

Terms of Reference

Independent review of impacts of bottled water industry on groundwater resources in the Northern Rivers region of NSW

The Chief Scientist & Engineer is requested to conduct an independent review and provide expert advice on the impacts on groundwater quantity arising from extraction by the bottled water industry in the Northern Rivers of NSW.

1. In undertaking the review, the Chief Scientist & Engineer will:
 - a. review existing data and information on the bottled water industry's entitlements and extractions in the context of:
 - i. total water access rights (basic landholder rights and access licences); and
 - ii. extraction limits established in statutory water sharing plans.
 - b. provide advice on the sustainability of the extraction limits in the relevant water sharing plans for groundwater sources in the Northern Rivers of NSW.
 - c. provide advice on whether the current or proposed groundwater monitoring bores on the Northern Rivers are sufficient.
2. Provide advice on potential impacts:
 - a. on groundwater resources, having regard to the sustainable take of the resource and the scale of the current bottled water industry and proposed or potential expansion of the industry
 - b. of the groundwater take of the bottled water industry on surface water
3. As needed, the Chief Scientist & Engineer may:
 - a. seek advice from relevant Government agencies and other organisations
 - b. draw on additional sources of advice and expertise
 - c. commission or recommend studies.
4. The Chief Scientist & Engineer will:
 - a. Consult with key local stakeholders
 - b. provide an initial report by 1 February 2019
 - c. provide a final report by mid-2019