

SIO Regional Water Allocation and Management Policy

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Allocation Principles

SIO's water allocation policy ensures equitable distribution based on regional capacity, agricultural needs, and sustainability considerations. Allocations reviewed quarterly by the SIO board.

Regional Capacities

Riyadh Region: 50 million m³ total capacity, serves 15,000 km² agricultural area. Makkah Region: 40 million m³, serves 8,000 km². Eastern Province: 45 million m³, serves 12,000 km². Qassim Region: 35 million m³, serves 20,000 km². Other regions: 22-30 million m³ each. Total Kingdom capacity: 267 million m³.

Priority Allocation System

Tier 1: Essential food security crops (wheat, dates, vegetables) - guaranteed full allocation. Tier 2: Traditional agricultural crops (barley, alfalfa) - 90% allocation during normal periods. Tier 3: Industrial users and export crops - 80% allocation, subject to optimization restrictions. Tier 4: Ornamental and recreational - lowest priority, first restricted during optimization.

Farm Size Considerations

Small farms (under 10 hectares): protected allocation, last to face restrictions. Medium farms (10-50 hectares): standard allocation, proportional restrictions if needed. Large farms (over 50 hectares): expected to lead conservation efforts, implement efficiency measures. Industrial users (over 100 hectares): quarterly efficiency audits required.

Seasonal Adjustments

Allocations adjusted seasonally to match crop water requirements. Summer (June-September): 150% of baseline allocation. Spring/Fall (March-May, October): 100% baseline. Winter (November-February): 70% baseline. Dates and citrus receive year-round priority. Adjustments announced 30 days in advance.

New Allocation Requests

Existing customers may request increased allocation for expansion. Requirements: demonstrate current efficient usage (under regional average), submit expansion plan with crop details, environmental impact assessment for large increases (over 1,000 m³/month), and payment of 1,000 SAR application fee (refunded if approved). Processing time: 30-45 days.

Transparency and Reporting

SIO publishes quarterly regional allocation reports showing: total capacity, current utilization, allocation by customer type, efficiency metrics, and conservation achievements. Reports available at sio.gov.sa/reports. Customers can access their allocation history and benchmarks via the SIO portal.

Appeals Process

Customers may appeal allocation decisions within 14 days. Submit appeal to regional SIO director with: account information, reason for appeal, supporting documentation. Appeals reviewed by SIO technical committee. Decision provided within 21 days. No fees for appeals.