

## 2. Salinity causes and processes

Salinity can be either primary (natural) or secondary (induced). The majority of salinity in the West Gippsland area is secondary, with primary salinity being concentrated around coastal areas.

There are three key processes that cause secondary or induced salinity in the region as shown in Figure 3:

- Salinisation caused by evapotranspiration from an elevated water table
- Salinisation caused by direct inundation of wetlands and lower river reaches with saline water (ocean inflows)
- Salinisation caused by salt applied to soil from above (irrigating with saline water)

Each of these key processes is described in further detail in the following three sections.

- **Figure 3: Summary of the three key processes causing secondary land and water salinisation in West Gippsland**

