

2014 Regional Snapshot

Are our groundwater resources being sustainably used?

The SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region relies on groundwater for its town water supplies and agricultural industry. Groundwater also sustains a range of ecosystems.

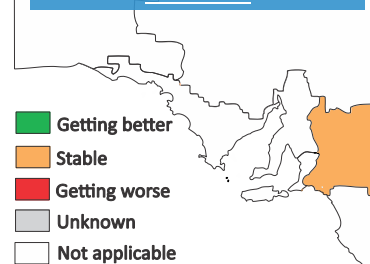
Excessive use of groundwater can cause water levels to drop and salinity to increase, which can impact industries and degrade water-dependent ecosystems, particularly if [climate change](#) impacts on rainfall patterns and reduces the rainfall needed to refresh groundwater aquifers in the future.

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 5 prescribed groundwater management areas in the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region (map below), which are made up of 8 separate groundwater resources (aquifers and lenses), which have sustainable limits determined 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 our groundwater resources are reported [here](#).



Trends in the use of prescribed groundwater resources



State target

Maintain the productive capacity of our natural resources

Trend (2009–13)

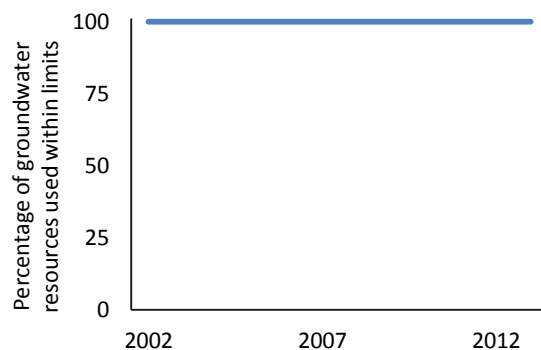
Stable

Groundwater resources have been used within sustainable limits since 2002

In the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region there are 5 prescribed groundwater resource areas: the [Marne-Saunders](#) Prescribed Water Resource Area, and the [Peake-Roby-Sherlock](#) Prescribed Wells Area, which each have 2 aquifers, and the [Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges](#) Prescribed Water Resource Area, the [Mallee](#) and the [Angas Bremer](#) Prescribed Wells Area, which each have 1 aquifer (see map below). The sustainable limit for each resource is determined every year by the amount of rainfall received.

Trends in the sustainable use of groundwater resources are stable.

Since 2002, all of our prescribed groundwater resources in the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region have been used within sustainable limits.



Where we are at (2013)

Good

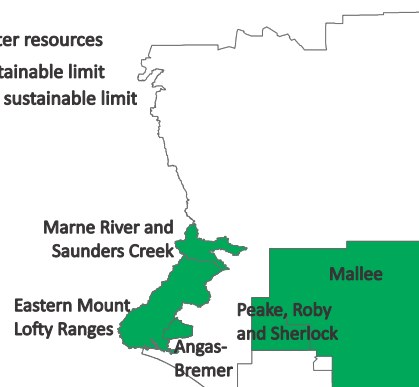
Prescribed groundwater resources were all used within sustainable limits

In 2013, all of our groundwater resources in the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region were used within their sustainable limit (map on right). Licensed use of water in these areas ranged from zero in the unconfined aquifer to 64 per cent in the confined aquifer in the Peake-Roby-Sherlock Prescribed Wells Area.

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

Prescribed groundwater resources

Green: Used within sustainable limit
Red: Not used within sustainable limit



Reliability of information



Very Good

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