

2014 Regional Snapshot

Are the water levels and salinity of our prescribed groundwater resources improving?

The South East NRM region relies on groundwater for its town water supplies, agricultural and industrial use. Groundwater also sustains a range of ecosystems.

Groundwater is mostly recharged when rainfall percolates down through the soil to the watertable. Groundwater levels naturally change in response to seasonal rainfall, droughts and climate change. Excessive use can cause levels to fall and salinity to increase, which can impact the communities, industries and ecosystems that are dependent on groundwater, particularly if [climate change](#) impacts rainfall patterns and reduces the rainfall needed to recharge groundwater.

This report summarises whether changes in groundwater levels and salinity of [prescribed](#) groundwater resources are within acceptable limits. This report should be read alongside reports on the sustainable use of [ground water](#) and [surface water](#) resources.



Trends in salinity and water levels for prescribed groundwater resources



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

Trend (2010–13)	Stable	Salinity and groundwater levels are within acceptable limits in all prescribed groundwater resources
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Groundwater levels and salinity are largely driven by rainfall and are therefore naturally variable. Rainfall in 2013 was less than long term averages (maps on right). Water use in 2013 was therefore expected to be higher.

Since 2010, all of the prescribed groundwater resources have stable or improving water levels and salinity (map above), according to [groundwater level and salinity reports](#).

Rainfall anomaly maps:

Rainfall (mm)

- > 50 more
- No change
- 50-100 less
- 150-200 less
- > 300 less

How rainfall in the last 12 months compares to the last 113 years

How rainfall in the last 12 months compares to the last 10 years

Where we are at (2013)	Good	All 5 groundwater resources are within acceptable limits
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In the South East NRM region there are 4 prescribed groundwater resources. Based on changes in salinity and water levels between 2012 and 2013, the [status](#) of all 4 prescribed groundwater resources is good. There has been some gradual decline in water levels and increases in salinity, but values are within acceptable limits based on the needs of the primary users and the natural variation of each resource.

The Tatiara area is within acceptable limits, but is being monitored closely because of some concern due to declining groundwater levels.

Managing our groundwater resources relies on consistent and timely measurements of groundwater levels, salinity and water use.

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