

Water interception a reform risk

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A significant volume of surface water and groundwater is unaccounted for as a result of land use activities outside current water entitlement regimes and planning frameworks, says a report produced for the National Water Commission.

The *Surface and/or groundwater interception activities: initial estimates* report, released in June, found that 5600 GL of water annually is intercepted by forestry plantations (2000 GL/yr), farm dams (1600 GL/yr), stock and domestic bores (1100 GL/yr) and overland flows (900 GL/yr). This equates to almost 25 per cent of all the entitled water on issue in Australia.

‘These are significant uses of water which need to be brought within the water planning and management fold, both to manage current activities and guide future growth,’ says National Water Commission CEO, Ken Matthews.

In agreeing to the National Water Initiative in 2004 (a national blueprint for water reform), all Australian governments committed that significant interception activities would be identified for all water systems by 2011. Such activities present a risk to the security of water access entitlements and the achievement of environmental objectives for water systems.

The new report will assist governments to understand the extent of unaccounted water use and to identify the regions where water interception activities are of greatest concern within their jurisdictions.



Pinus radiata plantations near Mt Gambier, SA, 1993.

More information

Interception report: <http://tiny.cc/vgfgs>

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