



# Salinity Hazard

## in the Burnett Mary and Western Catchments of South East Queensland

This map identifies areas of the Burnett Mary and Western Catchments of South East Queensland with significant potential to develop salinity. The Queensland Government needs your support to address this situation now to safeguard the future of the region's primary industries, environment, economy and infrastructure.

### What areas are covered by this salinity hazard map?

This map covers the broad catchments of:

- the Burnett and Mary rivers, along with other small catchments, known as the Burnett Mary Region, covering about 4.9 million hectares.
- the Bremer and Upper Brisbane rivers and Lockyer Creek, known as the Western Catchments, covering about 1.36 million hectares.

The region is made up of a range of landscapes, including mountain ranges, coastal plains, and floodplains, with land uses including intensive agriculture and grazing, horticulture, aquaculture, forestry, mining, tourism, urban and rural residential development, and national parks and other protected areas.

A salinity hazard map has been produced for these catchments as they have been identified by the Commonwealth Government as priority regions under the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP).

The map will help the Queensland Government, the Burnett Mary Regional Group for Natural Resource Management and the South East Queensland Western Catchments Group to decide where and how salinity prevention projects should take place.

### Why is it important to protect these catchments?

Salinity becomes a problem when salt levels become so high that land and water use is limited, or when it begins to affect infrastructure and the environment, and threatens the prosperity of our regions. The Queensland Government is committed to addressing these threats before they increase in severity.

Parts of the Burnett Mary region and Western Catchments are already affected by salinity due to the landscape's characteristics and the impact of land use change. This land use change, and the inherent characteristics of the landscape, means there are areas with high potential for salt mobilisation. We need to monitor these landscapes closely to identify future effects.

We must recognise early warning signs and take suitable action to minimise the risk of further salination. If we don't act now, we face the prospect of losing significant productive capacity, sustaining damage to buildings, roads and bridges, damaging the environment and undermining the economy of our towns.

### What does the map show?

Large areas of these catchments have the potential to develop salinity in the longer term unless preventative measures are identified and changes are made to the way we manage our land, particularly those landscapes with high hazard potential.

The Department of Natural Resources and Mines (NR&M) has produced this map to increase the community's awareness of the landscape's vulnerability to salinity, and the potential for the quality of the region's water resources (surface and ground) to deteriorate due to the landscape's inherent characteristics.

This map is not intended to replace on-the-ground and site-specific assessments. It is a resource to support the prioritisation of regional actions for improved natural resource management.

**You cannot use this map on its own to determine if your property is prone to salinity.**

The scientific methods used to develop this map have been independently reviewed by leading scientists, who have verified the methods as a sound indication of those areas sensitive to land use change, and with the potential to develop salinity.

### What is being done to prevent widespread salinity in the region?

The Queensland and Commonwealth Governments have committed \$162 million to the NAP, complementing Queensland's regional vegetation management and regional natural resource planning frameworks. The Queensland Government is working closely with industry, community groups and other agencies to further these initiatives.

Continuing scientific research will provide a solid base for long term planning by regional communities, allowing them to make better natural resource management decisions.

Many landholders are already taking action by changing their land management practices, using methods like retaining native vegetation, planting trees, and using alternative cropping methods to prevent salinity.

**For more information about salinity in Queensland, visit the NR&M website [www.nrm.qld.gov.au/salinity](http://www.nrm.qld.gov.au/salinity), or contact your nearest NR&M office.**