

Water targets 'vague'

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NEW State Government targets for future water management and population growth in South Australia have been criticised as vague and meaningless.

The Government plans to target "sustainable water supply" and River Murray salinity as part of its revised strategic plan.

The management of water was one of more than 30 targets unveiled in a revamped strategic plan announced yesterday by Premier Mike Rann.

Opposition Leader Iain Evans said the revised plan contained "nothing more than vague goals and targets that were often not

measured for years at a time".

The updated plan also includes modifications to most of the 84 targets initially set by the Government in March, 2004, when the plan was first released.

A review committee led by Brenton Wright, a former deputy chief executive of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, lowers targets in areas such as export growth and interstate migration out of the state, while modifying "achieved" targets such as economic growth and unemployment.

On water, the Government is aiming for the state's water resources to be managed "within sustainable limits by 2018".

It also wants to "maintain a positive balance on the Murray-

Darling Basin Commission salinity register", while renewing its commitment to increase environmental flows by 500GL in the River Murray by 2009.

On population, the existing target of two million by 2050 has been revised by adding an "interim target" of 1.64 million by 2014.

Mr Evans said the updated plan failed to address adequately the state's water needs. "The strategic state plan is fast becoming a strategic sham," he said.

"The plan says we are still aiming for a population of two million by 2050, yet this plan sets out no detail as to how we're actually going to supply that population with water."