

Groundwater Monitoring & Evaluation & Grower Survey, Namoi Catchment

Client: Cotton CRC and Namoi Catchment Management Authority

Year: 2008-2009

Project Reference: 08085



Groundwater system management is an important natural resource issue to underpin the socio-economic sustainability of the region. Groundwater in the Namoi catchment supports an irrigation industry worth in excess of \$380 million as well as being the water supply for many towns and intensive industries such as feedlots.

Monitoring the status of groundwater levels and groundwater salinity is central to groundwater management. To better understand this, the Cotton CRC and Namoi CMA have commissioned a project which aims to:

- Establish a framework for benchmarking groundwater quantity and quality in the Namoi which will form the basis of future assessment
- Understand how the condition of the catchment varies over time and across the region and to utilise this information to improve the management of groundwater resources in the Namoi

The project will build on the Namoi CMA State Monitoring and Evaluation Programme, current monitoring by the Department of Water and Energy (DWE) and various groundwater projects around the catchment.

This project will help to meet the goals and milestones of the Cotton CRC's Catchment and Communities program. The monitoring data evaluation will help meet the Namoi CMA's Catchment Action Plan and resource management targets.

The University of New South Wales WRL Projects team has been awarded the contract to complete groundwater monitoring, evaluation and grower survey in the Namoi catchment over a 12 month period. The project team, led by Dr Wendy Timms, is working in partnership with Ingrid Roth and her team from GHD-Hassall who will undertake the grower survey.

The broad scope of work to be completed by the end of 2009 includes:

- The review, collation of information and targeting of monitoring strategies
- Consultation with stakeholders including Namoi water users
- Groundwater level and salinity data collection from representative monitoring bores
- Building capacity for groundwater users to participate in monitoring
- The design and implementation of a grower survey on attitudes and perceptions; deliver a discussion paper on grower attitudes, perceptions & enhancing participation
- Production of groundwater maps showing groundwater levels and quality
- Reporting on future strategic sampling approach and risks to beneficial uses
- Developing guidelines for implementing best practice monitoring and report on early warning indicators of the condition of groundwater resources and better managing catchment targets
- Stakeholder workshops