

2024-25 Announced Allocation Notice for the Ooloo Dolostone Aquifer

Water extraction licences in the Ooloo Dolostone Aquifer Water Allocation Plan area are subject to announced allocation conditions. These conditions provide me, as the Controller of Water Resources, an option to temporarily reduce water licence entitlements, should it be required, to protect the environmental, cultural or social values associated with a water resource.

I have determined that the environmental, cultural and social values of the Ooloo Dolostone Aquifer plan area will be maintained without any reduction in water entitlements for the 2024-25 water accounting year, commencing 1 May 2024.

All licence holders within the Ooloo Dolostone Aquifer plan area are permitted to extract up to 100 per cent of their licensed entitlements for the 2024-25 water accounting year.

In determining not to reduce allocation entitlements, I considered the following matters:

- The Daly region received above average rainfall during the 2023-2024 wet season.
- Reported water use for all licences in the Plan area was approximately 44 per cent of the total licensed volume for the 2023-24 water accounting year.
- The Ooloo Dolostone Aquifer Water Allocation Plan 2019-2029 identifies an allowable level of impact to the Daly River flows at three key monitoring sites: Dorisvale, Ooloo Crossing and Mount Nancar gauging stations. Daly River flows during the dry season are predominantly driven by groundwater from the Ooloo Dolostone Aquifer seeping into the river. The Plan specifies the environmental flow targets for 1 November, as this is typically the lowest flow period in the river.
- Modelling by the Department predicts the impact of water extraction on river flows for the Plan area. Modelled predictions for the Daly River, based on recent rainfall and water use records, and assuming zero rainfall for the remainder of 2024 indicate a natural flow rate at Dorisvale of 8.3 m³/s, Ooloo Crossing of 12.4 m³/s and Mount Nancar of 19.6 m³/s on 1 November 2024.

The Plan reports these flow rates as an 'Average river flow scenario' requiring 80 per cent of the river flow be reserved for environmental, cultural and social values, and providing up to 20 per cent of river flow available for extraction.

Modelling of extractions, including for rural stock and domestic use and assuming existing licences take their total licensed volume predicts reductions in flow at each of these locations of 12.3%, 10.3% and 9.6% respectively, which meets the Plan criteria.



Andrew Johnson

Controller of Water Resources

2 April 2024