



Protecting South Australia's Waters

Working with the community

The EPA, regional natural resources management boards, other state agencies, local governments, and the community will work together to set environmental values and water quality objectives, and develop management and monitoring strategies for South Australian waters under the *Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2003*.

Setting environmental values and water quality objectives, and developing management and monitoring strategies will assist with the sustainable management of South Australia's waters. In so doing protecting the associated ecological, social, economic and cultural values.

The projects accord with the requirements of the Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2003 and the *National Water Quality Management Strategy*.

How will environmental values and water quality objectives be used?

Environmental values and water quality objectives will support the planning and management of waters by:

- providing a blueprint for future management, protecting ecosystem values whilst maintaining their economic (tourism, industry, fishing and agriculture) and recreation values
- enabling better regulation of pollutant discharges to waterbodies by incorporation of regionally specific criteria into legislation
- providing information for government, industry and community planning activities such as the development of regional natural resources management plans
- informing where best to undertake management actions and make investments to improve water quality
- supporting targeted and cost-effective water quality monitoring programs.

Where do I get more information?

A guideline, *Establishing Environmental Values & Water Quality Objectives – Applying the National Water Quality Management Strategy*, is located at www.epa.sa.gov.au

How do I get involved?

Community consultation on protecting South Australia's waters will be held and comments invited in individual regions. Please contact the EPA if you wish to receive notification of the consultation meetings. For further information call (08) 8204 2000 or 1800 623 445 (SA non-metropolitan callers only).

Environment Protection Authority

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Photographs

- 1 Cover: The water quality of our creeks is vital, EPA
- 2 Horses along Torrens River, EPA
- 3 Patawalonga, EPA
- 4 Adelaide and Torrens River, EPA
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- 6 Waterwatch SA Torrens River, Waterwatch SA
- 7 Coastline view from Seacliff, EPA
- 8 Irrigation along the Murray, EPA
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- 10 Divers in seagrass, courtesy of PIRSA
- 11 The River Murray is a popular destination, EPA
- 12 Collecting samples, Field River, EPA

Environmental values icons courtesy of Queensland Environment Protection Authority



South Australians use and value water for a variety of environmental, social and economic needs.



Protecting South Australia's Waters

South Australia's water environments are diverse, unique and among the state's most valuable assets. They support biologically diverse ecosystems and provide a range of ecological services that sustain the livelihoods and lifestyles of many South Australians.

The use of water environments for economic and recreation activities has become more intensive, as has the use of our catchments and coasts. These uses have affected the health of our environments to an extent that threatens the very features that make them so attractive and valuable. Periods of prolonged drought and associated water pressures mean that it is even more crucial that we sustainably manage our waters.

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA), regional natural resources management boards, state agencies, and local governments are helping communities to protect their valuable waters through projects that set environmental values and water quality objectives, and develop management and monitoring strategies for the state's waters.

What are environmental values and water quality objectives?

Environmental values describe the qualities of waters that need to be protected from the effects of pollution, waste discharges and deposits; to ensure healthy aquatic ecosystems and waters that are safe and suitable for community use.

They reflect the ecological, social and economic values and uses of fresh, ground, estuarine and coastal waters. Examples of environmental values include supporting aquatic ecosystems, drinking water, and primary recreation (eg swimming, waterskiing).

Water quality objectives are measures of water quality needed to protect environmental values. They are defined for physical (eg turbidity, suspended sediment and temperature), chemical (eg phosphorous, nitrogen and toxicant levels), and biological measures (eg micro-organisms).

Environmental values for waters include:

-  Aquatic ecosystems
-  Irrigating crops
-  Farm use
-  Stock watering
-  Aquaculture
-  Human consumption
-  Raw drinking water
-  Industrial use
-  Cultural and spiritual
-  Primary recreation
-  Secondary recreation
-  Visual appreciation

