



THE UNIVERSITY  
of ADELAIDE

# Legal Compliance Education and Awareness



CRICOS PROVIDER 00123M

## Natural Resources Management Act 2004

(South Australian)

[adelaide.edu.au](http://adelaide.edu.au)

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# What is Natural Resources Management?

- Natural Resource Management (NRM) refers to the management of natural resources such as land, water, soil, plants & animals
- NRM is similar to the concept of sustainable development & focuses on how management affects the quality of life for both present & future generations

## ***Why is NRM important?***

- Australia's natural resources are under threat from climate change, water scarcity, pollution, inappropriate development, land clearing & unsustainable farming practices
- There will be significant costs to the Australian economy & the welfare of all Australians if these assets are allowed to degrade

# What does the NRM Act do?

- Provides the guiding principles for Natural Resources Management in South Australia through an integrated & sustainable framework
- Establishes the [Natural Resources Management \(NRM\) Council](#) as the state-wide peak body for administration of the Act
- Establishes eight Regional NRM Boards across South Australia to
  - *assist the NRM Council to monitor & evaluate the condition of natural resources across the State*
  - *promote public awareness & understanding of sustainable, regional NRM*
  - *provide grants to researchers, farmers & engineers (among others) to undertake NRM projects*
  - *develop a Natural Resources Management Plan for their region*
    - *Plans may cover weed, pest & animal management, salinity control, biodiversity enhancement, landholder advice & incentives*

## What does the NRM Act do? (cont.)

- Establishes the key objectives for state-wide NRM;
  - *integrated management*
  - *protection of existing biological diversity*
  - *ecological restoration & rehabilitation*
  - *economic production*
  - *balancing ecological needs with the need to support the contribution of primary & other economic production systems, such as agriculture & mining, to the State economy*
  - *supporting & increasing people's capacity to participate in NRM, especially through educational initiatives*

# How does the Act apply to the University?

- The University, as a substantial land-owner, occupier, manager & developer, is subject to the State NRM Plan which requires the University to (among others);
  - *control declared plants on University land*
  - *eradicate certain pests*
  - *obtain water-allocation permits*
  - *construct animal-proof fencing*
  - *protect certain vegetation or habitats*
- All Development Plans for construction & modification of University buildings must be consistent with the NRM Act
  - *Some plans require consultation with an NRM board*

## Who does the Act apply to?

- The Act applies to any University staff member who works or interacts with natural resources (land, water, soil, plants & animals), but most specifically to;
  - *staff at Waite & Roseworthy campuses*
  - *staff participating in field trips or research projects*
  - *members of the Infrastructure Branch who are responsible for the management of the University's property portfolio & the provision of asset & facilities management*
- Some University staff may be a recipient of a NRM grant or undertake work as part of an NRM-initiated project
- All employees have a general statutory duty under the NRM Act to act reasonably & responsibly in relation to the management of natural resources

# Control of Animals and Plants

- Under the Act, restrictions apply to the control, movement & transportation of certain animals & plants on University property
- The Act prescribed measures for the;
  - *protection of vegetation*
  - *control of deer, goats & other animals*
  - *destruction or control of animals, plants or pests*
  - *construction of animal-proof fences*
  - *movement & possession of animals or plants*
- ***Penalties of \$50,000 or imprisonment for 1 year can result from breaches of the Act***

# Water Allocation Plans

- The University is subject to various Water Allocation Plans as outlined by regional NRM boards
- Water Allocation Plans specify (among others);
  - *the rate at which drinking water may be taken*
  - *obligations relating to the management & protection of water resources*
  - *strict rules forbidding certain conduct in & around a watercourse, lake or dam*
- The University may obtain a **water licence** to use water from a prescribed watercourse, lake, surface water area or well (eg: *Waite campus must obtain a licence to access water from an underground bore*)
  - A water licence provides a water access entitlement to the holder of the licence
  - ***Penalties & fines of up to \$70,000 apply for unauthorised taking of water in excess of the amount available under the allocation***



# What can happen if I don't comply?

## ***University Consequences:***

- Fines of up to \$70,000
- Negative publicity
- Damage to the University's reputation
- Attraction & retention of staff & students is compromised
- Offences under the NRM Act may also constitute a breach of the Environment Protection Act 1993 (SA)
  - harsher penalties apply

# University Obligations under the Act

## ***Managers:***

- Promote environmental conservation & enhancement in the use & development of the university campuses & land, through;
  - proper [environmental management](#)
  - the development of [sustainability targets](#)
- Ensure that contractors on University campuses & property comply with the NRM Act

## ***All Staff:***

- Behave in a manner consistent with the [University Sustainability Policy](#)
- Learn to recognise environmental risk
  - undertake risk assessments for activities that may impact the environment
    - Contact [Anne Hill](#), Manager Risk Services for more information
    - 8313 4603

## Additional Resources

- [Libby Dowling](#), Environmental Project Officer
  - 8313 5871
- [University Sustainability Policy](#)
- [Ecoversity \(formerly Sustainable Adelaide\) website](#)
- [Natural Resources Management Act 2004 \(SA\)](#)
- [Natural Resources Management \(General\) Regulations 2005](#)
- [Natural Resources Management Council](#)

Contact or learn more about your regional NRM Board;

- [Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board](#)
- [Eyre Peninsula NRM Board](#)
- [Kangaroo Island NRM Board](#)
- [Northern & Yorke NRM Board](#)
- [SA Arid Lands NRM Board](#)
- [SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board](#)
- [South East NRM Board](#)
- [Alinytjara Wilurara](#)



# Disclaimer

The content of this material is intended only to provide a summary & general overview of the *Natural Resources Management Act* as it applies to the University of Adelaide.

It is not intended to be comprehensive nor does it constitute legal advice.

Please contact *Mathew Jeffrey* or Legal & Risk if you are unsure of your compliance obligations under the Act.