

PLANS FOR AN ECONOMIC EVALUATION OF A DRYLAND SALINITY PROGRAM IN YORNANING, WA

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1. AIMS OF THE PROJECT

ABARE proposes to conduct a case study of a dryland salinity amelioration program being carried out by the Western Australian Department of Agriculture in the East Yornaning catchment. The Yornaning catchment is located 170 km south-east of Perth, and has an area of approximately 100 sq km. There are 16 farms in the catchment, which are involved almost exclusively in the production of wheat and wool. Increasing salinity in the area has resulted in decreasing production, and as a result of the salting, there are a number of large bare eroding patches.

The aims of the Yornaning project are to:

1. Develop models for linking economic performance with farm management practices, soil quality and geological structure.
2. Develop models for making these same links over time.
3. Perform a cost-benefit analysis of the Western Australian Department of Agriculture's farm management plan for the Yornaning catchment.

2. DATA

Data are available on a large number of variables describing aspects of economic performance, farm management practices, geological features and soil quality.

The catchment was overflown by a geological survey company several times in 1989-90 using a variety of remote sensing techniques. Hence most of the physical data are available measured on a 10 metre grid, whereas the economic and farm management practice data will be available on a paddock by paddock basis only. Paddocks will therefore be used as the units in the analysis.