

## Atlas maps ecosystems that depend on groundwater

**The Bureau of Meteorology and the CSIRO have developed an online Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems Atlas that offers the first comprehensive picture of Australia's groundwater-dependent ecosystems, bringing together current knowledge of known ecosystems as well as ecosystems – springs, wetlands, rivers and vegetation – that might use groundwater.**



Credit: scienceimage/W van Aken

Groundwater has frequently been considered our water resource safety net in the face of a highly variable climate, growing demands from population growth and the pressures of development.

However, increased groundwater use also places pressure on those wetlands and ecosystems that depend on groundwater for their survival.

According to the Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water, Senator Don Farrell, the Australian Government hopes [the Atlas](#) will enable a consistent and evidence-based approach to water resource planning.

The Atlas incorporates multiple lines of scientific evidence including previous fieldwork, literature and mapping, and combines nation-wide layers of satellite remote sensing data.

‘This innovative web-based tool will provide vital information for water planners and managers to use when weighing up how to allocate our precious water resources,’ said Senator Farrell.

‘For the first time we now have a clear inventory showing the location and features of groundwater dependent ecosystems across Australia. [Such information] is fundamental to...the nation's water security.’

The development of the Atlas included project consultancy services from Sinclair Knight Merz and Cohga and inputs from state and territory water agencies.

The Atlas has already been recognised for its technical excellence in the 'Spatial Enablement' Award category at the 8th Annual Victorian Spatial Excellence Awards in Melbourne.

Source: Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water

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