

Water sharing plans

A water sharing plan is a set of operational rules for water users and the environment. Each plan stipulates the rules for water sharing, water trading and annual water allocations.

Who is accountable for water sharing plans?

The Department of Primary Industries, Water (DPI Water) is accountable for water sharing plans (WSPs), which define the rules for sharing the water resources of each regulated river valley.

WSPs are legally binding. They ensure water is made available for both the environment and licence holders and enable licence holders to plan their business activities.

WaterNSW's role

WaterNSW delivers water and manages customer water accounts in accordance with WSP rules. We deliver water to customers and the environment throughout the year. Customers' water accounts are credited with their shares of available water and, as they use their water, usage is debited from their accounts. Account balances are also affected by allocation assignments.

What is the purpose of a water sharing plan?

There are three main purposes of a WSP. They are:

- Protect environmental health of the water source
- Ensure sustainability for the long term
- Provide a clear picture of water availability.

How are plans developed?

The *Water Management Act 2000* requires plans to:

- Allocate water between all water users and the environment
- Improve river health
- Provide security for water users
- Meet the needs of regional communities
- Enable water trading.

Water is provided on a priority basis, as follows:

1. The environment
2. Basic landholder rights
3. Town water and licensed domestic and stock
4. Irrigators, farmers and industry.

Further information

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