

# 2014 State Report Card

## Are our groundwater resources being sustainably used?

As the largest freshwater resource in South Australia, groundwater is vital for our agricultural, mining and manufacturing industries. Groundwater provides us with town water supplies and sustains a range of ecosystems.

Excessive use of groundwater can cause water levels to drop and salinity to increase, which can impact industries and degrade water-dependent ecosystems, particularly if [climate change](#) impacts on rainfall patterns and reduces the rainfall needed to refresh groundwater aquifers in the future.

The groundwater resources we rely on the most and those that were at the greatest risk of degradation are now [prescribed](#) with sustainable use limits defined in [water allocation plans](#). These plans ensure water resources will be able to provide for us in the future. There are 19 prescribed groundwater management areas (map below), which are made up of 35 separate groundwater resources (aquifers) that have sustainable limits for water use.

This report card assesses if groundwater resources are used within their sustainable limits, based on [groundwater status reports](#) and water allocation plans. The water levels and salinity of groundwater are reported [here](#).



Regional trends in the use of prescribed groundwater resources



State target

Maintain the productive capacity of our natural resources

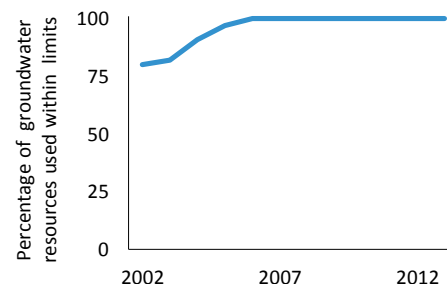
### Trend (2009-13)

Stable

Groundwater resources have been used within sustainable limits since 2006

Since 2006, all of our prescribed groundwater resources have been used within sustainable limits (graph on right).

The Far North and the Eastern and Western Mount Lofty Ranges prescribed areas have sustainable limits, but do not yet have accurate water use information. [Estimates](#) of water use and monitoring indicate that they are being used within their limits. The Clare Valley and Barossa prescribed areas do not have sustainable limits, but water use is considered to be sustainable.



### Where we are at (2013)

Good

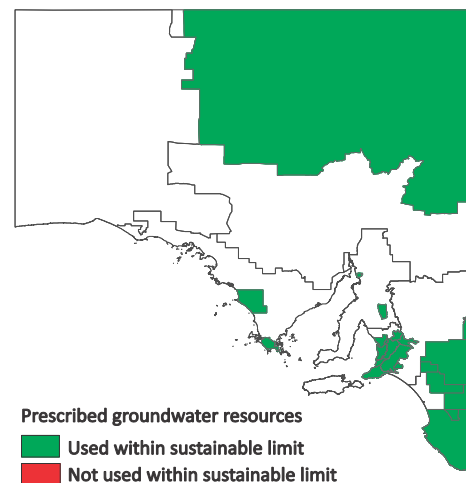
Prescribed groundwater resources were all used within sustainable limits

All of our groundwater resources were used within their sustainable limit in 2013 (map on right). Licensed use of water in these areas ranged from zero in the unconfined aquifer of the Peake-Roby-Sherlock Prescribed Wells Area (SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region), to nearly 100 per cent of the limit in the Wanilla aquifer in the Southern Basins Prescribed Wells Area (Eyre Peninsula NRM region).

Groundwater use in the Central Adelaide, Clare Valley, Barossa, Baroota and Far North prescribed areas is within sustainable limits, although there are some information gaps in these areas - either sustainable limits have not been established or water use data are not available for all users.

In the Eastern and Western Mount Lofty Ranges prescribed areas, groundwater use is sustainable, but some localised areas are at risk of overuse.

Managing our prescribed groundwater resources within their sustainable limits relies on consistent and timely measurements of rainfall, water levels, salinity and water use.



### Reliability of information

★★★★☆ Very good

#### Further information:

[Technical information for this report card](#) and reports on the [status of South Australian water resources](#).