

# Sustaining our region through water allocation planning

Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan | November 2013 | Factsheet 1

The groundwater resources of the Lower Limestone Coast are unique and precious, and underpin the region's people, townships, industries and environment.

The Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation adopted the Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan (the WAP) to ensure the long term sustainability of the region's water resources.

Developing the WAP has involved significant research, community and stakeholder consultation, resulting in what is believed to be a world-first approach to sustainable water resources management in that it now includes commercial forests as a licensed water user.

**A series of factsheets have been prepared to explain the policies set out in the WAP.**

Factsheets cover issues such as:

- Volumetric conversion
- Water trade and transfer
- Groundwater dependent ecosystems
- Commercial forestry
- Farm forestry
- Managing the confined aquifer
- Target management levels and reductions
- Border Groundwaters Agreement

Factsheets are available at [www.senrm.sa.gov.au](http://www.senrm.sa.gov.au)

## WATER PLANNING IN THE SOUTH EAST

The aquifers of the Lower Limestone Coast Prescribed Wells Area (PWA) provide the region with large volumes of high quality water. This resource requires careful management to ensure that future generations can enjoy the lifestyle, economic prosperity and unique environment that water provides in the region.

The majority of groundwater in the South East is prescribed. This means that there are special rules to ensure that water is used sustainably.

There is also one prescribed surface water resource,

the Morambro Creek and surrounding area.

A Water Allocation Plan (WAP) sets out the rules for managing and taking prescribed water. The community-based South East Natural Resources Management Board is responsible for working with the community to develop and review water allocation plans for the region.

## WHAT IS A WAP?

A Water Allocation Plan (WAP) is a legal document that sets out the rules for managing, taking and using prescribed water.

In developing and reviewing a WAP, consideration is given to the social, economic and environmental impacts of the plan.

Each WAP takes into account the needs of water-dependent ecosystems and any potentially detrimental effects on the quality or quantity of water resources from taking or using water. The ability of water resources to meet future demand is another key consideration.

A WAP identifies:

- how water will be allocated
- the amount of water available for allocation
- rules for transferring licences and allocations
- how trading will occur
- the criteria for water affecting activity permits

The rights of traditional owners, as well as existing and future users are also considered when developing a WAP.

Ultimately, a WAP seeks to provide security and equity between water users while balancing the capacity of the region's water resources and the needs of the environment.



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## HOW WAS THE LOWER LIMESTONE COAST WAP PREPARED?

Development of the WAP since its initiation in 2004 has involved extensive research and stakeholder consultation, as well as the passing of the *Natural Resources Management (Commercial Forests) Amendment Bill 2011* by the Parliament of South Australia. This Bill has resulted in what is believed to be a world first approach to water allocation planning in that it requires forestry water use to be accounted for and licensed.

## WHAT IF I NEED MORE INFORMATION ON THE WATER ALLOCATION PLAN?

If you have questions about the WAP and how it will operate, you will find further information on our website: [www.senrm.sa.gov.au](http://www.senrm.sa.gov.au)

If you are a licensee, you will also shortly receive further information including application forms from our licensing staff.

Assistance is also available from Natural Resources South East. Contact **08 8735 1177**

## FURTHER READING

Guide to the WAP

- Factsheet 1 - Sustaining our region through water allocation planning
- Factsheet 2 - Changes to how water is allocated
- Factsheet 3 - Forest water use
- Factsheet 4 - Protecting vulnerable water resources
- Factsheet 5 - Water trade and transfer
- Factsheet 6 - Protecting groundwater dependent ecosystems
- Factsheet 7 - Managing the confined aquifer
- Factsheet 8 - Managing water in the Border Zone
- Factsheet 9 - Farm forestry



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