

Tintinara Coonalpyn Water Allocation Plan Review Stakeholder Advisory Group Minutes

Meeting No. 9, 24 June 2026, 2:00 – 4:30 pm
Coorong District Council Board Room, Tintinara

Objectives

- Consider and evaluate approach to stock and domestic (deferred from Meeting 8).
- Confirm whether current Management Areas remain relevant and appropriate (deferred from Meeting 8).
- Consider alignment of the Plan to current legislation.

Attendees:

Group Attendees – Dr Jonathon Sobels (Chair), Tracey Strugnell, Graham Gates, John Young, Campbell Foote, Adam Zacker, James De Barro, Jim Rowntree, Rodney Lush

LC Landscape Board Staff Attendees – Sue Botting, Chelsea Burns

Apologies – Nil

Welcome and agenda

The Chair welcomed everyone and thanked Group members and staff for their attendance and gave an acknowledgement of country.

Agenda check and minutes

Meeting 7 minutes confirmed as true and correct with correction of duplication in attendees/apologies. Moved by: Graham Gates. Seconded: Jim Rowntree.

Meeting 8 minutes confirmed as true and correct. Moved by: Graham Gates. Seconded: John Young.

Discussion:

- The Group had a brief recap of the key points for each management area from Meeting 8 with discussion on licence % use and unused water (sleeper licences).

Stock and Domestic

Chelsea Burns facilitated a discussion to review how stock and domestic water is considered in the Plan.

Discussion:

- It was discussed that currently stock and domestic is not licensed/not metered and there are no plans to change this in the LC region.

- Group members raised that domestic use in TC is more for gardens or lawns than in homes or consumption and has a role in bushfire protection.
- The first Plan for TC including a cost sharing scheme for stock and domestic as a transition mechanism for impact from increased extraction/allocation. At the time there was depreciation of existing infrastructure at same time as use was increasing. Different impacts happened at similar time but now resource and impacts have stabilised.
- Group members confirmed that all lined catchments are outside the PWA.
- Intensive animal keeping is not considered stock and domestic, requires a water licence and is specified as a purpose of use. Group members raised that in drought conditions there might be more stock containment and would that increase water need or if stock use vs licence need. Some viewed that in those drought/containment conditions wouldn't be more stock numbers potentially less, raised that EPA threshold for feedlot is quite low.
- It was raised that there is a need to protect stock access for dryland farming as important part of local economy. So not just about whether stock and domestic use is impacting the resource but if they are being affected by other use or declines.
- Summary:
 - Minimal stock and domestic issues heard of or reported for some time.
 - Updated estimate from URPS higher than Plan but still within reasonable estimate. If needed, volume allowance could be updated but currently no evidence to suggest it is causing issues so ok to maintain as is.
 - Low volume and low risk overall to impact on the resource with water quality limitations.
 - There is a need to consider and protect stock access for dryland users.

Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems

Chelsea Burns presented on groundwater dependent ecosystems and environment objectives within the Plan.

Discussion

- It was raised by the Group how far north do drains impact in the PWA? General understanding of drains very close to PWA boundary if in PWA at all and impacts don't extend far so likely very little impact.
- The Group discussed that most wetlands/GDEs are in Boothby management area which currently has no allocation or extraction, with hydrographs showing stable groundwater levels.
- There was discussion on salinity monitoring in Boothby to be able to evaluate the objectives of the Plan on GDEs. There aren't any current monitoring wells potentially due to no equipped bores and could be challenging. There were historically 3 bores in near lucerne around RIC015 to see impact. Consider how salinity could be monitored in these GDEs to be able to evaluate in future.
- The Group discussed wetlands groundwater connection which is important for the general system and groundwater quality.
- Summary:
 - Not much has changed in the term of the Plan. The Plan identified additional work needed which doesn't appear to have been undertaken.
 - Groundwater levels generally stable in Boothby where GDEs are present. No allocation or use in this MA. Improvement in salinity monitoring around known GDEs may be needed.

Legislative alignment

Sue Botting presented on alignment of the Plan to current legislation, including consumptive pools, management zones, licensing instruments, water classes and water affecting activities.

Discussion:

- The Group discussed how consumptive pools fit in with existing TML or management areas and different ways they can work. They don't replace the TML but can set a maximum volume available for consumptive uses at a higher level eg total maximum volume from unconfined aquifer.
- Generally, the Group viewed that the existing management area boundaries remain appropriate and relevant. There is alignment to hydro zone boundaries (eg east boundary of Tintinara MA) which is more relevant than arbitrary hundred line boundaries. There was some discussion around the south eastern portion of Coonalpyn MA between Tintinara and Sherwood and if there was additional extraction in this area would there be a need to manage this area differently to the majority of Coonalpyn MA (northern portion).
- Group members also raised principles within the Plan for contiguous properties or properties that span both sides of a management area boundary.
- There was general discussion on advantages of partial unbundling in a groundwater system and whether legislation would allow the Plan to remain bundled. Adaptive management can only be applied if instruments are not bundled. Administrative drawbacks and duplication of forms/fees in unbundled systems was also raised.
- There was some discussion on adaptive management and how this was being applied or proposed in other PWAs. Questions were raised as to responsibilities of DEW and LCLB in the process of notification, investigations in management actions, how entitlements or allocations are impacted and timing of restrictions both ways.
- The importance of the monitoring network for adaptive management for both the triggers to go into restrictions but also of the recovery of the resource to come back out. Current obswell network would not be sufficient in most of the PWA.
- Summary:
 - Some of the Plan no longer aligns to current legislation which has changed since the adoption of the current Plan. Mainly administrative, terminology or structural.
 - Further discussion required on whether an adaptive management framework would be appropriate to consider during an amendment process for the PWA moving forward given concerns about partial unbundling, observation well network and implementation.

Review check in

The timeline of the review process was revisited to discuss the next steps of the process and the proposed community sessions.

Discussion:

- There was discussion on next steps to finalise this evaluation phase of the review within the timeframe. Next meeting will focus on any key concepts not yet considered, where the process is landing overall and specific focus areas or outcomes that might need community feedback from proposed community sessions. Summary overview document to be provided to Group members prior to next meeting.
- Group will meet again following the August community sessions and informal Board presentation to consider feedback before formally being provided to the Board in October.

Minister is informed after Board has considered recommendation and resolved if the Plan remains appropriate or requires amendment. Overview of remainder of the evaluation phase of process to be added/provided to Group members.

- If applicable, amendment process could commence from 2027 and groundwater model would be built as part of the amendment process. It was raised as to whether this Group would continue through to amendment process if applicable. In other processes, Group members have been invited to continue on if they are happy to.

Next meeting dates

- Meeting 10: Thursday 23 July 2026

Close of meeting

Meeting closed at 4.45pm

The Chair thanked the stakeholders and staff for attending.

Confirmed

Tintinara Coonalpyn Water Allocation Plan review
Stakeholder Advisory Group
Actions Table

Action	TC WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group Actions	Status	Meeting 7 Update
2.5	To be followed up with DEW: - Current monitoring program in TCPWA, and what are they actually committed to doing as part of the regional program. - Further explanation/reason for decrease in number of wells for 10 year and static salinity trends. - Seek advice on potential influence and/or risk of hydrogeology to west of PWA and whether that could be contributing to rising water levels in Coonalpyn/Tauragat. - Confirm locations of observation wells in Ngarkat Conservation Park or explanation if none present in this area as part of network	Partially complete	Salinity monitoring summary provided to Group members and available on Group member portal. Further detail on historical salinity change provided at meetings 3 and 4. Hydrogeology influence from west of PWA and observation wells in Ngarkat raised as part of DEW presentation at meeting 6.
3.1	Salinity monitoring: - To be raised at LC Landscape Board level and/or DEW water steering committee. - Continue ongoing liaison with DEW Science and Monitoring on salinity data availability and application, potential gaps and opportunities. - Request monitoring team to confirm purpose of use of obswell bores during next round of monitoring. - Seek DEW feedback on coverage and representativeness of current obswell network in TC PWA as part of evaluation/review.	Partially complete	Presentation to LC Landscape Board in December 2025. Salinity monitoring summary provided to Group members and available on Group member portal.
3.3	Summary of key concepts to revisit recommendations for: - Holding licences - Active & expeditious use - Delivery supplement - flood	Ongoing	To be provided in overview document for Meeting 10.
4.2	Summary of key concepts to revisit/recommendations for principles of: - Carry over - Seasonal variability - Rotational crop	Ongoing	To be provided in overview document for Meeting 10.

Action	TC WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group Actions	Status	Meeting 7 Update
5.2	To be followed up with DEW re hydro test: - If the assessment uses the previous 5 years, if there is not enough obs wells or not enough nearby that are relevant, how do they do the hydro test usefully. - What is the recharge value used for the management areas. - With rotational crops is the rotational allocation accounted for in a hydro test if a neighbour is bringing in water. - Example or more detail on how hydro test is applied.	Ongoing	Being considered as part of broader discussions on hydro test across PWAs.
5.3	Summary of key concepts to revisit/recommendations for principles of: Trade	Ongoing	To be provided in overview document for Meeting 10.
6.1	Question on notice for DEW: - Sub aquifers in the confined aquifer. Risk and management. - Rate of recharge used in current or previous Plan.	Ongoing	
8.1	Summary of: Sustainable allocation considerations for each management area.	Ongoing	To be provided in overview document for Meeting 10.
9.1	Summary of key concepts to revisit/recommendation for principles of: - Stock and domestic - Groundwater dependent ecosystems - Legislative alignment		To be provided in overview document for Meeting 10.
9.2	To be provided to Group members: - Summary of remainder of evaluation process. - Overview summary document of key concepts to support revisit discussion at next meeting.		

Tintinara Coonalpyn Water Allocation Plan review Stakeholder Advisory Group

Items identified to be revisited and/or for recommendation

Item number	TC WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group	Status	Meeting raised
1.	Salinity monitoring 10 year trends to 2025 from DEW only showed 2-3 obswells. This is insufficient for educated decisions to be made.	Revisit for formal recommendation	2
2.	Consider need for mandatory salinity readings/returns from licence holders.	Revisit	2 3
3.	Consider whether Delivery Supplement (DS) is still needed as a component or whether it could be simplified. DS-Flood still considered a relevant need and component for TC PWA. View to retain existing DS-flood allocations with no new.	Revisit Revisit for formal recommendation	2 3
4.	Holding licences no longer relevant and not current in PWA. View to manage intent through other mechanisms more aligned with legislation.	Revisit for formal recommendation	3
5.	Active and expeditious use no longer relevant for the PWA and was time specific. View to remove these principles.	Revisit for formal recommendation	3
6.	Carry over is highly valued. View that it remains appropriate as per current principles unless resource condition warrants more in depth review.	Revisit for formal recommendation	4
7.	<i>Seasonal variability principle is likely to remain appropriate in intent. Consideration of being available 2 years out of 5.</i> Revisit discussion: principle may warrant further review or redundancy based on view to sustainably manage the resource, reducing complexity of the Plan and other ways to manage business risk in established farming systems.	Revisit for formal recommendation	4 5
8.	<i>Rotational crop principle is likely to remain appropriate noting it is expected to have low use or expansion.</i> <i>Engage with industry groups prior to formal recommendation</i> Revisit discussion: subject to industry engagement, principle may warrant further review or redundancy based on view to sustainably manage the resource, low use and opportunity for expansion based on water quality in PWA, reducing complexity of the Plan and other ways to manage business risk in industry related to rotational crop principles.	Revisit for formal recommendation	4 5

Item number	TC WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group	Status	Meeting raised
9.	Trade principles remain partially relevant for the PWA with view that the principles: - had some inconsistencies and redundant principles. - may benefit from revision including how trade could be considered in an adaptive management framework linked to resource condition. - should be revisited in consideration of sustainable allocation and resource condition.	Revisit	5
10.	In consideration of Target Management Level (TML) in sustainable allocation: - maintaining a Target Management Level (TML) or maximum extraction volume remains appropriate and reasonable. - Delivery Supplement Flood and carry-over not being included in TML continues to remain a reasonable approach. - there is a need for better rationale or clarity of objectives for TML for each management area. - TML should remain but moving forward to manage resource condition through adaptive management, resource condition and with the support of groundwater modelling.	Revisit for formal recommendation	8
11.	In consideration of sustainable allocation: - use/extraction appears fairly sustainable across the PWA based on current resource condition. - there is a need for better testing/modelling of capacity and demand, including the ability of and impacts to the resource if use/extraction were to increase. - more salinity monitoring is needed across the PWA to support understanding of salinity movement across the PWA. - further understanding and investigation of Tauragat confined management area is needed, including sub-aquifers, interactions, significant declines/level changes or variations.	Revisit for formal recommendation	8
12.	Stock and domestic approach and allowance appears to remain within reasonable estimate. Consider as low volume and low risk overall to impact on the resource. View to also consider and protect stock access for dryland users.	Revisit for formal recommendation	9
13.	Groundwater dependent ecosystems and environmental provisions are likely to remain consistent with current Plan:	Revisit for formal recommendation	9

Item number	TC WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group	Status	Meeting raised
	- Plan identified additional work needed which doesn't appear to have been undertaken. - Groundwater levels generally stable in Boothby where GDEs are present. No allocation or use in this MA. - Improvement in salinity monitoring around known GDEs may be needed.		
14.	Due to changes in legislation, parts of administration or terminology of the Plan no longer align with the <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i>. Including: - Consumptive pools - Management zones - Authorisation instruments - Water classes	Revisit for formal recommendation	9
15.	Water Affecting Activities principles are transitioning from Water Allocation Plans across PWAs into the Water Affecting Activities Control Policy.	Administrative change LCLB	9
16.	Further discussion required on whether an adaptive management framework would be appropriate to consider during an amendment process for the PWA moving forward. Concerns raised: - Partial unbundling - Observation well network - Implementation	Further discussion Revisit	9