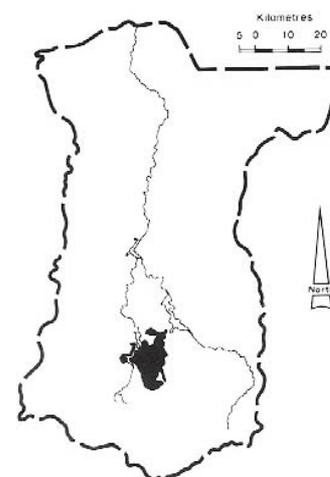


2.11 PgB3 PLAINS – gently undulating, BASALTIC, type 3

An area of basaltic terrain to the east of Tullaroop Reservoir is characterised by: a flat gently undulating plain; numerous areas with relatively poor drainage; and soils that are typically heavier in texture than those on adjacent basaltic map units.

The unit is bounded by scarps on the eastern and western sides and is devoid of the volcanic hills that are prevalent to the south. Grazing predominates on the cleared plains, although *E. camaldulensis* still remains in many of the poorer-drained depressions. In recent years dryland salting, caused by proximity of the underlying Ordovician sedimentary rocks (P. R. Dyson, pers. Comm. 1986), has occurred in the lower-lying areas. The basalt flow here is relatively thin, and rainwater infiltrates through the basalt to the saline groundwater table in the underlying weathered or fractured sedimentary rock. Where this water table approaches the surface, salting occurs.



Geology Qvn – Quaternary olivine basalt

Rainfall 500-550 mm per annum

Slope Average 1%; range 0-3% on plain, flat to gently undulating

Dominant landform element (75%) Plain flat to undulating

Minor landform elements (25%) closed depression, drainage depression, scarp, scarp footslope, rocky rise

Soils Dominant: Ug5.2, Ug5.3, Ug5.24. Uniform cracking clay soils common, especially on the flatter parts of the plain and in the closed depressions, of ten having gilgaied surface with a texture varying from clay on the puffs to clay loams in the depressions; reddish brown rootline mottling frequently occurs in the upper horizons; the subsoils – heavy, blocky in structure and grey, brown or dark in colour – are neutral to alkaline

Gn3.92, Db1.12. Yellow to brown gradational to duplex soils on the better-drained parts of the plain; profiles vary considerably, even over short distances, but are characterised by a heavy yellow-brown non-mottled clay subsoil and an overlying silty loam to silty clay loam topsoil

Minor: Gn3, Gn4. Shallow, well structured red to reddish brown gradational soils on the scarps are well-drained and frequently stony

Uf. Dark to shallow stony uniform clay occur occasionally on the scarps, and are frequently less than 20 cm deep

Native vegetation Almost totally cleared, except for scattered trees of *E. camaldulensis* in poorer-drained areas, especially in the closed depressions; *Muehlenbeckia cunninghamii* also grows in these situations, notably in Lignum Swamp; occasional bushes of *Hymenanthera denata* on the scarps

Stone-rock outcrop Generally less than 1%, although significant rock outcrop occurs on the scarp

Pans Nil or not observed

Land use Predominantly grazing by sheep on introduced pastures, although native grasses persist in some area; limited cropping also occurs; noxious weeds such as thistles thrive in poorly managed areas

Observed land deterioration Other than salting, which occurs in a few lower-lying parts of the plain, land deterioration is generally minor: limited sheet and gully erosion occur on the scarps; some compaction of the topsoils results from trampling by stock

Susceptibility to land deterioration
Sheet erosion (moderate – scarp)
Gully erosion (low)
Compaction (low to moderate)
Salting (low to moderate)



Poorly drained depressions are common in this unit – for example, Lignum Swamp north-west of Campbelltown.