# 2014 Regional Snapshot

## Are our groundwater resources being sustainably used?

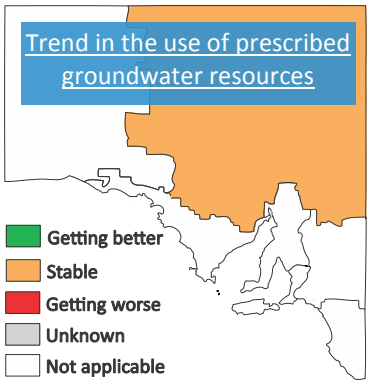
The South Australian Arid Lands NRM region relies on groundwater for its town water supplies and agriculture industry. Groundwater also sustains a range of ecosystems.

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 localised 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 is one prescribed groundwater management area in the SA Arid Lands NRM region, the Far North Prescribed Wells Area (map below), which is made up of several groundwater resources. However the main aquifer, the Great Artesian Basin aquifer, is the only resource for which a sustainable limit for water use has been determined.

This report card assesses if the Far North groundwater resource is used within its sustainable limit, based on groundwater status reports and water allocation plans. The water levels and salinity of our groundwater resources are reported here.

Trend in the use of prescribed groundwater resources




**State target**

**Maintain the productive capacity of our natural resources**

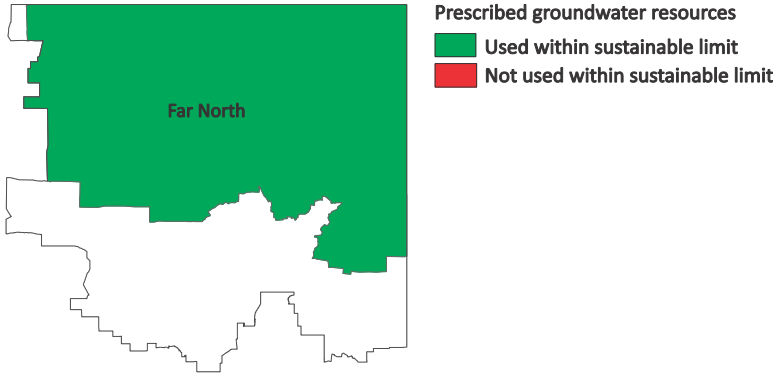
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Trend (2009-13)** | Stable | The groundwater resource has been used within sustainable limits since 2009 |

Water use data are not available for all users of the Great Artesian Basin aquifer, however estimates of water use are within the sustainable limit established in the Water Allocation Plan for the Far North Prescribed Wells Area.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Where we are at (2013)** | Good | The prescribed groundwater resource was estimated to have been used within sustainable limits |

In 2013, in the South Australian Arid lands NRM region the Great Artesian Basin aquifer is estimated to have been used within its sustainable limit (map on right).

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

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|---|---|---|
| **Reliability of information** | ★★★★☆ | Very Good |

**Further information:**
Technical information for this report and reports on the status of South Australian water resources

This report is a work in progress. As resource monitoring improves, so too will our ability to describe trends in condition.

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Government of South Australia