WATER USE OBJECTIVES

I, John Thwaites, Minister for Water, Environment and Climate Change, as Minister administering the Water Act 1989, make the following determination of water-use objectives.

Authorising provision

1. This determination is made in accordance with section 64T(1) and (2)(a) of the Water Act 1989 (the Act).

Commencement

2. This determination comes into force on the day on which it is made.

Application

3. This determination applies to all water-use licences granted for use of water from water systems that are declared under section 6A of the Act.

Notes: * under section 64M of the Act, one of the considerations in granting a water-use licence is whether or not the proposed use is consistent with the water-use objectives that would apply to the licence. Under sections 64Z(2), 64AD and 64AG(2) of the Act, any standard or particular conditions that are placed on existing or new water-use licences, and any variation of existing licence conditions, must be consistent with the water-use objectives that apply to the licence.

Under section 64U of the Act, water-use objectives may provide for minimising the impacts of water use on other persons and the environment, including the following –

(a) managing groundwater infiltration;
(b) managing disposal of drainage;
(c) minimising salinity;
(d) protecting biodiversity;
(e) minimising cumulative effects of water use.

Water-use objectives

4. The water-use objectives are:

(a) Managing groundwater infiltration

To limit infiltration to groundwater systems arising from irrigation so as to minimise or avoid waterlogging, land salinisation, water salinisation and groundwater pollution.

* These notes in italics are explanatory only, and are not part of the formal water-use objectives.
(b) Managing disposal of drainage
To control the disposal of drainage from irrigation so as to minimise or avoid waterlogging, salinising or eutrophying waterways, wetlands, native vegetation, native animal habitats, groundwater and other persons’ property.

(c) Minimising salinity
To ensure that, where limits on groundwater infiltration and controls on drainage disposal are not sufficient to manage identified risks of land or water salinisation, licence-holders are responsible for the full costs of measures to reduce those risks, or, alternatively, the full cost of any necessary offsetting works.

(d) Protecting biodiversity
To set corrective action thresholds and corrective action procedures where limits on groundwater infiltration and controls on drainage disposal are not sufficient to manage identified risks, associated with water use, to specific wetlands, native vegetation stands, or native animal habitats.

(e) Minimising cumulative effects of water use
To ensure that, where a series of individually acceptable expansions in water use within a defined area reaches a previously announced level, the combined impact on other people and the environment is dealt with by remedial action such as a communal drainage scheme, with water users in the area who expand their use after the announcement contributing to the capital cost in line with their expansion in use compared with total use (and remaining costs shared by government and water users in a way judged after due consultation to be equitable).

Dated: 20.6.07

JOHN THWAITES MP
Minister for Water, Environment and Climate Change