

Tintinara Coonalpyn Water Allocation Plan Review Stakeholder Advisory Group Minutes

Meeting No. 8, 28 May 2026, 2:00 – 4:30 pm
Coorong District Council Board Room, Tintinara

Objectives

- Revisit key concept of sustainable allocation as part of the evaluation of the current Plan.
- Consider and evaluate current Plan approach to stock and domestic (deferred to Meeting 9).
- Confirm whether current Management Areas remain relevant and appropriate (deferred to Meeting 9).

Attendees:

Group Attendees – Dr Jonathon Sobels (Chair), Tracey Strugnell (via Teams), Graham Gates, John Young, Campbell Foote, Adam Zacker

LC Landscape Board Staff Attendees – Sue Botting, Chelsea Burns

Apologies – James De Barro, Jim Rowntree, Rodney Lush

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

Discussion:

- Duplication of Adam Zacker in attendees and apologies. Correction as apology only.

Meeting 7 minutes to be confirmed at the next meeting due to apologies/attendees of each meeting.

Sustainable Allocation - TML

Sue Botting facilitated further discussion on approach to target management level (TML).

Discussion:

- The Group discussed the general approach to the confined aquifer of 'cautiously manage' and/or responsibly manage the resource.
- There was general discussion around sustainable allocation and the key point that this will look very different for each management area.

- The Group viewed that maintaining a Target Management Level (TML) or maximum extraction volume remains appropriate and reasonable approach. It was also viewed that Delivery Supplement Flood and carry-over not being included in TML continues to remain a reasonable approach.
- It was raised as to whether the average annual recharge used for TML included or excluded native vegetations areas. Generally these areas are considered when estimating the rate of recharge, the current Plan doesn't provide a lot of detail on this. There was some general discussion around rate of recharge change over time, decrease in rainfall and the approach of the previous Plan.
- The Group viewed broadly that the TML should remain but moving forward to manage resource condition through adaptive management, resource condition and with the support of groundwater modelling.
- There was a general discussion on groundwater modelling including data availability and process to develop a new model. A new model would need to be developed for Tintinara Coonalpyn which would use the best available data and science. This would commence if the Plan went to an amendment process.

Sustainable Allocation

Sue Botting facilitated further discussion on current resource condition, allocation and use at management area level to consider sustainable allocation.

Unconfined management areas

Coonalpyn

- The Group viewed that resource condition looked fairly stable overall, with some localised slight increases where groundwater is shallower (LVG001 and CNB002) and current use not high risk.
- It was raised that the management area (MA) was limited by suitable land/soil type, water quality and irrigation capacity and noted dryland salinity to the western side of the MA.
- The Group confirmed its previous position that additional observation wells are needed in this MA to supporting understanding of resource condition particularly salinity but also groundwater levels, gaps to the western side and where irrigation/development has increased.

Sherwood

- The Group raised that further consideration/review of statements in the current Plan for Sherwood, particularly:
 - *2km buffer around existing irrigation areas to minimise increased flushing.*
 - *"Given the long term decline in the resource due to flushing of salts from the unsaturated zone, it is considered that development of allocations up to TML is well within the capacity of the resource."*
- The Group noted that use had increased in the MA. It was also raised that use may reflect a rotational crop use pattern/break or activation in that area.
- The impact of use in Tatiara PWA and lateral flow through from Shaugh MA was raised in response to groundwater declines and trigger of MCA010.
- The Group viewed that the resource condition looked fairly stable overall. Some declines which was viewed by some in the Group as positive to manage salinity.

- The Group confirmed its previous position that more salinity observation wells were needed in this MA. Given the objectives and aims around flushing of salts, to only have 1 current salinity observation well is insufficient.

Tintinara

- It was noted that there were more declining trends in resource condition in this MA. Some group members raised that in particular areas it can be more saline and decline may not necessarily be negative or may have been the aim, but the Plan didn't clearly articulate that.
- The Group noted that salinity was variable across the MA and groundwater levels were generally stable or some decline. CMB056 was noted as an anomaly, potentially a change in reference point. At current use, viewed as being about right but noted higher use in the MA compared to others.

Boothby

- Resource condition was viewed to be fairly stable, with no allocation or use in the MA.
- Given the high salinity in this MA, allocation for innovative purposes and east to west groundwater flow, the Group confirmed its position that to not have any salinity monitoring wells in this MA is insufficient to support understanding of salinity changes and trends over time.

Confined management areas

Tauragat

- It was noted that resource condition was more variable in this MA, with some obswells seeing significant change/drop in water levels and further context or investigation needed eg LVG005. Some decline is expected and/or accepted in the confined aquifer.
- Use has reduced over time possibly due to land use change. Use consistently quite low and unlikely to increase significantly/activated based on land capacity and water quality in some parts of the MA.
- Better understanding of sub-aquifers and their interactions in this MA is needed. Including which obswells are in which sub-aquifer – this may be challenging based on the varying/interconnected depths of the sub-aquifers and the log records.

Tolmer

- The Group viewed that resource condition, groundwater level and salinity all appeared relatively stable for a confined aquifer, even though level triggers had been met as a result of seasonal variations (autumn lows).
- Some Group members noted pressure impacts have already occurred across the current and previous Plan. No artesian wells remain in Tolmer to the knowledge of the Group.
- Generally viewed that TML is not significant volume, use relatively consistent and resource is generally fairly stable at current use.

Kynoch

- The Group viewed that it would be preferred to have at least 1 observation well in this MA moving forward to have a basic understanding of the aquifer and resource condition. There are currently no observation wells, no TML, no allocation and no licenced use.

- It was generally viewed that the unconfined aquifer in this area was still of sufficient quality and quantity to meet demand, so the confined at 100m+ would be unlikely to be accessed until that is no longer the case.

Summary

- Broadly, the Group viewed that:
 - maintaining a Target Management Level (TML) or maximum extraction volume remains appropriate and reasonable approach. Delivery Supplement Flood and carry-over not being included in TML continues to remain a reasonable approach.
 - use/extraction appears fairly sustainable across the PWA based on current resource condition.
 - there was a need for better rationale or clarity of objectives for each management area.
 - 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.

Stock and domestic / management areas

Deferred to Meeting 9 due to time.

Any other business

Discussion:

- Inter-PWA trade was raised by the Group. There was general discussion around this being raised by MRLB previously and how this needed to be managed in policy from both PWAs.

Next meeting dates

- Meeting 9: Wednesday 24 June 2026
- Meeting 10: Thursday 23 July 2026

Close of meeting

Meeting closed at 4.35pm

The Chair thanked the stakeholders and staff for attending.

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	
4.2	Summary of key concepts to revisit/recommendations for principles of: - Carry over - Seasonal variability - Rotational crop	Ongoing	

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	
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	
7.1	Provide as follow up data to Group: - Example of Padthaway annual resource condition update - Additional breakdowns of licence % use/allocation - URPS Social Economic Profile report	Completed	Provided to Group via private project page portal
8.1	Summary of sustainable allocation considerations for each management area.		

**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