

Tri-state Salinity Management Policy Comparison for the Mallee Region



salinity zones and associated charges. However a risk based approach that uses the Salinity Impact Rapid Assessment Tool (SIMRAT) as the 'triage' tool for assessment of preliminary salinity impacts for new development proposals is utilised. More detailed assessments are required if potential salinity impacts are identified. The application form for water use and works approvals provides guidance in relation to information and approval requirements for developments.

*Photo Left: Psyche Bend Lagoon, Mildura.
Asitha Katupitiya MDBA*

Tri-state comparisons of water and salinity management

Water and Land Management Acts in all states (New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia) provide for strong management of the impacts of water use, including salinity impacts.

Water and use entitlements in the Mallee areas of all three states have been 'unbundled'.

Consistent with the level of development, Victoria has the most detailed arrangements for managing the impacts of salinity, including salinity zones, salinity

offset charges and detailed arrangements for management of irrigation developments.

South Australia also has comprehensive and specific arrangements for salinity management, including a Salinity Zoning Policy with salinity impact zones and corresponding salinity related rules for development. Some case management of irrigation development occurs for large developments, but the irrigation development process is not written up into a single document.

New South Wales does not have

Cost Shares

Each state has a different cost share arrangement for salinity management. In South Australia the government pays for construction and operation and maintenance (O&M) of salt interception schemes. In Victoria, irrigators pay the capital and O&M costs of offsetting salinity impacts

At a glance

The three states (VIC, SA & NSW) all have unbundled water entitlements and manage salinity effects on the river Murray differently in the Mallee region.



Photo by Nolani McColl (2013) - MDBA

associated with new development. Victoria also shares between its Water Resource provider and the state the costs of salinity interception. In New South Wales the government pays for construction and O&M of salt interception schemes although some of its contribution is recovered for River Murray operations from irrigators.

Community Participation

Community knowledge and participation in salinity management has declined in all states since the 1990s as salinity issues have been brought under control. South Australia and Victoria see a need to raise awareness and participation levels in salinity management and to maintain support for ongoing salinity management arrangements.

Community demand for salinity management and project advice

remains high in NSW, with a need to continue to develop salinity information and products to support the delivery of current NSW policy and intergovernmental agreements.

Continuous Improvement

All states recognise the need to continually improve arrangements to manage the salinity impacts of irrigation development in the Mallee in response to the dynamics of the irrigation sector and new directions in Basin Salinity Management 2030 (BSM2030) and the Basin Plan. South Australia and Victoria are currently reviewing their policy arrangements and NSW has undertaken preliminary work in preparation for a review of its NSW Sunraysia Irrigation Development accountable action

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Further information

For more information regarding Salinity Management Policy contact the Mallee CMA on 03 5051 4377.

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