



Understanding Water Allocation Planning

Water is vital for the wellbeing, prosperity and lifestyle enjoyed by many Territorians and also maintains the health of our unique environment.

Despite wet season rainfall in the Top End, water is not in endless supply and we rely heavily on groundwater reserves during the dry season. In Central Australia groundwater supplies are relied upon all year round.

To protect the health of our rivers and groundwater reserves for future generations we need to ensure water is used sustainably.

What are water allocation plans?

Water Allocation Plans aim to protect the environment and equitably share the available water between users, to ensure the long term sustainability of the water resource. They are used in regions where there are competing demands for water, there is risk from water use to significant environmental values or a need to manage the whole system (surface water and groundwater resources) due to their significant inter-connection.

What's in a plan?

- A description of the water resource and its characteristics;
- Rationale about the need for the plan, its legal basis and effect;
- Clear outcomes, objectives, strategies and performance indicators;
- A description of the risks and uncertainties;
- Rules for management of licences and permits; and
- Monitoring and reporting arrangements.

Water Planning Outcomes

- Transparent sharing of water to protect human and environmental interests
- Protection of water dependant ecosystems and cultural values
- Sustainable water allocations for consumptive uses
- Identified reliability of water supply for water users
- Established basis for water allocations to be traded subject to safeguards.



A finalised Water Allocation Plan applies for up to 10 years and is reviewed at least every five years. The review process provides an opportunity to assess progress and fine tune the Plan based on new information gained through its monitoring program.

Where are Water Allocation Plans being developed?

Plans are being developed on a priority basis in areas such as Darwin Rural area -Howard East and Berry Springs; Mataranka, Douglas Daly Region and the Great Artesian Basin.

Where are plans being implemented?

- Katherine Tindall Limestone Aquifer
- Ti Tree Region
- Alice Springs
- Western Davenport Water Control District.

Declared Water Control Districts



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