

2014 Regional Snapshot

How many Aboriginal people are involved in NRM?

The protection and management of natural resources have been traditional responsibilities of Aboriginal people for tens of thousands of years. Despite widespread changes to Australia over the last 200 years, healthy natural resources remain critical to the spiritual, social, cultural and economic wellbeing of Aboriginal people.

This report tracks Aboriginal involvement in natural resource management through participation in projects, boards, committees, workshops and employment with the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR).

The 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics census indicates that over 2,000 Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people (jointly referred to as Aboriginal people in this report) live in the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region – about 3.2 per cent of the population.

In South Australia, the unemployment rate of Aboriginal people was about three times higher than for non-Aboriginal people between 2005-11. The Government of South Australia aims to increase Aboriginal employment in all public sector agencies to at least 2 per cent across all levels. DEWNR has an addition target of at least 3 per cent.



Trend in involvement of Aboriginal people in natural resource management



State target

Involve more people in the sustainable management of natural resources

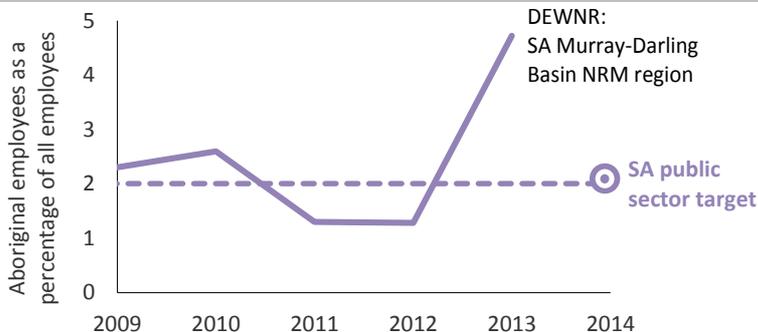
Trend (2009-13)

Variable

In this NRM region, Aboriginal employment is increasing within DEWNR. More information is needed to report trends in Aboriginal participation in NRM.

From 2009-13, DEWNR exceeded the Aboriginal employment targets of 2 per cent (public sector target, graph on right) and 3 per cent (DEWNR target) in the South Australian Murray Darling Basin NRM region.

In 2013, 5 Aboriginal people were employed by DEWNR (5 per cent of staff) in partnership with the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board. The regional NRM Board also funded 20 Aboriginal people as external contractors.



Where we are at (2013)

On track

In this NRM region, Aboriginal employment within DEWNR is 5 per cent. More information is needed to report Aboriginal participation rates in NRM.

The knowledge of Aboriginal people guides natural resource management through their participation in boards, committees and workshops. The SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board has 1 member who is Aboriginal. Three Aboriginal people also participate in co-management committees that manage natural resources.

The collection of information on participation in NRM is not standardised and people's heritage is not always recorded, so the following summaries underestimate actual participation rates. In 2013, 45 Aboriginal people volunteered in field activities, supported by the NRM Board, DEWNR, and the Australian Government. Five Aboriginal people participated in resource management workshops and field days, and regional projects supported improvements at 9 properties managed by Aboriginal people in the NRM region.

The [Australian Government's 2009 Invest Action Plan](#) highlights that increasing Aboriginal employment and broader participation in the natural resource management sector requires long-term funding and support, particularly for career-path opportunities.

Reliability of information



Excellent for Aboriginal employment. Participation data are not standardised.

Further information: [Technical information for this report](#), The [National agreement to close the gap in Aboriginal disadvantage](#), and a report on [the benefits of Aboriginal engagement in the natural resource management sector](#)