

BACKGROUND

Evaporation mitigation from farm storages in the cotton valleys:

Evaporative loss from off-allocation stored water in the cotton industry in NSW is estimated at around 150 000 megalitres each year. This can mean a loss of 1.5 to 2 metres of water depth from any one storage in a year, with about 80% of that loss occurring between October and April. The marginal value of a megalitre of water is put at \$300 or more by the cotton industry. About \$45 million dollars worth of cotton could be produced from 150 000 megalitres of water.

THE STUDY:

Commissioned in November 1994, it was funded equally by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC) and Sainty and Associates with a budget of \$47 000 and the following work was undertaken:

1. *Azolla* evaporation study (University of Western Sydney).
2. Floating ring evaporation study (RMIT, Melbourne).
3. Evaporation mitigation from on-farm water storages (CSIRO Centre for Environmental Mechanics).
4. Study tour of six cotton farms (CSIRO Division of Water Resources, Sainty and Associates).