

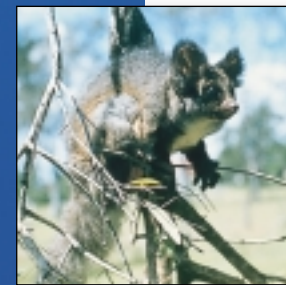
# Environment Expenditure Local Government

Australia

2000-01



4611.0 • ENVIRONMENT EXPENDITURE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, AUSTRALIA • 2000-01



2461100007005

ISSN 1444-3902

Recommended retail price \$24.00  
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# **Environment Expenditure**

## **Local Government**

### **Australia**

**2000–01**

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Australian Statistician**

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

EMBARGO: 11.30AM (CANBERRA TIME) THURS 17 OCT 2002

ABS Catalogue No. 4611.0

ISSN 1444-3902

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## INTRODUCTION .....

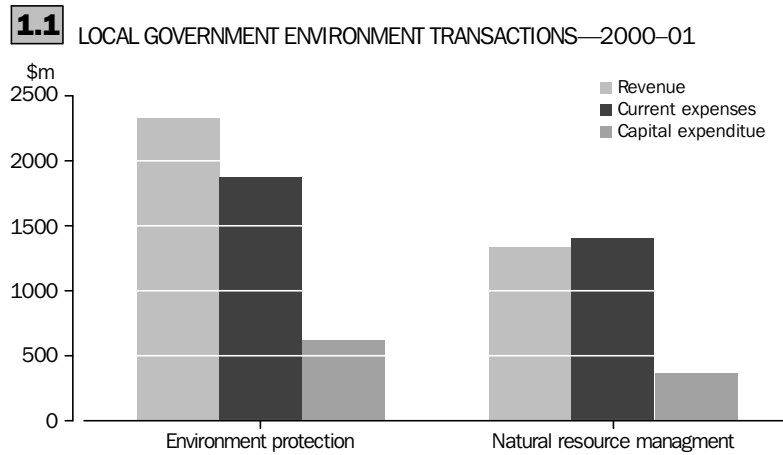
### BACKGROUND

This publication presents estimates of expenditures and revenues related to environment protection and natural resource management by local government authorities of Australia. The information is collected using an adaptation of an international framework known as the European System for the Collection of Economic Information on the Environment (SERIEE) developed in 1994 by the European Statistical Office (Eurostat).

The collection was developed in response to requests by local governments, local government associations and others for national information on local government financial transactions related to managing the environment and natural resources. Such information is not available in a detailed form in Public Finance Statistics.

The estimates presented are useful to policy makers in state and Commonwealth governments, to local government associations, to local councils themselves as well as to any other parties interested in management of the environment by local government authorities. The estimates collected from 1997–98 until 2000–01 demonstrate that local government is a significant player in managing the nation's environment and natural resources.

This is the fourth time this survey has been conducted in Australia. The ABS welcomes feedback from readers regarding the usefulness, range and quality of the data presented and explanations provided. Please send any comments to the Director, Environment and Energy Statistics Section, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Locked Bag 10, Belconnen, ACT 2616.



*Environment protection*

- Local government authorities received over \$2.3b in revenue for environment protection activities. This was mainly from rates (\$2.0b) and amounted to 14% of total revenue for councils in Australia.
- Environment protection expenditure was \$2.5b – just under \$1.9b in current expenditure and \$616m in capital expenditure. This was 12% of councils' total current expenditure and 15% of councils' total capital expenditure.
- There was a revenue shortfall in environment protection revenue of \$164m, which was 29% less than the shortfall for 1999–2000.
- Queensland received the most revenue (\$944m) of all states for environment protection activities.
- New South Wales had the highest level of environment protection expenditure. Current expenditure contributed \$761m and capital expenditure contributed \$236m.

*Natural resource management*

- Over \$1.3b was received by councils for natural resource management activities, which amounted to 8% of councils' total revenue.
- Natural resource management current expenditure (\$1.4b) and natural resource management capital expenditure (\$370m) were both 9% of councils' total current and capital expenditures.
- The revenue shortfall for natural resource management (\$433m) was significantly higher than for environment protection activities at \$164m. This was a 21% decrease from the 1999–2000 natural resource management revenue shortfall of \$545m.
- Queensland had the highest level of natural resource management revenue (\$758m) and expenditure (\$482m of current expenditure and \$146m of capital expenditure).

Other

- Small councils (councils with a resident population of less than 10,000 people) spent more per capita on environment protection activities (\$44 of current expenditure and \$9 of capital expenditure) and natural resource management activities (\$120 of current expenditure and \$44 of capital expenditure) than medium (population of 10,000–39,999) or large (population greater than 40,000) councils.
- All councils sizes had greater expenditure than revenue for environment protection and natural resource management activities.
- State governments contributed \$141m to local government for environment protection activities and \$57m for natural resource management activities. Commonwealth government contributed \$28m to local government for environment protection activities and \$5m for natural resource management. The bulk of government funding was for waste water management activities (\$102m or 60% of government environment protection funding) and water supply activities (\$48m or 78% of natural resource management funding).

**1.2** ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION TRANSACTIONS

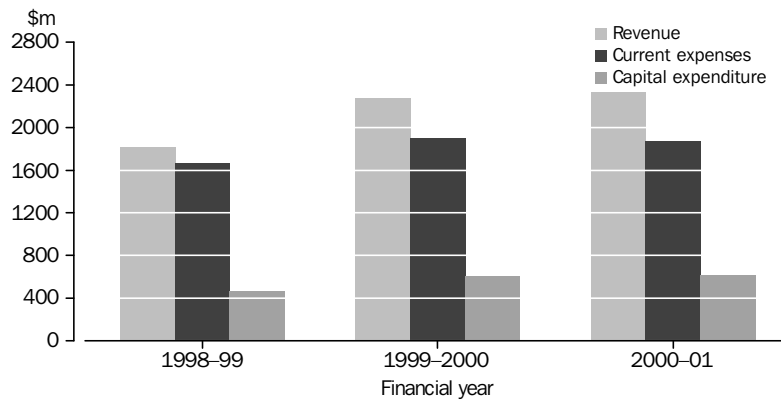


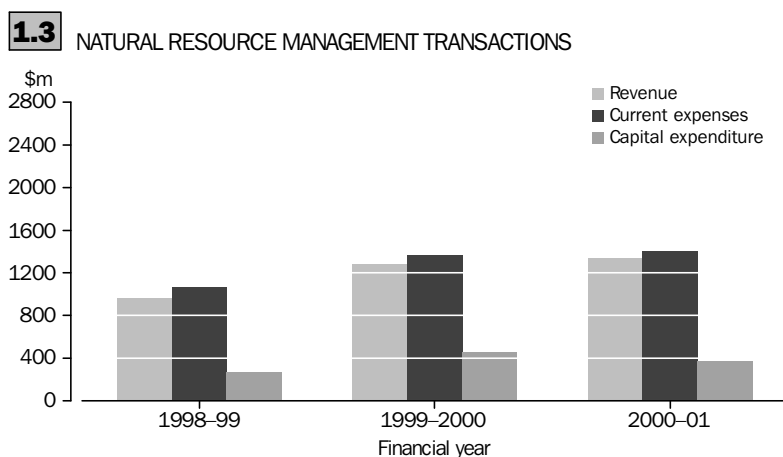
Table 1.1 shows environment protection and natural resource management revenue and expenditure for the three financial years, 1998–99, 1999–2000 and 2000–01. Graph 1.2 shows environment protection transactions for the three financial years 1998–99, 1999–2000 and 2000–01.

Revenue for environment protection activities was \$2.3b in 2000–01. The majority of revenue was collected directly for environment protection purposes from rates within councils' jurisdictions (85% of environment protection revenue, or \$2b).

Current expenditure by local government amounted to just under \$1.9b for environment protection activities (similar to 1999–2000). Operational expenditure comprised the majority of current expenditure for environment protection (79%, or \$1.5b).

Capital expenditure was \$616m for environment protection. Waste water was the dominant source of capital expenditure for environment protection (73%, or \$447m).

Other continued



Graph 1.3 shows natural resource management transactions for the three financial years 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01. Revenue for natural resource management activities was \$1.3b in 2000-01. Rates collected for natural resource management accounted for 81% (\$1.1b) of revenue for this category.

Current expenditure for natural resource management accounted for just over \$1.4b in 2000-01. This represents similar levels of expenditure to 1999-2000.

Operational expenditure comprised the majority of current expenditure for natural resource management activities (65%, or \$910m).

Natural resource management capital expenditure decreased by 19% (\$84m) to \$370m.



**1.1**

## FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS(a), By account

	<i>Environmental protection</i>	<i>Natural resource management</i>
	\$m	\$m
..... 1998-99		
<b>Revenue</b>		
Rates from household and industry	1 639	866
Government funding	138	38
Other	37	63
<i>Total</i>	<i>1 813</i>	<i>966</i>
<b>Current expenses</b>		
Wages and salaries	380	399
Operational expenses	1 286	664
<i>Total</i>	<i>1 665</i>	<i>1 063</i>
<b>Capital expenditure</b>		
Net acquisitions	150	102
Other	311	166
<i>Total</i>	<i>461</i>	<i>268</i>
..... 1999-2000		
<b>Revenue</b>		
Rates from household and industry	1 954	1 024
Government funding	128	75
Other	192	180
<i>Total</i>	<i>2 274</i>	<i>1 278</i>
<b>Current expenses</b>		
Wages and salaries	399	475
Operational expenses	1 500	895
<i>Total</i>	<i>1 899</i>	<i>1 370</i>
<b>Capital expenditure</b>		
Net acquisitions	197	*170
Other	410	283
<i>Total</i>	<i>607</i>	<i>453</i>

\* estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

(a) Caution is advised when comparing between years due to changes in the survey questionnaire design.

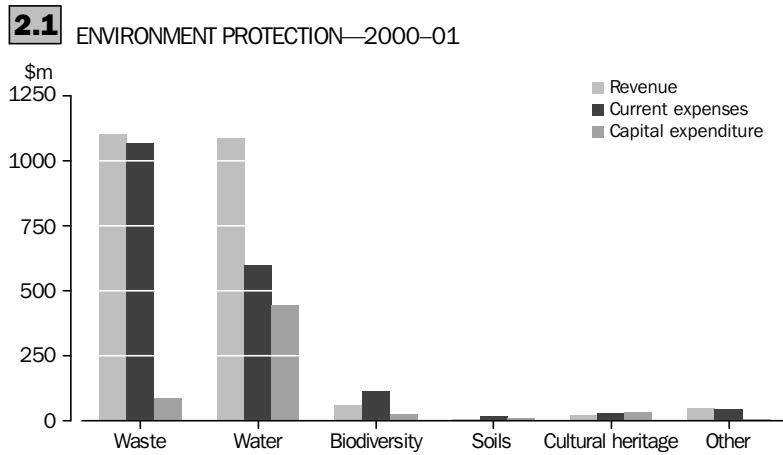
Note: Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur within totals.

**1.1**FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS (a), By account *continued*

	<i>Environmental protection</i>	<i>Natural resource management</i>
	\$m	\$m
..... 2000-01		
<b>Revenue</b>		
Rates from household and industry	1 967	1 079
Government funding	169	62
Other	191	197
<i>Total</i>	<i>2 327</i>	<i>1 338</i>
<b>Current expenses</b>		
Wages and salaries	401	491
Operational expenses	1 474	910
<i>Total</i>	<i>1 875</i>	<i>1 401</i>
<b>Capital expenditure</b>		
Net acquisitions	195	99
Other	422	271
<i>Total</i>	<i>616</i>	<i>370</i>

(a) Caution is advised when comparing between years due to changes in the survey questionnaire design.

Note: Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur within totals.



Graph 2.1 shows environment protection transactions by category. Environment protection data cover activities that prevent, reduce or eliminate pressures on the environment arising from social and economic activities. They also cover activities aimed at repairing or restoring damage to the environment after it has occurred. Table 2.1 shows revenue and expenditure of councils by environment protection activity for 2000–01.

Council revenue for environment protection activities was over \$2.3b (14% of councils' total revenue). Current expenditure for environment protection — mainly wages, salaries and payments to contractors — accounted for \$1.9b (12% of councils' total current expenditure). Capital expenditure on new assets for environment protection amounted to \$616m, (15% of councils' total capital expenditure).

The majority of environment protection revenue and expenditure was for solid waste and waste water management activities (94% of environment protection revenue, 89% of environment protection current expenses and just under 87% of environment protection capital expenditure). The remainder was spread across activities aimed at the conservation of biodiversity and habitat; soil resources; cultural heritage; and other environment protection activities.

*Revenue*

Revenue for environment protection activities in 2000–01 was \$2.3b (similar to 1999–2000). Just under 85% (almost \$2b) of all environment protection revenue was from rates collection.

Councils collected the most revenue from rates for solid waste management activities (\$1b or 45% of total environment protection revenue) and waste water management (\$857m or 37%).

*Revenue continued*

State and Commonwealth government funding of environment protection activities contributed 7% (\$169m) of total environment protection revenue. This was a rise of \$41m (32%) from 1999–2000. More information about government transfers can be found in Chapter 4.

The majority of government funding was provided for waste water management and biodiversity and conservation activities. Government funding for the latter is largely attributed to the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) administered by the Commonwealth and state governments. According to the *Natural Heritage Trust Annual Report 2000–01*, published by Environment Australia (2002), Australian local governments managed more than 1,250 Natural Heritage Trust projects in 2000–01, to the value of \$90m. NHT funded activities included native vegetation and habitat restoration, catchment management, biodiversity studies, land rehabilitation, improving water quality and improving coastal and marine environments.

*Expenditure*

Total environment protection current expenditure remained constant at just under \$1.9b, between 1999–2000 and 2000–01.

Current expenditure was primarily for solid waste (\$1.1b) and waste water management (\$601m). Solid waste management and waste water management activities amounted to 89% of total environment protection current expenditure in 2000–01.

Over 31% of total current expenditure for solid waste management activities was payments to contractors (\$586m). Wages and salaries payments for solid waste management amounted to \$163m and other current expenditure \$134m.

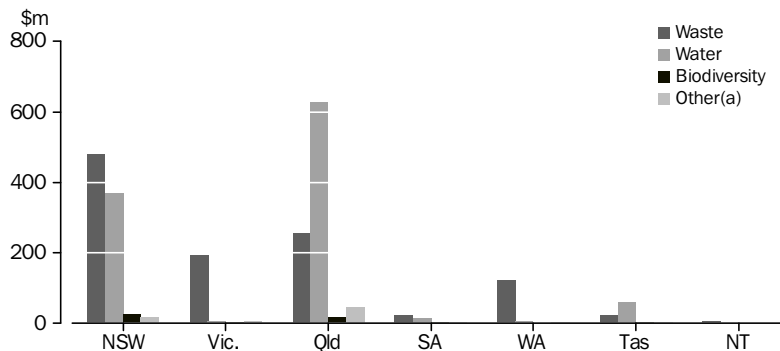
Expenditure on materials represented the largest current environment expenditure for waste water, \$197m, which was 8% higher than the previous year. Other significant environment protection current expenditure for waste water management included wages and salaries (\$163m) and other expenditure (\$149m). Current expenditure on biodiversity and conservation was 6% (\$113m) of total environment protection current expenditure in 2000–01.

Payments to government for environment protection activities were \$96m. Payments to government for solid waste management contributed 88% of total government payments for environment protection. These payments can take the form of licences, fees and fines.

Environment protection capital expenditure remained constant at \$616m. Nearly 73% of capital expenditure on environment protection was for waste water management activities.

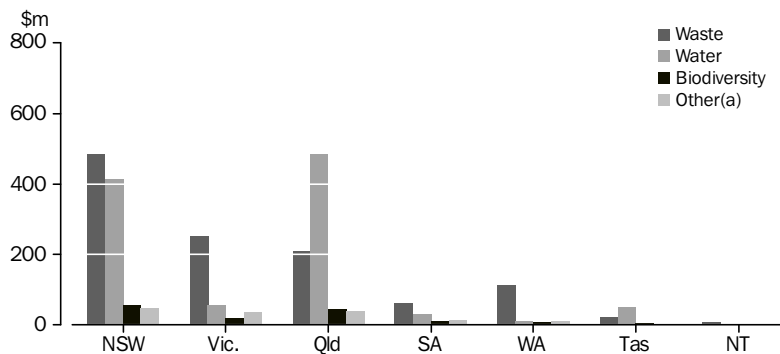
State estimates

**2.2** ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION REVENUE—2000–01



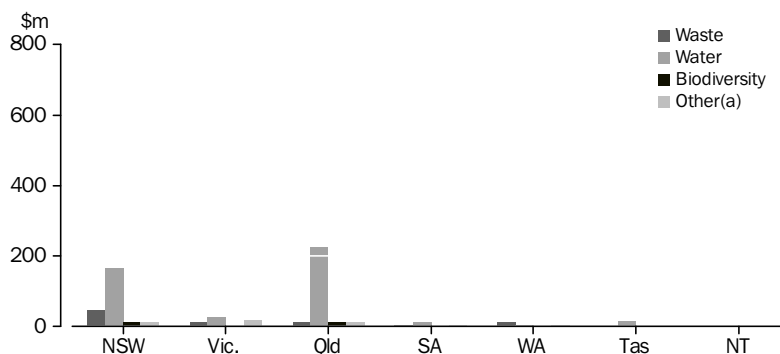
(a) Includes soil resources and cultural heritage categories.

**2.3** ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION CURRENT EXPENDITURE—2000–01



(a) Includes soil resources and cultural heritage categories.

**2.4** ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION CAPITAL EXPENDITURE—2000–01



(a) Includes soil resources and cultural heritage categories.

Revenue for environment protection was greatest in Queensland and New South Wales. These two states comprised 79% of total revenue for environment protection activities. These states also had the highest expenditure (71% of total environment protection expenditure for Australia).

Table 2.2 shows environment protection revenue and expenditure on a state basis by type of environment protection activity. Variation in states total and per capita figures reflects a variety of factors including the varying responsibilities of councils between states.

*State estimates continued*

Queensland councils received the largest total revenue for environment protection (\$944m). New South Wales has the largest environment protection current expenditure (\$761m) and Queensland had the largest environment protection capital expenditure (\$266m).

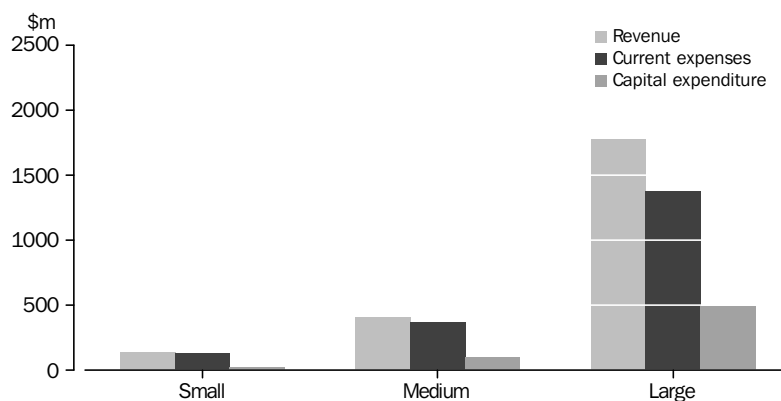
Queensland had the largest revenue per capita (\$260), mainly from waste revenue (\$172 per capita). New South Wales had the second highest per capita revenue (\$135). South Australian councils received the least revenue per capita (\$29) for environment protection activities.

Queensland had the largest per capita environment protection current expenditure (\$141) and per capita capital expenditure (\$73). Tasmania had the second highest per capita current expenditure (\$134) and capital expenditure per capita (\$39), and the Northern Territory spent the least per capita on environment protection current expenditure (\$42) and capital expenditure per capita (\$2).

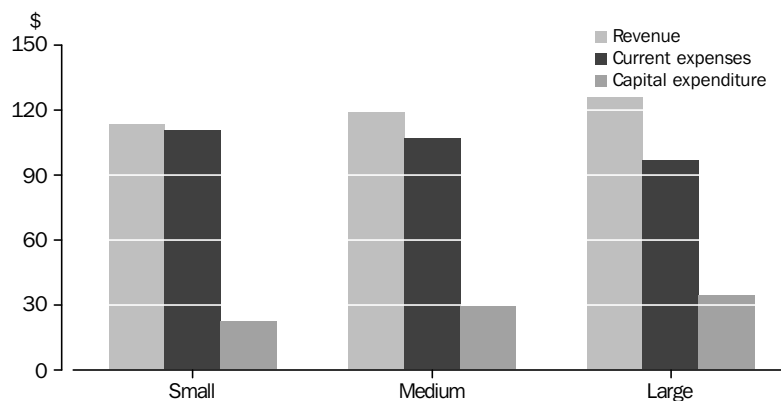
Solid waste management was the dominant environment protection activity in all states except Tasmania and Queensland. Waste water management and water protection activities were the dominant environment protection activities undertaken by councils in Queensland and Tasmania. These figures reflect the fact that Queensland and Tasmanian councils tend to have responsibility for sewage treatment. In the other states a combination of councils and other state agencies are responsible for sewage infrastructure, sewage treatment and water protection.

*Council size*

**2.5** ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION EXPENDITURE, By council size—2000–01



**2.6** ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION PER CAPITA, By council size—2000–01



*Council size continued*

Graph 2.5 and Table 2.3 shows that councils with a large resident population (greater than 40,000) received 77% (\$1.8b) of total environment protection revenue for 2000–01. Medium sized councils received 18% (\$411m) and councils with small populations received 6% (\$135m).

These amounts reflect the fact that large sized councils serviced 75% of the survey population, medium councils 18% and small councils 6% of the population. See paragraph 19 in the Explanatory Notes for the classification of council sizes.

Graph 2.6 shows that, on a per capita basis, small councils received the least revenue, and spent the most on environment protection activities. Large councils spent the least on environment protection activities and natural resource management on a per capita basis. There are several reasons for this pattern of revenue and expenditure. Small councils are more likely to have greater responsibility for waste water management and water supply activities than medium and large councils.

**2.1**

## ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION (a), By category—2000–01

	<i>Waste water</i>	<i>Solid waste</i>	<i>Biodiversity and conservation</i>	<i>Soil resources</i>	<i>Cultural heritage</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
<b>Revenue</b>							
Rates from household and industry	856.5	1 047.3	18.7	4.4	*0.8	39.2	1 966.8
Government funding							
Specific subsidies	26.0	6.7	28.0	1.2	3.8	*7.1	72.9
Investment grants	75.9	2.4	5.0	*0.1	11.1	1.9	96.4
Other revenue	127.8	46.8	7.5	*1.3	*4.9	*2.6	190.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>1 086.1</i>	<i>1 103.2</i>	<i>59.2</i>	<i>7.0</i>	<i>20.6</i>	<i>50.9</i>	<i>2 327.0</i>
<b>Current expenses</b>							
Wages and salaries	162.9	162.7	**41.3	4.7	8.1	21.7	401.3
Operational expenditure							
Contractors	85.9	585.7	34.2	7.9	15.8	9.0	738.5
Government payments	**6.9	85.0	4.3	—	—	**0.1	96.4
Materials	196.9	100.3	17.6	3.1	3.4	3.7	325.1
Other expenses	148.4	133.5	15.9	3.2	2.8	10.1	313.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>601.0</i>	<i>1 067.1</i>	<i>113.3</i>	<i>19.0</i>	<i>30.1</i>	<i>44.6</i>	<i>1 875.1</i>
<b>Capital expenditure</b>							
Net acquisitions	130.4	34.1	18.6	*2.3	7.2	*2.1	194.6
Contracted payments	136.4	37.4	5.2	*0.7	20.5	1.7	201.9
Own account work	179.8	17.1	4.3	10.2	*4.6	3.5	219.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>446.6</i>	<i>88.6</i>	<i>28.1</i>	<i>13.2</i>	<i>32.3</i>	<i>7.3</i>	<i>616.1</i>

\* estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

\*\* estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(a) Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur within totals.



**2.2**

## ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION, By state and category—2000–01

	Waste water	Solid waste	Biodiversity and conservation	Soil resources	Cultural heritage	Other	Total
REVENUE (\$M)							
NSW	368.9	479.0	27.0	1.7	6.7	10.4	893.6
Vic.	8.5	193.4	4.2	*0.2	6.9	1.4	214.6
Qld	626.5	256.0	18.3	4.8	*3.7	34.5	943.9
SA	14.3	23.3	*4.0	0.2	0.4	*1.6	43.8
WA	*7.7	121.6	1.6	*0.2	1.2	*2.4	134.7
Tas.	59.9	22.0	3.8	—	1.6	*0.5	87.8
NT	*0.3	8.0	0.3	—	—	—	8.6
Aust.	1 086.1	1 103.2	59.2	7.0	20.6	50.9	2 327.0
REVENUE PER CAPITA (\$)							
NSW	56	73	4	—	1	2	135
Vic.	2	40	1	—	1	—	45
Qld	172	70	5	1	1	7	260
SA	9	15	3	—	—	1	29
WA	4	64	1	—	1	1	71
Tas.	127	47	8	—	3	1	186
NT	2	40	2	—	—	—	43
Aust.	57	58	3	—	1	3	121
CURRENT EXPENSES (\$M)							
NSW	247.1	437.5	44.3	4.4	6.7	21.0	760.9
Vic.	33.4	237.2	17.8	2.2	9.7	5.2	305.3
Qld	259.8	196.6	30.9	11.0	3.3	9.1	510.7
SA	18.9	65.1	10.0	1.0	*7.4	4.7	107.1
WA	5.9	101.5	**5.4	0.5	2.6	3.4	119.3
Tas.	34.8	22.1	4.5	—	0.7	1.2	63.3
NT	1.0	7.0	0.3	—	—	—	8.4
Aust.	601.0	1 067.1	113.3	19.0	30.1	44.6	1 875.1
CURRENT EXPENSES PER CAPITA (\$)							
NSW	37	66	7	1	1	3	115
Vic.	7	49	4	1	2	1	63
Qld	72	54	9	3	1	3	141
SA	13	43	7	1	5	3	71
WA	3	53	3	—	1	2	63
Tas.	74	47	10	—	1	3	134
NT	5	35	2	—	—	—	42
Aust.	31	56	6	1	2	2	98
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE (\$M)							
NSW	165.6	45.2	*12.0	*0.4	*11.0	2.2	236.3
Vic.	23.8	14.3	1.2	*0.5	16.6	*0.4	56.8
Qld	226.0	13.4	12.6	10.1	1.3	2.3	265.6
SA	12.3	2.6	0.7	*2.2	0.7	*0.4	18.8
WA	2.7	11.5	1.1	—	2.5	*2.1	19.9
Tas.	16.0	1.5	0.5	—	0.3	—	18.2
NT	0.2	*0.1	—	—	—	—	0.4
Aust.	446.6	88.6	28.1	13.2	32.3	7.3	616.1

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— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

\*\* estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

**2.2**ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION, By state and category—2000–01 *continued* .....

	Waste water	Solid waste	Biodiversity and conservation	Soil resources	Cultural heritage	Other	Total
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PER CAPITA (\$)							
NSW	25	7	2	—	2	—	36
Vic.	5	3	—	—	3	—	12
Qld	62	4	4	3	—	1	73
SA	8	2	1	2	—	—	12
WA	1	6	1	—	1	1	10
Tas.	34	3	1	—	1	—	39
NT	1	1	—	—	—	—	2
Aust.	23	5	2	1	2	—	32

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

**2.3**

## ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION(a), Breakdown by size of council—2000–01 .....

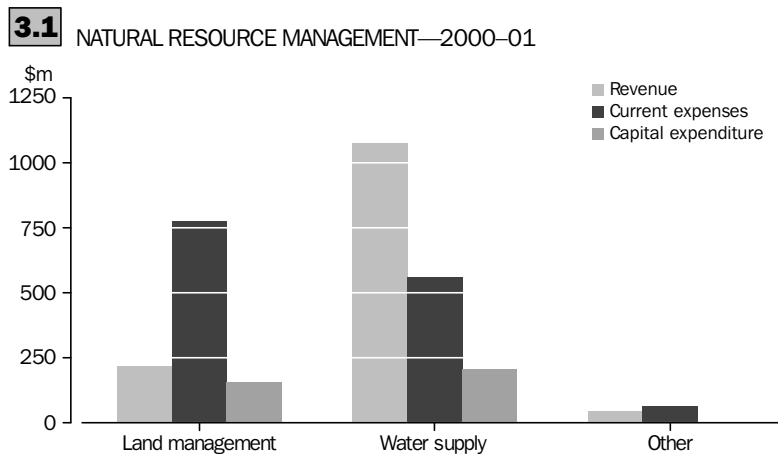
	Waste water	Solid waste	Biodiversity and conservation	Soil resources	Cultural heritage	Other	Total
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
REVENUE							
Small	51.7	66.6	*10.4	na	na	**6.4	135.1
Medium	193.4	195.5	10.1	0.4	9.2	*2.4	411.0
Large	858.2	824.1	38.7	6.6	11.4	42.0	1 780.9
Total	1 103.2	1 086.1	59.2	7.0	20.6	50.9	2 327.0
CURRENT EXPENSES							
Small	60.4	48.2	15.6	na	na	7.4	131.6
Medium	206.8	127.2	**19.8	3.6	7.6	3.7	369.2
Large	799.9	425.0	77.9	15.4	22.5	33.5	1 374.2
Total	1 067.1	601.0	113.3	19.0	30.1	44.6	1 875.1
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE							
Small	*6.7	*15.8	**3.9	na	na	**0.2	*26.6
Medium	*25.6	61.3	*2.6	*2.3	*9.8	*0.1	101.7
Large	56.3	369.2	21.5	10.9	22.5	7.1	487.5
Total	88.6	446.6	28.1	13.2	32.3	7.3	616.1

\* estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

na not available

\*\* estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

(a) Small councils have population sizes less than 10,000, medium councils 10,000–39,999 and large councils greater than 40,000.



Graph 3.1 shows natural resource management transactions by category. Natural resource management activities include the management, allocation and efficient use of natural resources (trees, land, water, quarrying materials). Also included are activities associated with the recreational use of the environment, such as the management of parks, beaches and reserves.

In 2000–01 councils received over \$1.3b (8% of councils' total revenue) for natural resource management. Current expenditure was \$1.4b (9% of councils' total current expenditure) and capital expenditure on resource management was \$370m (5% of councils' total capital expenditure). Total expenditure on resource management exceeded revenue by \$433m.

The majority of councils' resource management revenue came from water supply activities (80% of natural resource management revenue or \$1.1b) in 2000–01. Revenue for land management activities was \$218m or 16% of revenue for resource management.

Current expenditure on land management activities accounted for \$774m (55% of total natural resource management current expenditure), water supply accounted for \$563m (40%). The remainder was used in other natural resource management activities. Water supply accounted for 56% (\$208m) of capital expenditure on natural resource management and land management accounted for 43% (\$160m).

*Revenue*

Natural resource management revenue remained constant at \$1.3b. Rates collection accounted for 81% (\$1.1b) of all natural resource management revenue.

Five percent (\$62m) of revenue was provided by the state and Commonwealth governments for resource management. More information about Intergovernmental Transfers can be found in Chapter 4.

*Revenue continued*

'Other revenue' accounted for 14% (\$197m) of total revenue, an increase of 10% (\$18m) from previous results. 'Other revenue' was from sources such as contributions from developers, sale of materials (e.g. gravel from council quarries), fees for water connections and water reading fees.

*Expenditure*

Total current expenditure on natural resource management remained constant at just over \$1.4b.

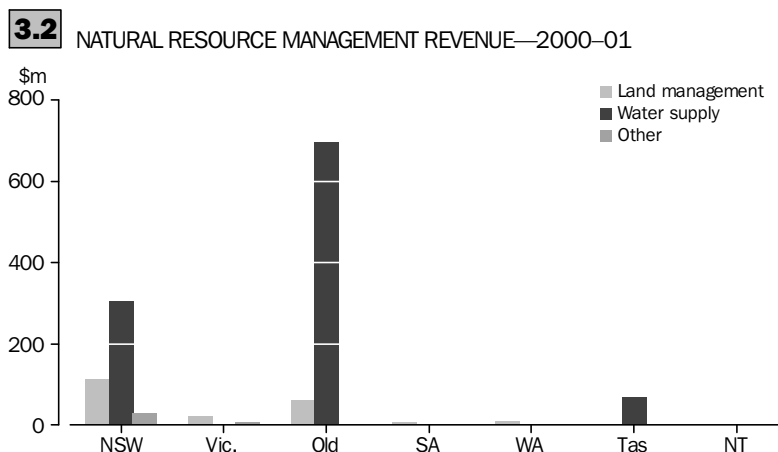
Materials expenses was the largest current expenditure item for water supply activities (\$197m or 35% of total current expenditure for water supply activities). Materials expenses represented 18% (\$143m) of land management current expenditure.

Wages and salaries was the largest current expenditure item for land management activities (\$347m or 45% of total current expenditure for land management activities). Wages and salaries represented 22% (\$127m) of water supply current expenditure. Contractor expenditure was greater for land management current expenditure (26% or \$197m) than for water supply current expenditure (9% or \$49m).

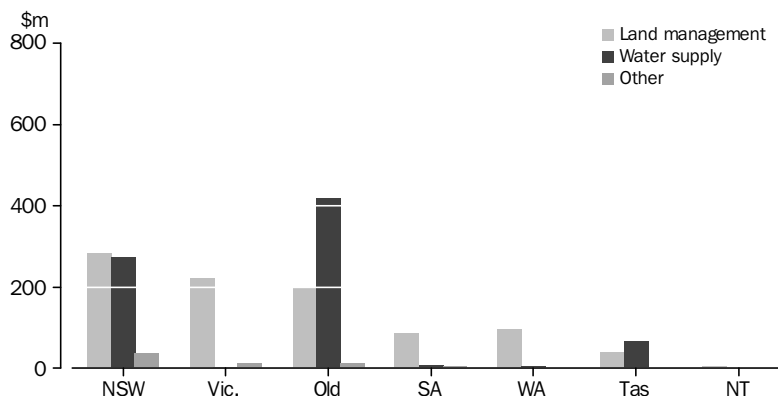
Total capital expenditure decreased by 18% (\$83m) to \$370m. Capital expenditure was highest for water supply activities, which accounted for 56% (\$208m) of total capital expenditure for resource management.

Capital and current expenditure on land management activities exceeded revenue for land management by \$715m. The majority of land management expenditure is funded from other areas of councils' budgets.

*State estimates*



**3.3** NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CURRENT EXPENDITURE—2000–01



**3.4** NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CAPITAL EXPENDITURE—2000–01

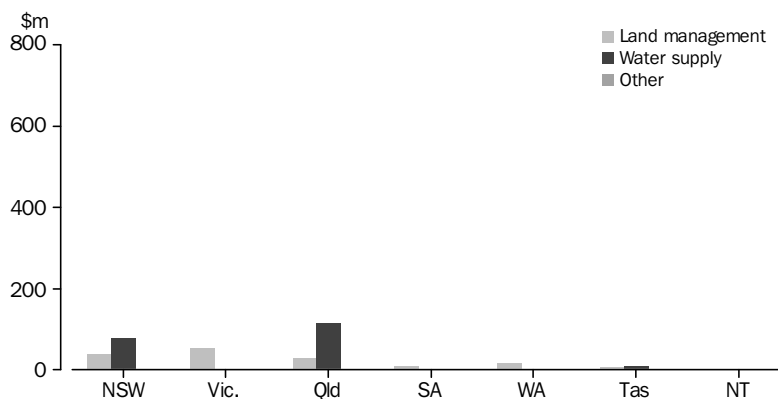


Table 3.2, graphs 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 show that revenue and expenditure for natural resource management were greatest for Queensland and New South Wales. Queensland councils' revenue for natural resource management was \$758m, 57% of Australian councils' total natural resource management revenue.

Queensland had the highest natural resource management current expenditure, \$482m, which was 12% lower than 1999–2000. New South Wales councils' current expenditure on natural resource management was \$474m. Queensland councils' capital expenditure on natural resource management was also the highest, \$146m, although 6% lower than 1999–2000. New South Wales councils' capital expenditure was \$119m.

Queensland had the highest per capita revenue for natural resource management (\$209) whilst Tasmania had the second highest (\$153). Tasmania councils had the largest total per capita current expenditure on natural resource management activities (\$185) and Queensland had the second highest (\$133). Queensland had the highest per capita natural resource management capital expenditure (\$40) with Tasmania having the second highest (\$38).

Water supply and land management were the main sources of revenue for all states. Tasmanian councils received 95% (\$69m) and Queensland councils 92% (\$696m) of their total natural resource management revenue from water supply. Revenue for land management activities accounted for 72% (\$23m) of Victorian and 64% (\$10m) of Western Australian councils' total natural resource management revenue.

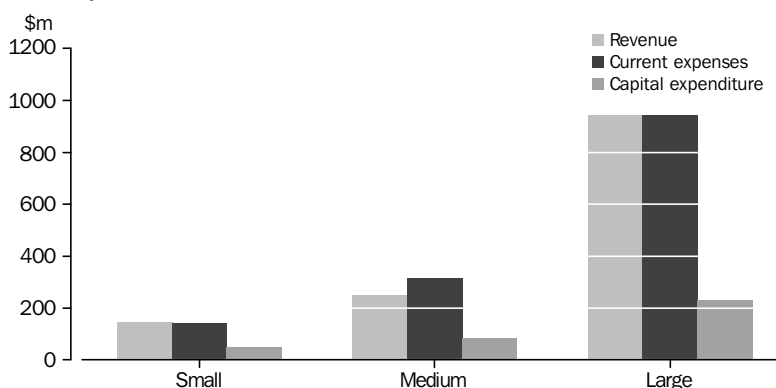
State estimates continued

Water supply was the dominant natural resource management activity undertaken by Tasmanian and Queensland councils, accounting for 63% of their current expenditure (\$302m and \$55m respectively). Land management was the dominant natural resource management activity for the remainder of the states. The majority of current expenditure was on land management activities for West Australian (96% or \$79m) and Victorian (93% or \$170m) councils. The majority of councils' capital expenditure was also on land management activities for Victoria (98% or \$53m) and South Australia (90% or \$10m).

Variation in both total and per capita figures reflects a variety of factors including varying responsibilities of councils between states. For example, Queensland councils supply water services to households and industry, whereas in some other states water boards may have this responsibility.

Council size

**3.5** NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TRANSACTIONS, By council size—2000–01



**3.6** NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TRANSACTIONS PER CAPITA, By council size—2000–01

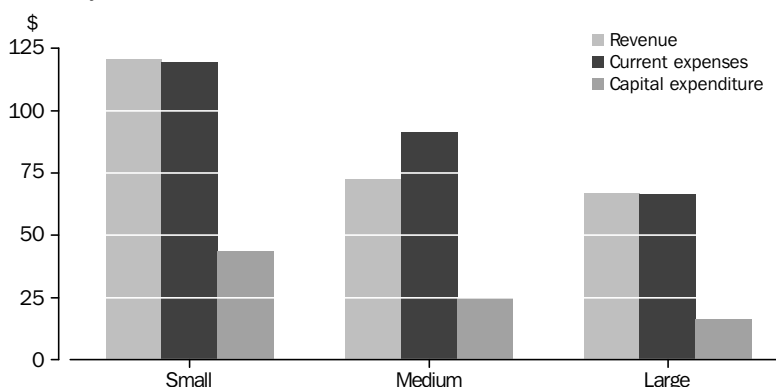


Table 3.3 and graph 3.5 shows that councils with large populations received 71% (\$944m) of total natural resource management revenue for 2000–01. Medium sized councils received 19% (\$251m) and councils with a small population received 11% (\$144m).

Graph 3.6 shows natural resource management revenue per capita by council sizes. See paragraph 19 in the Explanatory Notes for the classification of council sizes. On a per capita basis small councils received the most revenue, and had the highest current expenditure on natural resource management activities. Significantly less per capita revenue and current expenditure was received and spent by large councils for natural

*Council size continued*

resource management activities. This reflects the fact that the smaller (rural) councils are more likely to have responsibility for water supply activities.

Small and large councils spent less on water supply expenditure than they received in revenue. Medium sized councils spent just over their water supply revenue on water supply expenditure. In contrast, land management revenue was significantly less than expenditure for all council sizes. Small council's land management revenue covered only 10% of total expenditure, medium council's revenue covered 15% of expenditure and large council's 27%.

For councils with small and medium sized populations, the majority of their total natural resource management expenditure was used for water supply activities ( 59% and 51% respectively), including a large capital expenditure component. In contrast, land management activity made up the bulk of natural resource management expenditure by large councils (\$707m or 60% of total natural resource management expenditure by large councils).

### 3.1 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT(a), By category—2000–01

	<i>Water supply</i>	<i>Land management</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
<b>Revenue</b>				
Rates from household and industry	890.4	151.1	*37.7	1 079.2
Government funding				
Specific subsidies	9.8	5.4	2.1	17.2
Investment grants	*38.0	5.3	*1.1	44.4
Other	137.0	56.3	*3.9	197.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>1 075.1</i>	<i>218.1</i>	<i>*44.8</i>	<i>1 338.0</i>
<b>Current expenses</b>				
Wages and salaries	127.0	347.4	17.0	491.4
Operational expenses				
Contractors	48.8	197.3	*15.4	261.5
Government payments	65.0	**2.9	**0.5	68.5
Materials	197.3	142.7	*16.9	356.9
Other expenses	125.2	83.4	14.2	222.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>563.3</i>	<i>773.8</i>	<i>64.0</i>	<i>1 401.1</i>
<b>Capital expenditure</b>				
Net acquisitions	45.5	52.1	*1.7	99.3
Own account work	105.3	42.0	**0.5	147.8
Contracted payments	56.9	65.5	0.4	122.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>207.7</i>	<i>159.6</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>369.9</i>

\* estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

\*\* estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

(a) Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur within totals.



**3.2**

## NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT(a), By state and category—2000–01

	<i>Water supply</i>	<i>Land management</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
REVENUE (\$M)				
NSW	303.2	113.3	*29.5	446.0
Vic.	**0.1	23.0	**9.0	32.1
Qld	696.2	59.7	2.2	758.1
SA	2.8	8.0	*1.5	12.4
WA	**3.5	10.3	**2.3	16.1
Tas.	68.6	3.7	*0.3	72.6
NT	*0.7	*0.1	—	0.8
Aust.	1 075.1	218.1	*44.8	1 338.0

	REVENUE PER CAPITA (\$)			
NSW	46	17	5	68
Vic.	—	5	2	7
Qld	192	16	1	209
SA	2	5	1	8
WA	2	5	1	9
Tas.	145	8	1	153
NT	4	1	—	4
Aust.	56	11	2	70

	CURRENT EXPENSES (\$M)			
NSW	195.9	243.6	34.9	474.4
Vic.	*2.5	169.8	**10.0	182.2
Qld	301.6	169.2	11.3	482.1
SA	5.9	77.0	5.1	88.0
WA	1.2	79.0	*1.7	82.0
Tas.	55.1	31.4	*0.7	87.2
NT	1.1	3.8	*0.3	5.2
Aust.	563.3	773.8	64.0	1 401.1

	CURRENT EXPENSES PER CAPITA (\$)			
NSW	30	37	5	72
Vic.	1	35	2	38
Qld	83	47	3	133
SA	4	51	3	58
WA	1	42	1	43
Tas.	117	66	2	185
NT	6	19	1	26
Aust.	29	40	3	73

	CAPITAL EXPENDITURE (\$M)			
NSW	77.1	40.4	*1.1	118.6
Vic.	—	53.3	*1.2	54.5
Qld	115.6	30.5	—	146.1
SA	0.9	9.9	0.2	11.0
WA	**3.6	17.9	—	21.6
Tas.	10.4	*7.6	**0.1	18.1
NT	—	*0.1	—	*0.1
Aust.	207.7	159.6	2.6	369.9

\* estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

\*\* estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(a) Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur within totals.

**3.2**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT(a), By state and category—2000–01 *continued*

	<i>Water supply</i>	<i>Land management</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PER CAPITA (\$)				
NSW	12	6	—	18
Vic.	—	11	—	11
Qld	32	8	—	40
SA	1	7	—	7
WA	2	9	—	11
Tas.	22	16	—	38
NT	—	—	—	1
Aust.	11	8	—	19

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(a) Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur within totals.

**3.3**

## NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT(a), Breakdown by size of council—2000–01

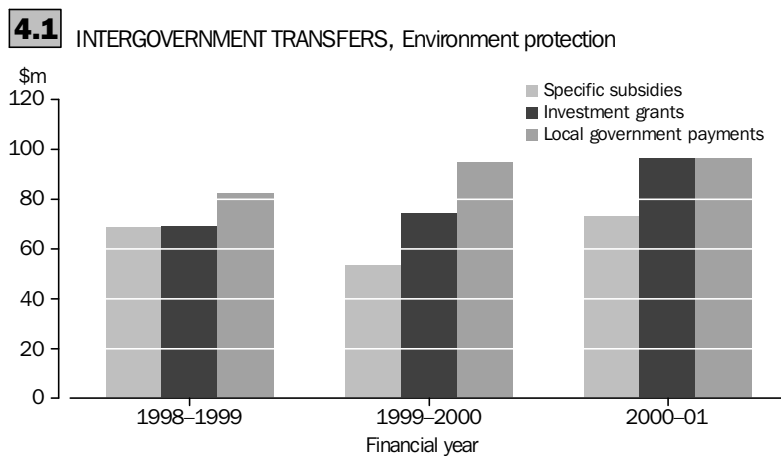
	<i>Water supply</i>	<i>Land management</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
REVENUE				
Small	125.7	6.2	*12.1	143.9
Medium	202.4	23.7	*24.4	250.6
Large	747.0	188.3	8.3	943.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>1 075.1</i>	<i>218.1</i>	<i>*44.8</i>	<i>1 338.0</i>
CURRENT EXPENSES				
Small	73.6	52.5	*16.3	142.4
Medium	143.3	142.2	30.2	315.7
Large	346.4	579.1	17.5	943.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>563.3</i>	<i>773.8</i>	<i>64.0</i>	<i>1 401.1</i>
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE				
Small	*41.2	*10.6	*0.2	*52.1
Medium	63.5	21.3	*1.6	86.3
Large	103.0	127.7	0.8	231.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>207.7</i>	<i>159.6</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>369.9</i>

\* estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

(a) Small councils have a population size less than 10,000, medium councils 10,000–39,999 and large councils. greater than 40,000.

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 focus on the specific subsidies and investment grants given to local government for environment protection and natural resource management activities and on the payments by local governments to state and Commonwealth governments for similar activities.

*Environment protection*

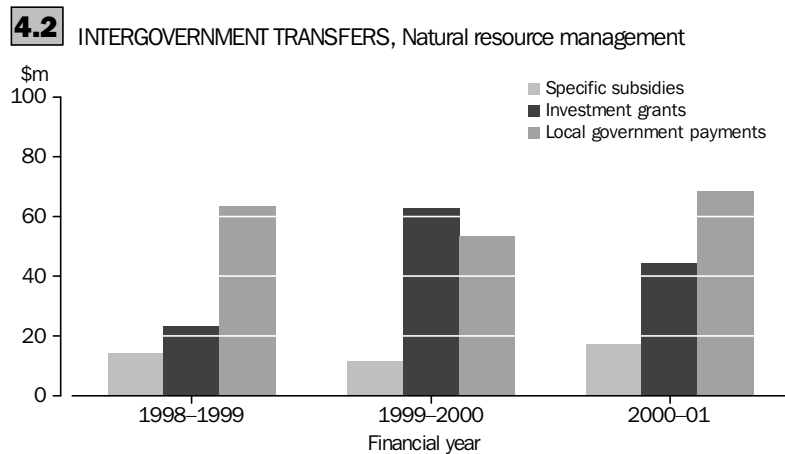


Funding from other levels of government was a minor contributor to environment protection revenue. Government subsidies and grants for environment protection activities within local government accounted for just over 7% (\$169m of \$2.3b) of revenue. This was an increase of \$41m (32%) from 1999–2000.

In 2000–01, state subsidies and grants contributed 83% (\$141m) of government funding to local government for environment protection activities. The majority (59%) of state government funding for environment protection was in the form of capital investment grants (\$83m), with the remaining 41% (\$58m) for specific subsidies for environment protection activities. The Commonwealth Government contributed \$15m of specific subsidies, and \$14m of investment grants for environment protection activities.

Local government authorities paid other local, state or Commonwealth government agencies a total of \$96m or the equivalent of 57% of the funding that they received. These payments to other government authorities were mainly for solid waste, waste water and biodiversity and conservation activities. Examples of these payments include: waste management levies; environment protection agency licences for landfills and water treatment facilities and precepts (fines for non-compliance with guidelines or standards).

Natural resource  
management



Funding from other levels of government was a minor contributor to natural resource management revenue, contributing 4% (\$62m of \$1.3b) of revenue. This was a decrease of \$13m (18%) from 1999–2000. In 2000–01, the bulk of government funding for natural resource management activities was provided by state governments (\$57m or 92% of total government funding to local government for these activities).

The majority of this funding was in the form of investment grants (74% or \$42m), with the remaining 26% (\$15m) for specific subsidies for resource management activities. An additional \$5m was provided by the Commonwealth Government in the form of subsidies (\$2.5m) and grants (\$2.5m).

Local government authorities paid other local, state or Commonwealth government agencies a total of \$69m dollars, 11% (\$7m) more than they receive in government grants and subsidies. Examples of these payments include: planning levies; purchase of water from water authorities; water analysis and precepts.

**4.1** INTERGOVERNMENT TRANSFERS, By account—2000–01

	<i>Environment protection</i>	<i>Natural resource management</i>
	\$m	\$m
.....		
FUNDING TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT		
Commonwealth funding		
Specific subsidies	14.7	2.4
Investment grants	13.7	*2.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>28.4</i>	<i>4.7</i>
State funding		
Specific subsidies	58.3	14.9
Investment grants	82.7	*42.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>140.9</i>	<i>56.9</i>
.....		
PAYMENTS BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO OTHER GOVERNMENT BODIES		
<i>Total</i>	<i>96.4</i>	<i>68.5</i>
.....		

\* estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

## EXPLANATORY NOTES .....

### INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

**1** The ABS Environment and Natural Resources survey was developed in the mid to late 1990s in response to calls from councils themselves, local government associations and agencies and other interested parties for comprehensive information on the financial activities of local government authorities related to managing the environment and natural resources. While all local governments keep financial records of their activities, there has in the past been limited information available on the financial transactions related specifically to managing local environments and natural resources.

**2** Development of the Environment and Natural Resources Survey was based on international guidelines on environmental accounting. These guidelines are contained in the United Nations *System of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting* (SEEA 1993). SEEA, which is currently being revised, proposes that countries use both physical and financial measures to analyse environment-economy interactions. The SEEA manual provides detailed guidelines on how environmental accounts can be compiled using both physical and financial measures, and how these data can be linked to better inform decision-making.

**3** The Environment and Natural Resources Survey of local government collects only financial information, and was developed to be consistent with the financial accounting guidelines provided in SEEA. The survey also drew upon guidelines on measuring financial transactions related to environmental management contained in the European Statistical Agency's (Eurostat's) *European System for the Collection of Economic Information on the Environment* (known by the French acronym, SERIEE 1994). SERIEE proposes that relevant financial transactions can be grouped under two main headings, 'environmental protection', and 'natural resources management'. For each of these activities it is possible to compile a separate account of relevant financial transactions.

**4** The main distinction between the 'environment protection' and 'natural resource management' accounts is that the environment protection account covers activities related specifically to protecting the environment from the harmful effects of socio-economic activities, by preventing, reducing or repairing damage where it occurs. The natural resource management account covers activities which involve using (and conserving) natural resources for social and economic purposes (such as providing drinking water and water for industrial purposes).

**5** For the local government collection, these international guidelines were used for the following purposes:

- to help define the activities that are included in the survey
- to ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant activities
- to determine the types of financial information collected, and
- to avoid double-counting.

INTERNATIONAL  
FRAMEWORKS *continued*ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION  
EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

**6** Use of these guidelines also ensures that information published from the local government collection is comparable between local governments in different states, between levels of government, and between the local government sector and other industry sectors. It also permits international comparisons.

**7** The Environment Protection Expenditure Account is the most developed of the monetary accounts proposed by SEEA. It describes the activities occurring in an economy aimed at protecting the environment; that is, the cost of protecting the environment from damage from development and the cost of remediating damage after it has occurred.

**8** Environment protection activities are classified into a number of categories based upon the UN Classification of Environmental Protection Activities, including:

- Waste water management and water protection
- Solid waste management
- Protection of biodiversity and landscape
- Protection of soil and groundwater
- Protection of ambient air and climate
- Other environmental protection activities.

**9** For the local government survey, the ABS added a category of 'protecting cultural heritage' in response to requests from councils involved in piloting the survey for this information to be collected as a distinct category of activity. The activities covered by each of these categories are outlined in the Glossary.

**10** In seeking to comprehensively measure economic transactions related to these categories of activity, the environment protection account focuses upon identifying and measuring three distinct types of economic activity:

- the purchase or use of environment protection products and services
- the supply of the environment protection products and services and
- the financing of environment protection products and services.

**11** To obtain this information in relation to local government requires detailed measures of councils' current expenses (such as wages and salaries, payments to contractors, materials and fuels, etc.) related to environmental protection services or products for each category of activity. Information is also required on councils' capital expenditure on fixed assets (such as machinery and equipment) needed to undertake these activities. Information was also collected on revenue received for supplying such services in order to measure the extent to which local governments supply environment protection services. In addition, information was collected on how much money local government received both from other levels of government, from businesses and from households, to finance its activities in this area.

**12** The survey showed that councils are major suppliers of services related to waste water (sewage) and solid waste management. They are often — with the exception of some metropolitan councils — the only provider of these services. For these environment protection activities it is often possible to recover some or all of the costs of providing the service, mainly in the form of rates paid by households and businesses.

**13** Other environmental protection activities, such as protecting biodiversity and landscape or soil and groundwater are typically carried out at a net cost to councils, that is, expenditure usually exceeds revenue in these areas of activity. Revenue for such activities comes from a range of sources, including subsidies and grants from state and Commonwealth governments earmarked for

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION  
EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

*continued*

environmental protection activities and other areas of council budgets not related to environmental protection.

**14** The concepts and methodologies used to estimate environment protection expenditure for Australia as a whole, and for local government, are discussed in more detail in *Environment Protection Expenditure, Australia* (cat. no. 4603.0).

NATURAL RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNT

**15** The natural resource management account describes the extraction of natural resources and the expenditure on prolonging the use of a resource through improvements in resource efficiency. SERIEE proposes three main categories of natural resource management (the activities covered by each of these categories are outlined in the Glossary):

- Water supply (inland water)
- Land management
- Other resource management.

**16** Councils often have a dual role in the management of natural resources. For example, many councils are involved in supplying water for use by householders while at the same time restrictions are imposed to limit that usage. Land is developed for expansion of townships and for industrialisation while controls are placed on the use of land taking into account economic, social and environmental considerations. Management decisions by councils on such issues as the rate at which resources like water and land are used for socio-economic purposes, and the locations from which such resources are drawn, can have a significant impact on the local environment.

METHODOLOGY

**17** The statistics presented in this publication are estimated from a survey of local councils, conducted under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. The survey is a mail-out questionnaire on environment protection and natural resources management.

**18** The survey was mailed to approximately half of the total number of local government authorities, not including Aboriginal regional councils, which existed in November 2001. The sample was representative of councils in all states, of councils with large, medium and small populations, and of councils in urban, provincial metropolitan and rural locations.

**19** For the purposes of this survey, the councils were deemed to be small if they had a population of less than 10,000, medium sized if they had a population of between 10,000 and 39,999 and large if their population was greater than 40,000.

**20** The estimation process used the number raised estimator. The majority of aggregated data presented in the results have a standard error of less than 15%. Most of the totals presented have a standard error of less than 10%. Standard errors for the state level estimates are sometimes high because of the smaller sample of councils contributing to the estimates. Estimates with a standard error of more than 25% have been marked with a \*. Estimates with a standard error of more than 50% have been marked with a \*\*. Estimates marked with either one or two stars should be used with caution. Some cells have been combined due to confidentiality and high standard errors.

**21** Implementation by councils of Australian Accounting Standard 27 has resulted in a change in the accounting systems used by local governments from cash accounting to accrual accounting. This means that estimates of the proportion of total council transactions related to environment and natural resource management presented in the overview of results section of this publication are not directly comparable with the proportions presented in the



METHODOLOGY *continued*

earlier edition of this publication (*Environment Expenditure, Local Government, Experimental Estimates, Australia: 1997–98*). The change to accrual based accounting may also have influenced some of the estimates presented for 1998–99.

**22** Between the 1998–98 and 1999–2000 collection years some changes were made to the survey form. The redesigned form was intended to reduce the burden of the survey on some of the councils. Many of the questions asked previously were combined into fewer questions, and depreciation was dropped entirely from the survey. The change in the form design may have impacted on the number of transactions recorded by councils.

**23** Per capita figures are based on the state population figures (estimated residential population as at June 1999). These figures were derived from *Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0).

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**24** The collection of information on local government environment-related transactions were initially a collaborative effort with the National Office of Local Government, University of Canberra and the Australian Bureau of Statistics, as well as numerous local government councils that voluntarily participated in piloting the survey between 1996 and 1999.

**25** An aim of this collection is to contribute to the development by local governments of accounting tools which may assist with improved management of local environments and natural resources. They also measure and demonstrate the significant financial contribution being made each year by the local government sector to the wider effort by all Australian governments aimed at protecting the environment and managing natural resources sustainably. These statistics also contribute to the development of more detailed environment protection expenditure information for Australia as a whole.

**26** Limited additional data may be available from the collection. Inquiries about data services can be made to Bob Harrison, Director, Environment and Energy Statistics Section, on Canberra 02 6252 7369.

## GLOSSARY .....

<b>Biodiversity</b>	<p>The variety of life forms on earth: the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems they form. It is usually considered at four levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ genetic diversity</li><li>■ species diversity</li><li>■ ecosystem diversity and</li><li>■ community diversity.</li></ul>
<b>Environment protection</b>	<p>All activities aimed at the prevention, reduction or elimination of pollution or any other degradation of the environment.</p> <p>An Australian interpretation of the UN's Classification of Environmental Protection Activities divides these activities into six main categories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Waste water management. Activities that correspond to sewerage operations and the reduction of waste elements reaching water bodies. Waste water reuse by council.</li><li>■ Solid waste management. Landfill and solid operations by council and the implementation of programs to reduce the amount of materials entering the solid waste stream.</li><li>■ Protection of soil and groundwater. Remediation of contaminated soils. Protection of existing soil and groundwater areas from contamination by wastes and degradation. Remediation of degraded (salinated, eroded) soils in crown land and national park regions.</li><li>■ Conservation of biodiversity and landscape. Programs that focus on the preservation of natural species and landscape. Programs to re-establish native species back into the environment. The construction of barriers to halt damage from developments entering areas specified as having a value for biodiversity. Clean up and establishment of catchment zones for water bodies.</li><li>■ Protection of cultural heritage. Establishment and maintenance of cultural heritage sites. Programs to encourage the implementation of cultural heritage preservation by business and householders.</li><li>■ Other environmental protection. Includes any environmental protection activity not broken down in the above categories, noise and vibration control, education on environmental protection and measures to protect the environment from radiation.</li></ul>
<b>Household sector</b>	<p>The System of National Accounts (1993) defines a household to be 'a small group of persons who share the same living accommodation, who pool some, or all, of their income and wealth and who consume certain types of goods and services collectively, mainly housing and food'.</p>
<b>Investment grants</b>	<p>Unrequited capital payments received (usually from government) and intended to finance acquisition of fixed assets for environmental purposes.</p>
<b>Natural resource management</b>	<p>All activities which manage natural resources and activities aimed at making more efficient use of natural resources. The categories of natural resource management are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Water supply and management. The supply and use of inland water stocks. Maintenance of quality and purification of water supply. Programs to encourage water conservation plans. Application of water restrictions.</li></ul>



- Natural resource management** *continued*
- Land management and development. The development by zoning of land resources. The management of recreational parks and sporting fields. Management of crown land not reserved for native biodiversity. The processing of development applications and associated costs.
  - Other resource management. The quarrying to provide raw materials for council works. Activities or programs aimed at developing alternative energy resources. Measures to reduce energy consumption.
- Subsidies** Government grants to local government which relate to their provision of specific environmental services and activities which are intended to allow the provision of goods and services at a reduced cost to the consumer.
- Transfers** A transaction in which one business or organisation provides a good, service or asset to another business or organisation without receiving from the latter any good, service or asset in return.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION . . .

- INTERNET* **www.abs.gov.au** the ABS web site is the best place to start for access to summary data from our latest publications, information about the ABS, advice about upcoming releases, our catalogue, and Australia Now—a statistical profile.
- LIBRARY* A range of ABS publications is available from public and tertiary libraries Australia-wide. Contact your nearest library to determine whether it has the ABS statistics you require, or visit our web site for a list of libraries.
- CPI INFOLINE* For current and historical Consumer Price Index data, call 1902 981 074 (call cost 77c per minute).
- DIAL-A-STATISTIC* For the latest figures for National Accounts, Balance of Payments, Labour Force, Average Weekly Earnings, Estimated Resident Population and the Consumer Price Index call 1900 986 400 (call cost 77c per minute).

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