

2014 Regional Snapshot

Are surface water resources being used within their allocated limits?

Water is fundamental for our industries, our health and way of life, and our environment. Pressure on surface water resources is likely to increase due to projections of reduced rainfall and increased [temperature](#) associated with climate change, increased irrigation needs and population growth.

The surface water resources we rely on the most and those at the greatest risk of over use and ecosystem degradation have been [prescribed](#) with water allocation limits, which are defined in [water allocation plans](#). There are 3 prescribed surface water resources in the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region, the [Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges](#), the [Marne Saunders](#) and the [River Murray](#) (shown on the map at the bottom).

This report card is based on [surface water status reports](#) and assesses whether the use of prescribed surface water resources is within the limits defined in water allocation plans.

This report does not assess the water requirements of aquatic ecosystems. Separate reports summarise the ecological condition of [rivers, streams and drains](#), flows [along](#) and out the [mouth](#) of the River Murray, and the ecological [condition](#) and water [quality](#) of the Murray.



Trends in the use of prescribed surface water resources



State target

Maintain the productive capacity of our natural resources

Trend (2005–13)

Variable

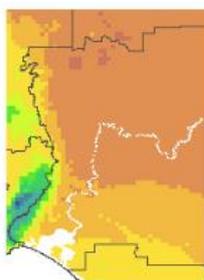
Water use varies each year depending on the climate, but has been within limits for the 2 resources with available data

Managing water use at sustainable levels is important to maintain the productive capacity of surface water resources.

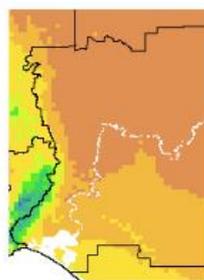
Water use varies in line with climate. For example, when we received above average rainfall, such as when the drought broke in 2010-11 (see maps on right) surface water use was lower.

In contrast, surface water use was higher when rainfall was below average. In the dry year of 2012-13 about 69 per cent of the allocation limit was used from the River Murray resource (see map below).

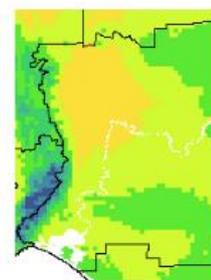
Average annual rainfall (mm)



111 years (1900-2010)



11 years (2000-10)



2011 rainfall

Where we are at (2013)

Good

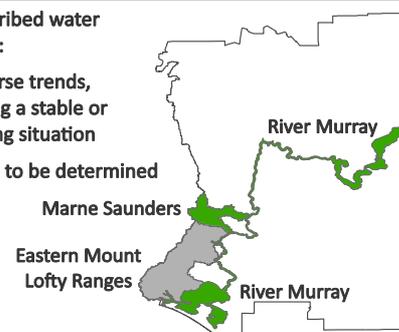
Two of our prescribed surface water resources have been used within allocated limits. Water use information is not available for the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges resource.

The River Murray and Marne Saunders prescribed resources, which have estimated or metered water use information, were used within allocation limits in 2012-13 (map on right). Surface water use was 69 per cent of the water allocation limit for the River Murray resource and 64 per cent for the Marne Saunders resource. Surface water allocation limits in Marne Saunders are based on low flows being secured for the environment. At this stage low flows are not being returned but a project to secure flows is in progress.

No surface water use information (estimated or metered) is available for the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges prescribed resource.

Status of prescribed water use in 2012-13:

- No adverse trends, indicating a stable or improving situation
- Not able to be determined



Reliability of information



Good. Surface water use data are not available for 1 prescribed resource.

Further information: [Technical information for this report](#), [the status of South Australian water resources](#)

