

# Compliance with water management principles – Water Sharing Plan for the NSW Murray–Darling Basin Fractured Rock Groundwater Sources Amendment Order 2022

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This document details how the NSW Department of Planning and Environment has complied with the water management principles outlined in the *Water Management Act 2000* in developing the Water Sharing Plan for the NSW Murray–Darling Basin Fractured Rock Groundwater Sources Amendment Order 2022.

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## Background

When making – or agreeing to – amendments to the Water Sharing Plan for the NSW Murray–Darling Basin Fractured Rock Groundwater Sources 2020, ministers have a duty under section 9(1) of the *Water Management Act 2000* (the Act):

- a. to take all reasonable steps to do so in accordance with, and so as to promote, the water management principles of the Act, and
- b. as between the principles for water sharing set out in section 5(3) of the Act, to give priority to those principles in the order in which they are set out in that subsection.

The water management principles in section 5(3) of the Act state that:

- a. sharing of water from a water source must protect the water source and its dependent ecosystems
- b. sharing of water from a water source must protect basic landholder rights
- c. sharing or extraction of water under any other right must not prejudice the principles set out in paragraphs (a) and (b).

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## This amendment

This amendment to the water sharing plan increases protection for groundwater-dependent ecosystems. It does this by including high-priority ecosystems for the Yass Catchment Groundwater Source in the map of high-priority, groundwater-dependent ecosystems.

This amendment promotes the water management principles set out in the Act, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Amendment to the water sharing plan

Water management/sharing principle #	How principle has been promoted	Relevant amendment item	Associated plan clause
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Section 5 (2) (a) – Water sources, floodplains, and dependent ecosystems (including groundwater and wetlands) should be protected and restored and, where possible, land should not be degraded</b></li> <li>• <b>Section 5 (2) (b) – habitats, animals and plants that benefit from water or are potentially affected by managed activities should be protected and (in the case of habitats) restored</b></li> <li>• <b>Section 5 (3) (a) – Sharing of water from a water source must protect the water source and its dependent ecosystems</b></li> <li>• <b>Section 5 (2) (d) – the cumulative impacts of water management licences and approvals and other activities on water sources and their dependent ecosystems, should be considered and minimised</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amendment does not lessen the level of protection provided by the current plan.</li> <li>• The plan currently limits total extractions to a long-term average annual extraction limit. The amendment does not lessen the protection provided by this extraction limit.</li> <li>• The plan also restricts the ability to develop water supply works near high-priority groundwater-dependent ecosystems. This amendment improves the protection of dependent ecosystems and habitats, animals and plants that benefit from water by adding:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– high-priority groundwater-dependent ecosystems for the Yass Catchment Groundwater Source to the High-Priority Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystem Map.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Item [1]</li> <li>• Item [2]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cl 4 (17)</li> <li>• Appendix 2</li> </ul>

#Note: The table does not include principles that are not affected by this amendment.