

Water accounts in Australia

Amanda Clark
Physical Environment Accounts and Statistics Branch
Australian Bureau of Statistics
amanda.clark@abs.gov.au

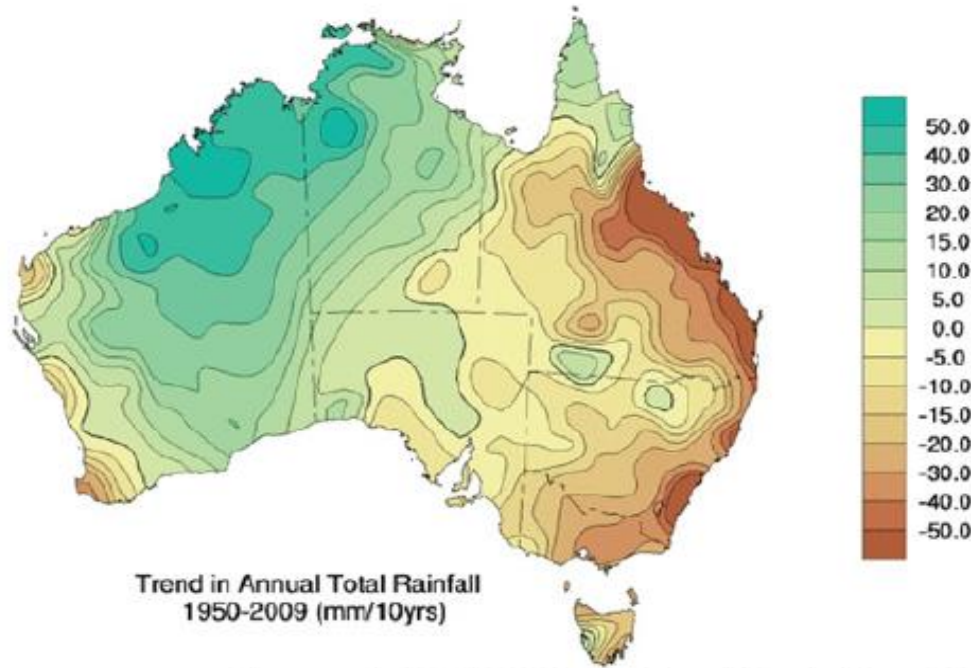
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Informing Australia's important decisions



Contents

- ▶ Australia's climate
- ▶ Australian water strategy
- ▶ Water accounting in Australia
- ▶ Policy applications

Australia's Climate



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Australian Water Strategy

- Water policy in Australia is supported by many government agencies (national and state level)
- 2004 COAG – National Water Initiative (NWI) established to address:
 - Availability of water for agriculture
 - Availability of water for human consumption
 - Ecological sustainability
 - Productivity and regulation of the Water Supply Industry
 - Water prices and return on assets
- Water Act 2007
 - Jurisdictional harmonisation
 - Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder established
 - ACCC enabled to enforce water charge and water market rules
 - BoM are given responsibility for water information functions including a National Water Account

Australian Water Strategy

Questions for policy setting:

- Are water providers achieving full cost recovery?
- Are water markets open and efficient?
- Are water uses and the water supply infrastructure that supports this economically efficient and sustainable?
- Is there consistency in water pricing across sectors and between jurisdictions?
- Are environment and other public benefit outcomes being achieved?
- What are the economic, environmental and social impact of changes in water resources allocation and use?

Water Accounting in Australia

➤ **ABS Water Account, Australia (WAA):**

The focus of the ABS Water Account Australia (WAA) is on the physical and monetary supply and use of water within the Australian economy. It is compiled in accordance with the SEEA Framework.

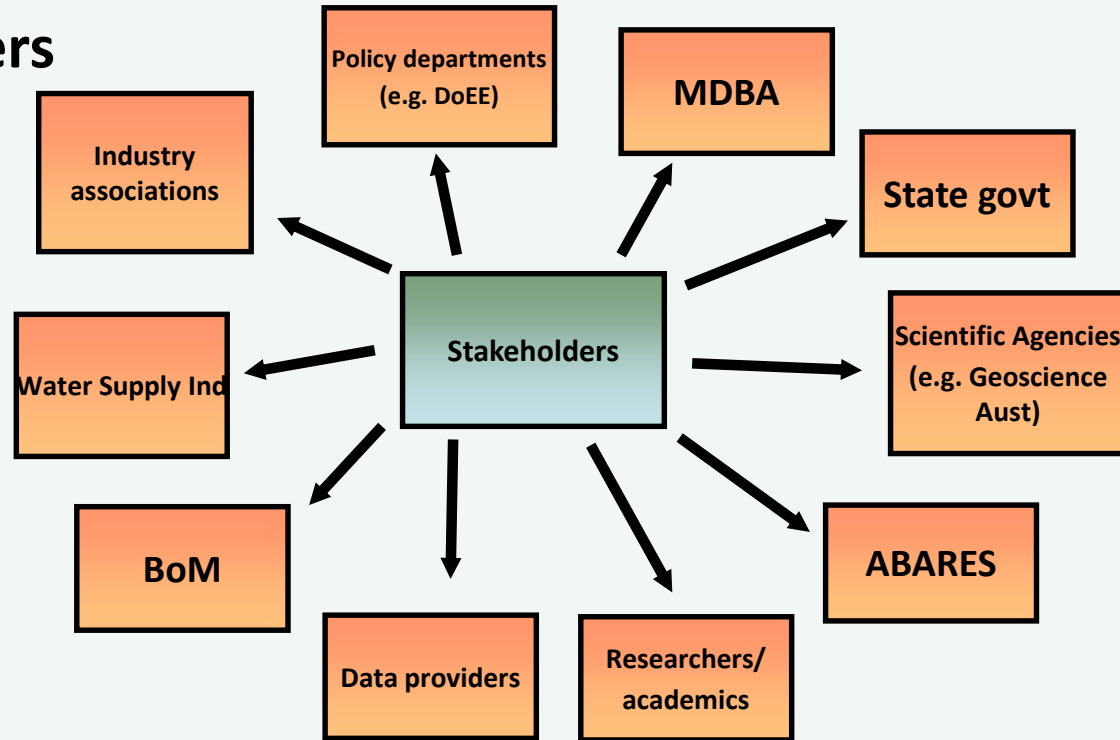
➤ **BoM National Water Account (NWA):**

The BoM National Water Account (NWA) reports on the volumes of water available, traded, extracted and managed for economic, social, cultural and environmental benefit across Australia. It's compilation is guided by the Australian Water Accounting Standard.

➤ **Various State Water Accounts**

Water Accounting in Australia

Stakeholders



Policy Applications – Successes

- National Approach to Environmental and Economic Accounting
- Scientific, statistical and policy agencies working together
- Long-time series of ABS water account available
- Many examples of specific policy and research questions being informed through the water account
- Pilot Integrated Water Account for the Canberra Region

Policy Applications – Successes

Pilot joint ABS/BoM water account for the Canberra Region:

- Water account combines elements of both the BoM NWA and the ABS WAA using a combination of the AWAS and the SEEA framework to product an integrated water account.
- Four sets of integrated SEEA-Water accounts, including:
 - water assets
 - physical supply and use of water
 - monetary supply and use of water
 - water condition/quality
- Produced new data not available in each stand alone account

Policy Applications - Challenges

- Relatively new tool for policy makers
- Different account measurements in Australia – BoM v ABS
- Timeliness
- Spatial referencing – state/territories v catchment areas v drainage divisions
- Granularity of data available
- Consistency/quality of data from different sources

Policy Applications – Future Directions

- Joined up decision making across Government on national priorities and approach
- Move towards more integrated water accounts across Australia
- Demystify water accounting and the SEEA framework
- Maintain a regular time series of the most relevant indicators
- Reduce provider load by increasing use of administrative data
- Improve timeliness

Thank You

