



NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF NSW/  
*protecting nature through community action*

## TAMWORTH - NAMOI BRANCH



### **Submission on Draft NSW Groundwater strategy by Tamworth-Namoi Branch, National Parks Association of NSW.**

We feel that the strategy places too much emphasis on encouraging economic growth over the protection of the environment. A more precautionary approach to groundwater values is vital.

Climate change predictions for groundwater are for a 15% reduction in recharge by 2060, yet demand for groundwater for urban supply is expected to increase by 300% over the next 20 years. The emphasis must shift to reducing demand on groundwater to recycling water projects.

#### **Strategic priority 1: Protect groundwater resources and the ecosystems that depend on them**

- Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs) can't be protected until they are mapped adequately.
- Public investment in updated mapping of GDEs is essential.
- The condition and integrity of aquifers should be determined and better managed.

#### **Strategic priority 2: Build community and industry resilience through sustainable groundwater use**

- The object appears to be encouraging greater reliance on groundwater for town water supply, this is a mistake. Instead, we should be reducing demand for water and investigating recycled water options instead for industry and urban supply.
- The bottled water industry relying on groundwater should be banned.
- There should be improved rules in water sharing plans for alluvium water sources.
- No carry over of water allowances should be allowed to protect water recharge.
- There should be stronger limits for groundwater extraction to establish sustainable use.
- We do not support Controlled Allocation Orders until GDEs are mapped and aquifer conditions are determined.

#### **Strategic priority 3: Improve groundwater management decisions with better information**

- The strategy should support public investment in improved groundwater knowledge for the protection of GDEs and aquifer integrity.
- We object to research projects having a strategic goal to increase economic output from groundwater use.

[REDACTED]  
National Parks Association of NSW