



6th March 2026

Member Brief

Initial SDL Assessment Lower Gwydir Alluvium (GS24)

Expectation that the trade restrictions fully implemented across the water resource in 2023 will continue to show improvements in the recharge capacity of the resource once they have been in place for a minimum of 10 years.

Summary

1. Storage statistics

- Size 23,312GL
- SDL 33 GL/yr
- Entitlement volume 33GL/yr
- Recharge estimate 32-47 GL/yr
- Average annual take 30.54 GL/yr (93%)

2. Key considerations

- Usage is main driver for decline
- Improvement in past 12 years but still greater than 30% declining
- Aquifer is very large
 - High buffering because takes long time for changes in recharge to affect overall levels. ie low sensitivity to use or changes in recharge.
- Proportion of take to recharge is less than 0.9

Objective

Maintain sustainability of resource for all users.

Current Management of Water Source

Trade restrictions were implemented in zone 2 in 2020, and across whole water source by 2023.

Improvements have been observed.

GVIA Request

1. No change to SDL until management arrangements (trade restrictions) have had time to demonstrate that they are suitable.
2. Support maintaining the existing trade restrictions until 2035 (15 years) to enable their impact to be fully appreciated.
 - 2.1. Request 15 year time frame as the aquifer has low sensitivity to use or changes in recharge.



- 2.2. If at time of WSP review (2029) improvement is not being observed. GVIA request detailed consultation with department groundwater team to discuss options.
3. Support maintaining the 200% carryover.
4. Users are actively engaged in consultation on the Water source between the MDBA and NSW DCCEEW before any changes to management are made.

Secondary options

- Government as part of Basin Plan 2 purchase licences.
 - Some license holders may sell as they are not active users and trade zones have significantly restricted their capacity to trade.