

Scientific Research Permits

The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) values scientific research, both on conservation reserves and on private land, to improve our knowledge and assist management decisions. Through increased scientific understanding, we can develop a solid system of conservation management for the state. We value your research contribution.

YOUR DATA IS IMPORTANT

The information collected through scientific research is vital to environmental management, adding to a knowledge base that informs landscape management and policy decisions.

Scientific permits help to coordinate research effort, promote best practice standards and accessibility of data.

By working collaboratively to ensure that data, reporting and research outcomes are made available, we are providing an invaluable resource for policy makers, natural resource managers and researchers.

How is data used?

The government uses your data for:

- Fire planning – fire response planning, threatened species maps, and landscape protection through prescribed burns.
- Natural resource management planning – species and habitat management, restoration, coastal planning, vegetation mapping, project planning for pest management, and evaluation of on-ground works.
- Environmental reporting – State of the Environment reporting, Natural Resource Management Report Cards, and State of the Forests reporting.
- Native species – species status assessments at a regional and state level, national threatened species programs, species distribution maps.
- Water planning – the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, water allocation planning, and management of Great Artesian Basin springs.

Groups external to the government including not-for-profit organisations, universities, educational institutions, primary producers, industry and the community use the data for:

- Species distribution and ecological publications
- Research – species, habitat, climate change.

- Development applications and impact statements – mining, local government, research development, vegetation clearance, and housing development.
- Field naturalists for survey or field work planning
- Amateur community/naturalists interested in species distributions

Who do we issue permits to?

Between 2013 and 2017, data has been returned from more than 800 scientific research permits. These permits were issued to:

- Local, interstate and international universities – 46%
- Consultants – 14%
- Conservation interests – 13%
- Individuals – 12%
- Commonwealth and State Government – 8%
- Museums and Herbaria – 7%

Why do we have Scientific Research Permits?

Permits enable a system of checks and balances to be applied to research to:

- minimise the impacts of research on animal and plant populations;
- maintain the environmental integrity of habitats and the conservation values of our protected areas;
- make research outcomes available to inform government and decision making;
- ensure that researchers are aware of, and use best practice conduct and research methodology.



APPLYING FOR A SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PERMIT

When do I need a permit?

Under legislation, you need a permit for:

- Any research (which may include geological research, mapping, visitor related or remote sensing) carried out in any of the state's protected areas, such as National Parks, Wilderness Protected Areas, DEWNR reserves, Marine Parks, roadside reserves and conservation areas.
- Collecting or interfering with any protected animal or plant in the wild. This includes on public land, private property, pastoral leases, and Aboriginal land.
- Any research involving marine mammals.

As well as carrying out the study itself, a permit enables you to carry out related activities such as accessing your research area, camping on site, damaging or removing plants, or using a boat, plane or drone.

It is a statutory requirement under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*.

For studies involving animals, you also need Animal Ethics Committee approval under the *Animal Welfare Act 1985*.

Who will evaluate my application?

Your application is examined by conservation managers for the region where your research will take place, and if necessary, by specialists in the species involved, and/or in research methodology.

What happens to the data I provide?

All information collected through projects that require scientific research permits is warehoused in recognised state government systems, such as the Biological Databases of South Australia, or with appropriate institutions such as the SA Museum or State Herbarium.

Submission under a permit does not alter the intellectual property status of the outputs. If the results are subject to commercial confidentiality agreements, only those aspects that do not breach confidentiality can be made publicly available.

There are also options for managing access to data with environmental or other sensitivities. Anyone may nominate

data they believe to be sensitive via the [environmentally sensitive data nomination form](#), available on the DEWNR website.

All nominations are reviewed and if necessary the relevant data is handled under a restriction category in the [SA Environmentally Sensitive Data Register](#).

What about photos?

A filming and photo permit is required when images taken in National Parks and Reserves are to be used for commercial purposes.

To enable researchers to use their images for research project outputs (including research publications) and promotion of the research, limited filming permission may be granted at no cost as part of the permit.

How to apply

For information on how to apply for a scientific research permit, visit the DEWNR website at www.environment.sa.gov.au and search for scientific permits.

For more information

For more information or to apply please contact the Department for Environment, Water and Natural Resources

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