



Image: Claypans Illparpa Rd
Alice Springs

WATER LEGISLATION REFORM IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Contemporary water resource management
legislation that supports sustainable
water resource management,
and builds trust.

The Northern Territory Government is developing new legislation to replace the *Water Act 1992*.

Draft legislation will be ready for the Legislative Assembly by 2026.

Vision

Contemporary legislation that supports sustainable water resource management, and builds trust.

Drivers for reform

Priority action 11 under the [Territory Water Plan](#) commits Government to delivering contemporary water resource management legislation contributing to sustainability and trust and confidence.

Today's legislation, the Water Act, provides a sound legislative basis for water resource management.

New legislation will ensure water resource management is:

- fit for the future
- can adapt to climate change and growing competition for water
- meets community expectations with enhanced governance and accountability.



3 SUSTAINABILITY

Use water sustainably to protect the Territory's environmental and cultural assets

- Territory rivers, groundwater and water-dependent ecosystems remain healthy
- Water use supports and maintains liveability and the Territory lifestyle
- Water use is efficient and productive across the water cycle
- Aboriginal cultural values are recognised and protected.

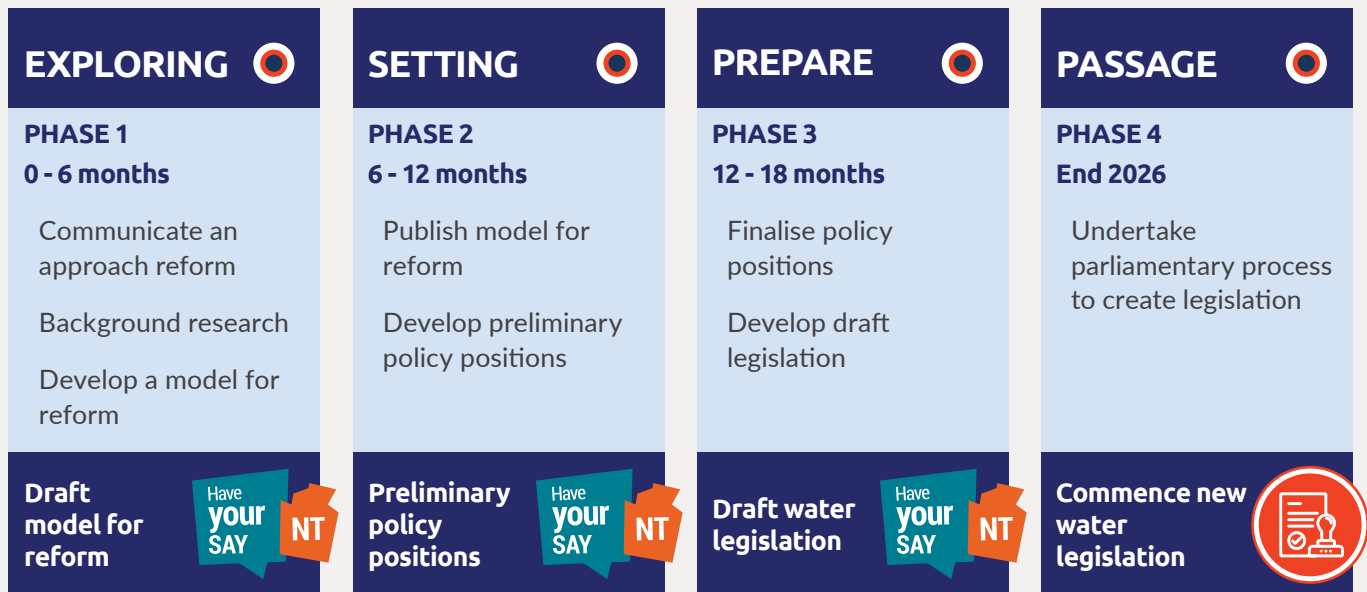
4 TRUST and CONFIDENCE

Engage Territorians in water management and decisions to build confidence and foster a shared understanding

- Water management and governance frameworks fit the Territory context and align with best practice
- Water is valued by community, business and government
- Water science, literacy and communication supports water stewardship
- All Territorians are empowered to participate in water management.

Program for reform

New water legislation will be developed across four phases:



Next steps – the model for reform

The model for reform will be the guiding document for water reform. Considering the Water Act and drawing on community feedback and national policy the model will outline:

- elements of the Act which should remain the same because they are effective or provide consistency for Territory businesses
- elements of the Act which could be enhanced with small changes
- new elements or elements which could be enhanced by significant change or a change in policy.

How you can participate

Territorians will help establish the model for reform and throughout the reform program.

You can participate:

- via your representative peak body - Peak industry and interest groups will be involved in early, targeted engagement as the model for reform and policy positions are developed
- through Have Your Say - broader public consultation processes like Have Your Say will allow individual voices to be heard as each project phase is resolved.

NT Government advisory groups and agencies will also help refine the model for reform and policy positions as they are developed.

The *International Association for Public Participation* spectrum will guide engagement activities throughout the reform program.



Image: Katherine Hot Springs

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