

● GATHER RECRUITMENT · FY2026 · INAUGURAL EDITION

# 2026 Australian Environmental Salary Survey.

Base-salary benchmarks built from 440 environmental professionals across Australia - by career level, specialism, employer type and state.

EIA & Approvals

Contaminated Land

Ecology (Fauna & Flora)

Water & Hydrology

Sustainability

GIS & Spatial

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# Market Commentary



*"2026 is one of the more interesting markets I've seen. Overall, conditions remain positive for experienced candidates, but there are some clear trends that are shaping salaries and hiring decisions."*

## Ben Oakley

Principal Consultant  
Gather Recruitment

### Demand remains strong

The consulting market remains active across most disciplines and states. In WA, mining project work continues to drive demand for approvals specialists, contaminated land practitioners, ecologists and water/hydrogeology professionals. Mining, infrastructure and energy projects continue to support a healthy pipeline of work.

Environmental professionals also have more career options than ever. Consulting firms are no longer competing only with each other - they're competing with mining companies, government, utilities and infrastructure owners. That increased competition for talent continues to put upward pressure on salaries, particularly where local regulatory knowledge creates a genuine barrier to interstate or overseas substitution.

### The consulting vs mining gap is real

The data confirms what I hear regularly - the premium for moving in-house to a mining or resources company is substantial, particularly at Intermediate and Senior level. A Senior with 8-10 years' experience might expect \$120,000 to \$140,000 in consulting, while an owner/operator role can often command \$160,000 to \$180,000.

The best mid-career consultants are frequently being recruited by their own clients, and many consulting firms have responded with higher salary bands, better benefits and faster progression, but the gap remains significant.

The move to mining does come with its challenges though - including potential long hours on site, time away from family, ethical considerations, and the risk of unstable employment when commodity prices fall, as the recent Nickel and Lithium price collapses demonstrated.

### Experience is where the shortage sits

Graduate hiring has softened, but demand for experienced professionals remains strong. Most employers are not struggling to find graduates or Principals - they're struggling to find capable people with 5-10 years' experience who can run projects, mentor juniors and deal directly with clients.

This shortage continues to support salary growth at Intermediate, Senior and Principal levels and explains why experienced hires are often attracting multiple opportunities and strong counteroffers.

### Salary transparency matters

One of the more surprising findings from the survey was that over a third of respondents were unsure whether they were being paid fairly. That's a problem for both candidates and employers. Without good market information, people either undervalue themselves or employers lose good staff because they are out of step with the market.

My advice is simple - use this data. Whether you're preparing for a salary review, setting budgets or designing remuneration bands, having realistic market benchmarks leads to better decisions.

### Flexibility is now expected

Hybrid work is no longer viewed as a perk. For many experienced professionals, it's simply part of a competitive employment offering. Firms insisting on five days in the office are finding recruitment and retention more difficult, particularly at mid-career level.

The organisations attracting and retaining good people are generally those offering sensible flexibility alongside opportunities for mentoring, collaboration and career development.

Beyond flexibility, tangible benefits like 9-day fortnights, additional leave days, employee share incentives, paid overtime and company-paid parking are increasingly giving employers the edge over salary alone.

### Overall outlook

I'd describe the market as healthy rather than overheated. Salary growth has moderated compared with the post-COVID boom, and employers are watching costs more closely, but experienced environmental professionals remain in strong demand.

The biggest challenge facing the sector isn't a lack of work - it's a lack of experienced people. Until that changes, I expect salaries to remain under upward pressure at Intermediate, Senior and Principal levels, particularly in specialist disciplines and resource-focused markets.

# 01 Executive Summary

The 2026 Australian Environmental Salary Survey is the inaugural edition of what will become an annual benchmarking resource for the Australian environmental sector - based on responses from 440 environmental professionals across Australia, collected in May 2026.

It covers base salary by career level, technical specialism, employer type and state, alongside benefits, working arrangements, superannuation, gender pay equity and pay sentiment. All salary figures are base salary in Australian dollars, excluding superannuation.

## ABOUT THE SURVEY

The survey was conducted by Gather Recruitment, a Perth-based specialist recruitment company covering the Environmental and Water, Mining and Resources, and Engineering sectors.

It was advertised and distributed via social media, direct email to relevant candidates from the Gather Recruitment candidate database, and through kind assistance via associations such as the Environmental Consultants Association (ECA), Goldfields Environmental Management Group (GEMG) and Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand (EIANZ).

The survey skews toward Western Australia, which accounts for 59% of responses, reflecting both Gather Recruitment's primary market and the distribution channels used.

Results for WA are the most statistically robust in this report. East coast results should be read with more caution given smaller sample sizes.

## Key findings

- **National median base salary is \$137,500**, reflecting a workforce spread across all career levels but skewed toward mid-to-senior experience.
- **EIA / Approvals is the highest-paid specialism nationally** - a median base of \$163,000 across all levels, roughly \$43,000 above the median for Ecology (Fauna) professionals.
- **Mining / Industry commands a clear premium over consulting**: \$170,000 median across all levels versus \$130,000 in consulting and \$132,000 in government.
- **WA leads all states on level-adjusted salary at \$145,928**, narrowly ahead of QLD (\$144,473) and NSW (\$143,864). QLD's higher raw median reflects a more senior respondent mix rather than a genuinely higher market. VIC is clearly lowest at \$135,913 adjusted.
- **A 13.3% gender pay gap exists at the median** (\$150,000 male vs \$130,000 female). It is widest at Intermediate level (10.5%) and narrows significantly at Senior and above.
- **Only 39% feel confident they are paid at market rate**. A further 35% have no idea whether they are paid fairly, and 25% believe they are underpaid.
- **60% work in a hybrid arrangement**. Only 10% are fully remote, and 22% remain fully office-based.
- **80% receive only the statutory 12% superannuation minimum**. Enhanced super is rare outside government and some large corporates.

# How do the states compare?

The chart below shows both raw and level-adjusted median salaries by state. The level-adjusted figure answers a simple question: if every state had the same mix of junior, mid-career and senior professionals, what would the median be? It removes the distortion of one state having a more senior respondent group than another.

## Median base salary by state

Raw median vs level-adjusted median · AUD, excluding super

Raw median    Level-adjusted



On a level-adjusted basis, **WA (\$145,928)**, **QLD (\$144,473)** and **NSW (\$143,864)** are within \$2,000 of each other - effectively the same market at comparable seniority. VIC (\$135,913) is genuinely lower.

At like-for-like comparisons, WA dominates at the top of the career ladder (Senior Principal / Manager: \$216,500), NSW leads at Intermediate (\$111,500), and QLD leads at Senior (\$137,800).

The practical implication: where you work matters less than what level you are at and which sector you work in. The consulting vs mining premium (31% at the median) is a far bigger salary driver than which state you are in.

● WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**\$145.9k**

Highest level-adjusted median. Mining-driven; leads at the top of the ladder (Senior Principal / Manager \$216,500).

● QUEENSLAND

**\$144.5k**

A diverse market across mining, infrastructure and ecology. Leads at Senior level (\$137,800).

● NEW SOUTH WALES

**\$143.9k**

Within \$2k of the leaders. Leads at Intermediate (\$111,500); strong infrastructure and renewables demand.

● VICTORIA

**\$135.9k**

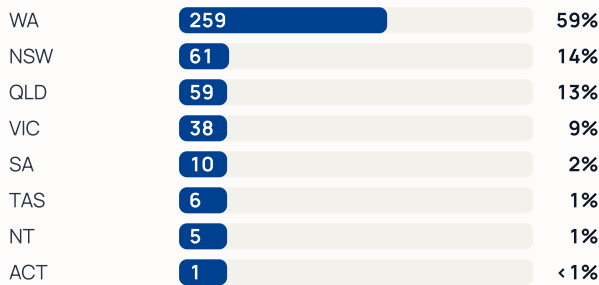
Genuinely lower. A competitive consulting market with less resources-sector influence.

## 02 About the Respondents

The survey received 440 valid responses from environmental professionals across Australia, after excluding overseas-based respondents.

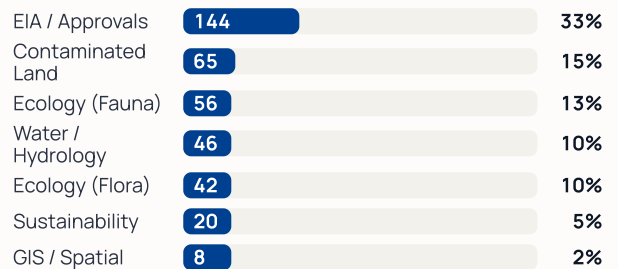
### Location

Responses concentrated in WA, reflecting Gather's Perth market and distribution channels. WA accounted for 59% of responses.



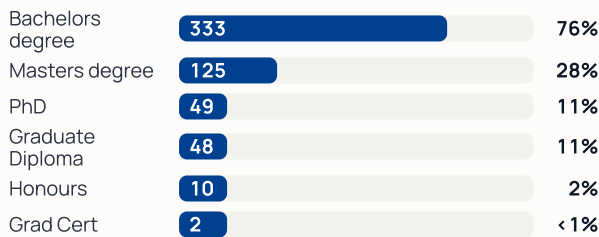
### Technical specialism

EIA / Approvals was the largest specialism. A further 58 respondents nominated specialisms outside these categories (mine closure, compliance, fisheries, etc.) and are excluded from specialism tables.



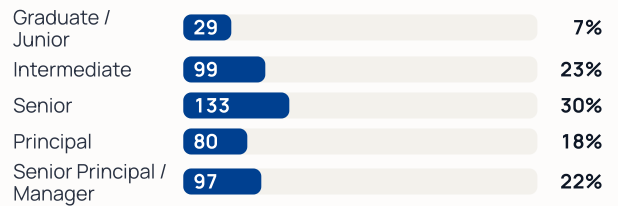
### Qualifications

76% hold at least a Bachelor's degree, with 28% holding a Masters and 11% a PhD.



### Career level

Senior professionals (7–14 years) were the largest single group, followed by Intermediate and Senior Principal / Manager.



### Gender

A fairly even split, with men at 53% and women at 45% of respondents.



### Employer type

The majority work in consulting or professional-services firms; client-side and Mining / Industry roles made up 22%.



### Company size

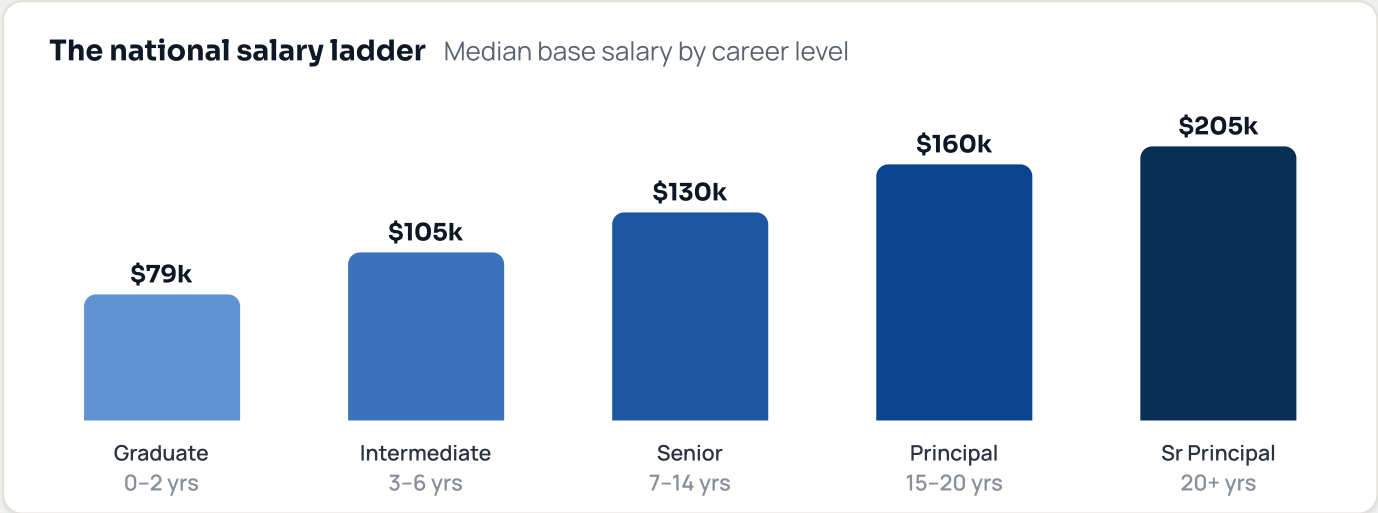


**A note on the numbers.** The survey received 440 valid responses, but not everyone answered every question, so individual charts reflect only those who responded to that question (for instance, 439 gave their location, 438 their gender and 418 a base salary). Salary figures are based solely on respondents who supplied a salary.

# 03 National Benchmarks by Career Level

Base salary across all 440 respondents by career level, aggregated nationally across specialisms and employer types - the best single reference point for general benchmarking.

|                                   |                                    |                         |                                   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>\$79k</b><br>GRADUATE / JUNIOR | <b>\$105k</b><br>INTERMEDIATE      | <b>\$130k</b><br>SENIOR | <b>\$160k</b><br>PRINCIPAL        | <b>\$205k</b><br>SR PRINCIPAL / MGR |
| <b>\$65k</b><br>LOWEST REPORTED   | <b>\$137,500</b><br>OVERALL MEDIAN |                         | <b>\$360k</b><br>HIGHEST REPORTED |                                     |



The step from Intermediate to Senior (\$105,000 to \$130,000) is the largest jump on the ladder in percentage terms - a 24% increase. The move from Principal to Senior Principal / Manager is the largest in absolute dollars, adding around \$45,000 at the median.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N          | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0-2 yrs          | 27         | \$65,000        | <b>\$79,000</b>  | \$107,000        |
| Intermediate 3-6 yrs               | 93         | \$75,000        | <b>\$105,000</b> | \$171,000        |
| Senior 7-14 yrs                    | 127        | \$68,700        | <b>\$130,000</b> | \$230,000        |
| Principal 15-20 yrs                | 77         | \$101,000       | <b>\$160,000</b> | \$270,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 94         | \$115,000       | <b>\$205,000</b> | \$360,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>418</b> | <b>\$65,000</b> | <b>\$137,500</b> | <b>\$360,000</b> |

All figures are base salary in AUD excluding super. Where a sub-group has fewer than 5 respondents, treat results as directional.

# 04 National Salary by Technical Specialism

Salary by main technical specialism, broken down by career level for respondents who nominated that discipline as their primary focus. EIA / Approvals commands the strongest premium: approvals professionals are disproportionately represented at Principal and Senior Principal level, and many work directly on major mining, infrastructure and energy projects where the commercial value of regulatory capability is highest.

## Median base salary by specialism

All career levels combined



### WHY ECOLOGY SALARIES ARE LOWER - AND WHY BASE SALARY TELLS ONLY PART OF THE STORY

The salary gap between ecology disciplines and higher-paid specialisms like EIA / Approvals is real and consistent across this survey. However **80% of Ecology (Fauna) respondents receive time in lieu for fieldwork** - the highest of any specialism in the survey, and 67% of Ecology (Flora) respondents receive it. In contrast, only 28% of EIA / Approvals professionals and 18% of those in Mining / Industry receive TOIL. Because this survey captures base salary only, ecology professionals who work significant field hours receive a form of compensation that does not appear in these tables.

## EIA / Approvals

MEDIAN (ALL LEVELS): \$163,000 · N = 138 · \$68,426–\$360,000

The highest-paid specialism overall, reflecting strong demand for complex EPBC and state-level approvals capability that few professionals can lead. Senior Principal / Manager EIA professionals report the survey's top salaries - up to \$360,000.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N   | MIN       | MEDIAN    | MAX       |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 10  | \$68,426  | \$81,000  | \$95,000  |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 27  | \$75,000  | \$106,000 | \$171,000 |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 27  | \$68,700  | \$157,000 | \$228,000 |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 31  | \$110,000 | \$170,000 | \$240,000 |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 43  | \$120,000 | \$210,000 | \$360,000 |
| All levels combined                | 138 | \$68,426  | \$163,000 | \$360,000 |

## Contaminated Land

**MEDIAN (ALL LEVELS): \$130,000 · N = 63 · \$73,150–\$278,000**

The third highest-paid specialism. High top-end salaries (\$278,000 maximum) reflect the scarcity of experienced practitioners with regulatory relationships and technical sign-off capability, with a clean progression from Graduate through to Senior Principal.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 5         | \$73,150        | <b>\$88,000</b>  | \$107,000        |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 15        | \$78,000        | <b>\$96,000</b>  | \$115,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 22        | \$102,500       | <b>\$132,500</b> | \$160,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 12        | \$130,000       | <b>\$167,290</b> | \$220,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 9         | \$135,000       | <b>\$198,000</b> | \$278,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>63</b> | <b>\$73,150</b> | <b>\$130,000</b> | <b>\$278,000</b> |

## Water / Hydrology

**MEDIAN (ALL LEVELS): \$156,000 · N = 43 · \$70,200–\$246,000**

Well-compensated relative to ecology, reflecting strong demand from both resources and infrastructure. Principal and Senior Principal water professionals earn comparably to their EIA counterparts, suggesting the market values deep technical expertise in hydrology and hydrogeology at senior levels.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1         | \$70,200        | <b>\$70,200</b>  | \$70,200         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 8         | \$83,000        | <b>\$114,000</b> | \$160,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 17        | \$90,000        | <b>\$130,000</b> | \$200,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 7         | \$150,000       | <b>\$170,000</b> | \$246,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 10        | \$176,000       | <b>\$200,500</b> | \$240,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>43</b> | <b>\$70,200</b> | <b>\$156,000</b> | <b>\$246,000</b> |

## Ecology (Fauna)

**MEDIAN (ALL LEVELS): \$119,680 · N = 54 · \$75,000–\$280,000**

Ecology charge-out rates are compressed by market competition, and much of total pay comes as time in lieu rather than base salary - which this survey does not capture.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 3         | \$75,000        | <b>\$75,000</b>  | \$75,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 15        | \$80,000        | <b>\$95,000</b>  | \$128,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 20        | \$100,000       | <b>\$118,180</b> | \$145,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 11        | \$120,600       | <b>\$140,000</b> | \$200,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 5         | \$135,000       | <b>\$180,000</b> | \$280,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>54</b> | <b>\$75,000</b> | <b>\$119,680</b> | <b>\$280,000</b> |

## Ecology (Flora)

**MEDIAN (ALL LEVELS): \$116,000 · N = 40 · \$70,000–\$275,000**

A similar profile to Fauna, with Senior practitioners around \$18,000 below the national Senior average. Growth accelerates at Principal level and above, where expertise in vegetation communities, offset design and referral processes commands a genuine premium.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 5         | \$70,000        | <b>\$77,000</b>  | \$87,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 3         | \$95,500        | <b>\$115,000</b> | \$118,125        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 16        | \$93,000        | <b>\$112,000</b> | \$138,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 6         | \$101,000       | <b>\$120,000</b> | \$160,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 10        | \$115,000       | <b>\$180,000</b> | \$275,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>40</b> | <b>\$70,000</b> | <b>\$116,000</b> | <b>\$275,000</b> |

## Sustainability

**MEDIAN (ALL LEVELS): \$124,000 · N = 17 · \$79,000–\$240,000**

A thin cohort - read with caution. Reasonable mid-career earnings with a very wide senior spread (\$79,000 to \$240,000), reflecting the diversity of roles from graduate ESG analysts to senior sustainability directors at large resource companies.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1         | \$79,000        | <b>\$79,000</b>  | \$79,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 6         | \$84,000        | <b>\$103,350</b> | \$130,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 5         | \$100,000       | <b>\$135,000</b> | \$220,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 1         | \$108,000       | <b>\$108,000</b> | \$108,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 4         | \$200,000       | <b>\$225,000</b> | \$240,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>17</b> | <b>\$79,000</b> | <b>\$124,000</b> | <b>\$240,000</b> |

## GIS / Spatial

**MEDIAN (ALL LEVELS): \$119,500 · N = 8 · \$65,000–\$133,000**

The smallest cohort; directional only. Tracks broadly in line with ecology at mid-career. The absence of very high earners may reflect that GIS roles often sit in support rather than technical advisory positions.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N        | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1        | \$65,000        | <b>\$65,000</b>  | \$65,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 2        | \$100,000       | <b>\$109,500</b> | \$119,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 4        | \$105,000       | <b>\$123,000</b> | \$130,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 1        | \$133,000       | <b>\$133,000</b> | \$133,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>8</b> | <b>\$65,000</b> | <b>\$119,500</b> | <b>\$133,000</b> |

All figures are base salary in AUD excluding super.

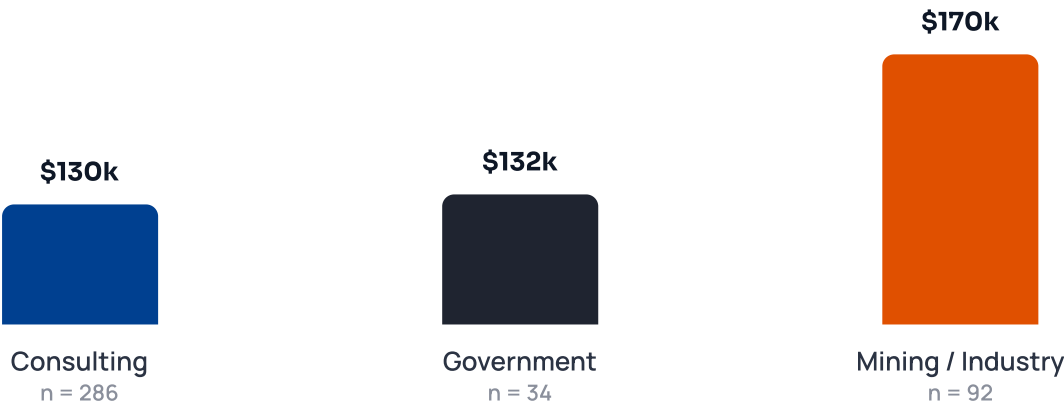
# 05 National Salary by Employer Type

Comparing the three main employer categories - Consulting, Government and Mining / Industry. Relevant for individuals weighing a sector move and for firms benchmarking their packages.

|                                    |                                    |                                           |                                              |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>\$130k</b><br>CONSULTING MEDIAN | <b>\$132k</b><br>GOVERNMENT MEDIAN | <b>\$170k</b><br>MINING / INDUSTRY MEDIAN | <b>31%</b><br>MINING PREMIUM OVER CONSULTING |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|

## Median base salary by employer type

All career levels combined



### SECTOR PAY: THE LIKE-FOR-LIKE PICTURE

The premium for moving in-house is real: at Senior level mining and industry pay a median of \$170,000 against \$125,000 in consulting - a 36% gap - and at Intermediate level \$130,000 versus \$99,500.

Government tells a subtler story. Its \$132,000 headline looks comparable to consulting, and at Intermediate and Senior level it actually pays slightly more (\$109,500 vs \$99,500; \$127,000 vs \$125,000). But the public sector falls behind higher up - \$136,000 vs \$155,000 at Principal, and \$160,000 vs \$200,000 at Senior Principal / Manager, a \$40,000 shortfall.

With 50% of government respondents sitting at Senior level, the level-adjusted median of \$132,313 confirms the headline is not inflated by a senior-heavy sample. Government remains a reasonable mid-career option, but Principal-level professionals and above trade meaningful salary for job security, predictable hours and, in some roles, above-minimum superannuation - a trade-off worth making with eyes open.

## Consulting & professional services

Consulting employs the majority of environmental professionals and provides the baseline against which other sectors are measured. Graduate and Intermediate salaries are the lowest of the three employer types, while Senior Principal / Manager salaries reach \$200,000 at the median.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N          | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 24         | \$65,000        | <b>\$78,000</b>  | \$107,000        |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 66         | \$75,000        | <b>\$99,500</b>  | \$152,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 81         | \$68,700        | <b>\$124,982</b> | \$165,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 52         | \$110,000       | <b>\$155,000</b> | \$270,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 63         | \$120,000       | <b>\$200,000</b> | \$360,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>286</b> | <b>\$65,000</b> | <b>\$130,000</b> | <b>\$360,000</b> |

## Government & public sector

A narrower band than consulting or mining. Government roles typically come with compensating factors - greater job security and more predictable hours. The absence of graduate respondents likely reflects lower entry-level hiring volumes.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0         | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 4         | \$101,700       | <b>\$109,500</b> | \$137,500        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 17        | \$90,000        | <b>\$127,000</b> | \$230,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 6         | \$101,000       | <b>\$136,000</b> | \$167,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 7         | \$115,000       | <b>\$160,000</b> | \$216,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>34</b> | <b>\$90,000</b> | <b>\$131,935</b> | <b>\$230,000</b> |

## Mining / Industry (client-side)

Client-side roles carry a clear and significant premium across every level - the largest single salary driver in the survey, reaching a \$230,000 median at Senior Principal / Manager level.

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 3         | \$70,200        | <b>\$80,000</b>  | \$95,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 22        | \$84,000        | <b>\$130,000</b> | \$171,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 25        | \$135,000       | <b>\$170,000</b> | \$228,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 19        | \$124,932       | <b>\$190,000</b> | \$250,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 23        | \$165,000       | <b>\$230,000</b> | \$320,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>92</b> | <b>\$70,200</b> | <b>\$170,000</b> | <b>\$320,000</b> |

## 06 Western Australia.

259 respondents · 59% of the survey

The strongest dataset in this survey. WA's environmental sector is uniquely shaped by mining and resources, which drives both high demand and strong salaries - particularly at senior and principal levels.

On a level-adjusted basis WA is the highest-paying state at \$145,928, narrowly ahead of QLD and NSW which sit within \$2,000 of each other. Its most significant premium, in this survey, is at Senior Principal / Manager level (\$216,500 median), where the mining sector lifts packages well above east-coast equivalents.

**259**

WA RESPONDENTS

**\$142,500**

RAW MEDIAN

**\$145,928**

LEVEL-ADJUSTED

**\$216,500**

SR PRINCIPAL MEDIAN

### WA - all respondents by career level

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N          | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0-2 yrs          | 12         | \$68,426        | <b>\$76,000</b>  | \$90,000         |
| Intermediate 3-6 yrs               | 55         | \$75,000        | <b>\$105,000</b> | \$171,000        |
| Senior 7-14 yrs                    | 74         | \$93,000        | <b>\$130,000</b> | \$228,000        |
| Principal 15-20 yrs                | 50         | \$101,000       | <b>\$160,000</b> | \$270,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 56         | \$120,000       | <b>\$216,500</b> | \$320,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>247</b> | <b>\$68,426</b> | <b>\$142,500</b> | <b>\$320,000</b> |

#### HOW THIS SECTION IS STRUCTURED

WA data is broken down by employer type (Consulting, Mining / Industry and Government) and then by technical specialisms nested within each employer type. This is more practical and accurate for benchmarking as it allows people to compare like for like and not have the data skewed by other employer types.

## WA - Consulting

Consulting firms account for the majority of WA environmental professionals (172 respondents). The consulting median across all levels is \$129,350 - lower than the WA overall median because the consulting workforce skews toward mid-career practitioners. EIA / Approvals is the highest-paid of the larger specialism groups within consulting (\$140,000, n=51). Water / Hydrology shows an even higher median (\$161,500, n=14), reflecting WA's strong hydro market. Ecology specialisms sit at the lower end, consistent with national trends.

### ALL RESPONSES

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N          | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0-2 yrs          | 11         | \$68,426        | <b>\$75,000</b>  | \$90,000         |
| Intermediate 3-6 yrs               | 38         | \$75,000        | <b>\$95,500</b>  | \$152,000        |
| Senior 7-14 yrs                    | 46         | \$95,000        | <b>\$120,000</b> | \$165,000        |
| Principal 15-20 yrs                | 33         | \$115,000       | <b>\$157,000</b> | \$270,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 36         | \$120,000       | <b>\$202,500</b> | \$300,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>164</b> | <b>\$68,426</b> | <b>\$129,350</b> | <b>\$300,000</b> |

### CONSULTING - BY SPECIALISM

#### EIA / Approvals

N = 51 · MEDIAN \$140,000 · \$68,426-\$300,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0-2 yrs          | 5         | \$68,426        | <b>\$75,000</b>  | \$90,000         |
| Intermediate 3-6 yrs               | 14        | \$75,000        | <b>\$102,500</b> | \$135,500        |
| Senior 7-14 yrs                    | 6         | \$98,000        | <b>\$137,500</b> | \$165,000        |
| Principal 15-20 yrs                | 12        | \$125,000       | <b>\$167,750</b> | \$240,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 14        | \$120,000       | <b>\$217,500</b> | \$300,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>51</b> | <b>\$68,426</b> | <b>\$140,000</b> | <b>\$300,000</b> |

#### Contaminated Land

N = 26 · MEDIAN \$135,000 · \$90,000-\$237,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0-2 yrs          | 1         | \$90,000        | <b>\$90,000</b>  | \$90,000         |
| Intermediate 3-6 yrs               | 7         | \$90,000        | <b>\$96,000</b>  | \$115,000        |
| Senior 7-14 yrs                    | 10        | \$102,500       | <b>\$135,000</b> | \$160,000        |
| Principal 15-20 yrs                | 4         | \$140,100       | <b>\$167,500</b> | \$187,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 4         | \$173,500       | <b>\$208,300</b> | \$237,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>26</b> | <b>\$90,000</b> | <b>\$135,000</b> | <b>\$237,000</b> |

## Water / Hydrology

N = 14 · MEDIAN \$161,500 · \$86,000–\$240,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0         | N/A             | N/A              | N/A              |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 1         | \$86,000        | <b>\$86,000</b>  | \$86,000         |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 5         | \$112,000       | <b>\$120,000</b> | \$165,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 4         | \$155,000       | <b>\$164,000</b> | \$220,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 4         | \$185,000       | <b>\$204,000</b> | \$240,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>14</b> | <b>\$86,000</b> | <b>\$161,500</b> | <b>\$240,000</b> |

## Ecology (Fauna)

N = 32 · MEDIAN \$113,000 · \$75,000–\$200,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1         | \$75,000        | <b>\$75,000</b>  | \$75,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 9         | \$80,000        | <b>\$92,500</b>  | \$109,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 11        | \$100,000       | <b>\$108,574</b> | \$128,400        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 7         | \$120,600       | <b>\$140,000</b> | \$160,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 4         | \$135,000       | <b>\$165,000</b> | \$200,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>32</b> | <b>\$75,000</b> | <b>\$113,000</b> | <b>\$200,000</b> |

## Ecology (Flora)

N = 19 · MEDIAN \$115,000 · \$70,000–\$250,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 4         | \$70,000        | <b>\$75,500</b>  | \$87,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 1         | \$118,125       | <b>\$118,125</b> | \$118,125        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 5         | \$96,492        | <b>\$109,500</b> | \$114,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 3         | \$115,000       | <b>\$125,000</b> | \$157,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 6         | \$150,000       | <b>\$190,000</b> | \$250,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>19</b> | <b>\$70,000</b> | <b>\$115,000</b> | <b>\$250,000</b> |

## GIS / Spatial

N = 3 · MEDIAN \$120,000 · \$105,000–\$126,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N        | MIN              | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|----------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0        | N/A              | N/A              | N/A              |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 0        | N/A              | N/A              | N/A              |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 3        | \$105,000        | <b>\$120,000</b> | \$126,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 0        | N/A              | N/A              | N/A              |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 0        | N/A              | N/A              | N/A              |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>3</b> | <b>\$105,000</b> | <b>\$120,000</b> | <b>\$126,000</b> |

## WA – Mining / Industry

Client-side mining and industry roles in WA carry a significant premium over consulting across all specialisms - an overall median of \$171,000. EIA / Approvals in Mining / Industry has a median of \$180,000, around \$40,000 above the equivalent consulting rate. Data is thinner at specialism level here (most sub-groups n < 10), so treat individual specialism figures as directional.

### ALL RESPONSES

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1         | \$80,000        | <b>\$80,000</b>  | \$80,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 14        | \$84,000        | <b>\$136,000</b> | \$171,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 19        | \$135,000       | <b>\$170,000</b> | \$228,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 14        | \$124,932       | <b>\$182,500</b> | \$246,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 17        | \$165,000       | <b>\$240,000</b> | \$320,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>65</b> | <b>\$80,000</b> | <b>\$171,000</b> | <b>\$320,000</b> |

MINING / INDUSTRY - BY SPECIALISM

### EIA / Approvals

N = 35 · MEDIAN \$180,000 · \$80,000–\$320,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1         | \$80,000        | <b>\$80,000</b>  | \$80,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 5         | \$132,000       | <b>\$155,000</b> | \$171,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 9         | \$142,500       | <b>\$170,000</b> | \$228,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 8         | \$124,932       | <b>\$182,500</b> | \$210,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 12        | \$165,000       | <b>\$240,000</b> | \$320,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>35</b> | <b>\$80,000</b> | <b>\$180,000</b> | <b>\$320,000</b> |

### Water / Hydrology

N = 8 · MEDIAN \$165,000 · \$117,000–\$246,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N        | MIN              | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|----------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0        | N/A              | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 2        | \$117,000        | <b>\$138,500</b> | \$160,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 4        | \$145,300        | <b>\$165,000</b> | \$200,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 1        | \$246,000        | <b>\$246,000</b> | \$246,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 1        | \$180,000        | <b>\$180,000</b> | \$180,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>8</b> | <b>\$117,000</b> | <b>\$165,000</b> | <b>\$246,000</b> |

### Sustainability

N = 6 · MEDIAN \$175,000 · \$84,000–\$240,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N        | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 3        | \$84,000        | <b>\$114,000</b> | \$130,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 1        | \$220,000       | <b>\$220,000</b> | \$220,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 2        | \$230,000       | <b>\$235,000</b> | \$240,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>6</b> | <b>\$84,000</b> | <b>\$175,000</b> | <b>\$240,000</b> |

## WA – Government

Government respondents in WA are a small cohort (n=15) and results should be read with caution. The overall median is \$137,500, with EIA / Approvals the largest sub-group.

### ALL RESPONSES

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N  | MIN       | MEDIAN    | MAX       |
|------------------------------------|----|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0  | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 3  | \$101,700 | \$105,000 | \$137,500 |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 6  | \$119,360 | \$132,435 | \$157,000 |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 3  | \$101,000 | \$157,000 | \$165,000 |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 3  | \$149,000 | \$160,000 | \$216,000 |
| All levels combined                | 15 | \$101,000 | \$137,500 | \$216,000 |

### GOVERNMENT - BY SPECIALISM

## EIA / Approvals

N = 5 · MEDIAN \$157,000 · \$129,870–\$165,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N | MIN       | MEDIAN    | MAX       |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 1 | \$137,500 | \$137,500 | \$137,500 |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 2 | \$129,870 | \$143,435 | \$157,000 |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 2 | \$157,000 | \$161,000 | \$165,000 |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| All levels combined                | 5 | \$129,870 | \$157,000 | \$165,000 |

## Sustainability

N = 3 · MEDIAN \$105,000 · \$101,700–\$135,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N | MIN       | MEDIAN    | MAX       |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 2 | \$101,700 | \$103,350 | \$105,000 |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 1 | \$135,000 | \$135,000 | \$135,000 |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| All levels combined                | 3 | \$101,700 | \$105,000 | \$135,000 |

# 07 Queensland.

59 respondents

QLD's raw median of \$148,000 sits just ahead of WA, but this reflects a more senior respondent profile (29% at Senior Principal / Manager vs 22% in WA) rather than a genuinely higher market. On a level-adjusted basis QLD sits at \$144,473 - just below WA.

In this survey, at like-for-like comparisons, QLD pays more than WA at Graduate and Senior levels, suggesting a genuinely competitive market for experienced practitioners. Its market is diverse - mining in Central and North QLD, infrastructure and renewables in the south-east, and a large ecology sector driven by the Reef, vegetation management and the 2032 Olympics pipeline.

**59**

QLD RESPONDENTS

**\$148,000**

RAW MEDIAN

**\$144,473**

LEVEL-ADJUSTED

**\$360k**

HIGHEST REPORTED

## QLD - all respondents by career level

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0-2 yrs          | 5         | \$65,000        | <b>\$82,000</b>  | \$95,000         |
| Intermediate 3-6 yrs               | 11        | \$83,000        | <b>\$102,000</b> | \$157,000        |
| Senior 7-14 yrs                    | 16        | \$100,000       | <b>\$137,800</b> | \$174,000        |
| Principal 15-20 yrs                | 9         | \$110,000       | <b>\$167,000</b> | \$250,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 17        | \$130,000       | <b>\$195,000</b> | \$360,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>58</b> | <b>\$65,000</b> | <b>\$148,000</b> | <b>\$360,000</b> |

## QLD – salary by technical specialism

Specialisms with fewer than 3 respondents in this state are not reported.

### EIA / Approvals

N = 22 · MEDIAN \$163,282 · \$70,000–\$360,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 3         | \$70,000        | <b>\$82,000</b>  | \$95,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 3         | \$95,000        | <b>\$104,000</b> | \$106,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 3         | \$130,000       | <b>\$160,816</b> | \$170,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 3         | \$110,000       | <b>\$172,000</b> | \$185,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 10        | \$130,000       | <b>\$211,340</b> | \$360,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>22</b> | <b>\$70,000</b> | <b>\$163,282</b> | <b>\$360,000</b> |

### Water / Hydrology

N = 5 · MEDIAN \$150,000 · \$83,000–\$210,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N        | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 2        | \$83,000        | <b>\$105,250</b> | \$127,500        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 1        | \$174,000       | <b>\$174,000</b> | \$174,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 1        | \$150,000       | <b>\$150,000</b> | \$150,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 1        | \$210,000       | <b>\$210,000</b> | \$210,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>5</b> | <b>\$83,000</b> | <b>\$150,000</b> | <b>\$210,000</b> |

### Ecology (Fauna)

N = 8 · MEDIAN \$126,500 · \$92,400–\$152,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N        | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 1        | \$92,400        | <b>\$92,400</b>  | \$92,400         |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 5        | \$111,000       | <b>\$120,000</b> | \$145,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 2        | \$133,000       | <b>\$142,500</b> | \$152,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>8</b> | <b>\$92,400</b> | <b>\$126,500</b> | <b>\$152,000</b> |

### Ecology (Flora)

N = 7 · MEDIAN \$117,000 · \$95,500–\$185,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N        | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 2        | \$95,500        | <b>\$105,250</b> | \$115,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 3        | \$100,000       | <b>\$117,000</b> | \$135,600        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 2        | \$150,000       | <b>\$167,500</b> | \$185,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>7</b> | <b>\$95,500</b> | <b>\$117,000</b> | <b>\$185,000</b> |

## 08 New South Wales.

61 respondents

NSW's raw median of \$128,000 understates its true position: on a level-adjusted basis NSW comes in at \$143,864 - almost identical to QLD and just below WA.

In this survey, NSW leads all states at Intermediate level (\$111,500), reflecting strong demand for mid-career practitioners in Sydney and the broader market, driven by infrastructure and contaminated land work. The renewables sector is growing rapidly, creating demand for ecologists and approvals practitioners across regional areas.

**61**

NSW RESPONDENTS

**\$128,000**

RAW MEDIAN

**\$143,864**

LEVEL-ADJUSTED

**\$111,500**

LEADS AT INTERMEDIATE

### NSW - all respondents by career level

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0-2 yrs          | 5         | \$79,000        | <b>\$80,000</b>  | \$88,000         |
| Intermediate 3-6 yrs               | 16        | \$82,000        | <b>\$111,500</b> | \$133,000        |
| Senior 7-14 yrs                    | 22        | \$90,000        | <b>\$132,500</b> | \$230,000        |
| Principal 15-20 yrs                | 7         | \$108,000       | <b>\$158,000</b> | \$220,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 9         | \$115,000       | <b>\$198,000</b> | \$280,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>59</b> | <b>\$79,000</b> | <b>\$128,000</b> | <b>\$280,000</b> |

## NSW – salary by technical specialism

Specialisms with fewer than 3 respondents in this state are not reported.

### EIA / Approvals

N = 15 · MEDIAN \$154,385 · \$82,500–\$220,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1         | \$82,500        | <b>\$82,500</b>  | \$82,500         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 4         | \$86,444        | <b>\$109,000</b> | \$120,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 2         | \$120,000       | <b>\$135,000</b> | \$150,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 4         | \$154,385       | <b>\$174,000</b> | \$220,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 4         | \$160,000       | <b>\$185,275</b> | \$205,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>15</b> | <b>\$82,500</b> | <b>\$154,385</b> | <b>\$220,000</b> |

### Contaminated Land

N = 16 · MEDIAN \$130,000 · \$80,000–\$223,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 2         | \$80,000        | <b>\$84,000</b>  | \$88,000         |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 2         | \$82,000        | <b>\$95,500</b>  | \$109,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 9         | \$114,400       | <b>\$130,000</b> | \$153,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 1         | \$161,000       | <b>\$161,000</b> | \$161,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 2         | \$198,000       | <b>\$210,500</b> | \$223,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>16</b> | <b>\$80,000</b> | <b>\$130,000</b> | <b>\$223,000</b> |

### Water / Hydrology

N = 3 · MEDIAN \$114,000 · \$90,000–\$114,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N        | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 2        | \$114,000       | <b>\$114,000</b> | \$114,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 1        | \$90,000        | <b>\$90,000</b>  | \$90,000         |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>3</b> | <b>\$90,000</b> | <b>\$114,000</b> | <b>\$114,000</b> |

### Ecology (Fauna)

N = 6 · MEDIAN \$128,000 · \$98,000–\$280,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N        | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0        | N/A             | <b>N/A</b>       | N/A              |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 2        | \$98,000        | <b>\$113,000</b> | \$128,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 2        | \$116,000       | <b>\$122,000</b> | \$128,000        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 1        | \$147,000       | <b>\$147,000</b> | \$147,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 1        | \$280,000       | <b>\$280,000</b> | \$280,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>6</b> | <b>\$98,000</b> | <b>\$128,000</b> | <b>\$280,000</b> |

## Ecology (Flora)

N = 7 · MEDIAN \$124,000 · \$80,000–\$275,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N | MIN       | MEDIAN    | MAX       |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1 | \$80,000  | \$80,000  | \$80,000  |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 4 | \$118,000 | \$129,500 | \$138,000 |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 2 | \$115,000 | \$195,000 | \$275,000 |
| All levels combined                | 7 | \$80,000  | \$124,000 | \$275,000 |

## Sustainability

N = 3 · MEDIAN \$93,750 · \$79,000–\$108,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N | MIN       | MEDIAN    | MAX       |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1 | \$79,000  | \$79,000  | \$79,000  |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 1 | \$93,750  | \$93,750  | \$93,750  |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 1 | \$108,000 | \$108,000 | \$108,000 |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| All levels combined                | 3 | \$79,000  | \$93,750  | \$108,000 |

## 09 Victoria.

38 respondents · read with caution

The smallest of the four main state datasets. VIC's level-adjusted median of \$135,913 is the lowest of the four, around \$10,000 below WA, QLD and NSW.

This genuine gap is consistent with Melbourne's consulting market being more competitive on volume but less influenced by a high-paying resources sector. In this survey, Victorian Principal-level respondents reported the highest median salary at this level, although the sample is small (n=7) and should be treated as directional. The Melbourne market is active, with significant infrastructure-driven work and a strong water and contaminated land sector.

**38**

VIC RESPONDENTS

**\$123,500**

RAW MEDIAN

**\$135,913**

LEVEL-ADJUSTED

**\$173,580**

LEADS AT PRINCIPAL

### VIC – all respondents by career level

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N         | MIN             | MEDIAN           | MAX              |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 4         | \$70,200        | <b>\$74,075</b>  | \$107,000        |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 8         | \$78,000        | <b>\$95,000</b>  | \$120,000        |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 7         | \$102,000       | <b>\$118,000</b> | \$137,500        |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 7         | \$115,000       | <b>\$173,580</b> | \$220,000        |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 8         | \$169,000       | <b>\$187,500</b> | \$230,000        |
| <b>All levels combined</b>         | <b>34</b> | <b>\$70,200</b> | <b>\$123,500</b> | <b>\$230,000</b> |

## VIC – salary by technical specialism

Specialisms with fewer than 3 respondents in this state are not reported.

### EIA / Approvals

N = 4 · MEDIAN \$185,000 · \$137,500–\$200,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N | MIN       | MEDIAN    | MAX       |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 1 | \$137,500 | \$137,500 | \$137,500 |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 1 | \$190,000 | \$190,000 | \$190,000 |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 2 | \$180,000 | \$190,000 | \$200,000 |
| All levels combined                | 4 | \$137,500 | \$185,000 | \$200,000 |

### Contaminated Land

N = 13 · MEDIAN \$115,000 · \$73,150–\$220,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N  | MIN       | MEDIAN    | MAX       |
|------------------------------------|----|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 2  | \$73,150  | \$90,075  | \$107,000 |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 4  | \$78,000  | \$83,850  | \$115,000 |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 1  | \$115,000 | \$115,000 | \$115,000 |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 5  | \$150,000 | \$173,580 | \$220,000 |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 1  | \$169,000 | \$169,000 | \$169,000 |
| All levels combined                | 13 | \$73,150  | \$115,000 | \$220,000 |

### Water / Hydrology

N = 9 · MEDIAN \$130,000 · \$70,200–\$230,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N | MIN       | MEDIAN    | MAX       |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1 | \$70,200  | \$70,200  | \$70,200  |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 1 | \$100,000 | \$100,000 | \$100,000 |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 3 | \$102,000 | \$118,000 | \$130,000 |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 4 | \$176,000 | \$200,500 | \$230,000 |
| All levels combined                | 9 | \$70,200  | \$130,000 | \$230,000 |

### Ecology (Fauna)

N = 4 · MEDIAN \$117,500 · \$75,000–\$127,000

| CAREER LEVEL                       | N | MIN       | MEDIAN    | MAX       |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Graduate / Junior 0–2 yrs          | 1 | \$75,000  | \$75,000  | \$75,000  |
| Intermediate 3–6 yrs               | 2 | \$115,000 | \$117,500 | \$120,000 |
| Senior 7–14 yrs                    | 1 | \$127,000 | \$127,000 | \$127,000 |
| Principal 15–20 yrs                | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| Senior Principal / Manager 20+ yrs | 0 | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       |
| All levels combined                | 4 | \$75,000  | \$117,500 | \$127,000 |

# 10 Other States & Territories

SA, TAS, NT and the ACT each contributed a small number of responses. Sample sizes are too low for reliable salary tables - the data below is context only and should not be used for individual benchmarking.

## ● SOUTH AUSTRALIA · SA

Median base · 10 respondents · \$95,000 – \$278,000

**\$134,000**

Contaminated Land was the most common specialism (4 respondents), spread across Principal, Intermediate and Senior Principal levels. The relatively high median likely reflects the seniority profile of respondents rather than a generally high-salary market.

## ● TASMANIA · TAS

Median base · 6 respondents · \$68,700 – \$156,000

**\$105,000**

EIA / Approvals and Water/Hydrology were the primary specialisms. The Tasmanian median is the lowest of any state, which may reflect smaller project scale and fewer Mining / Industry roles.

## ● NORTHERN TERRITORY · NT

Median base · 5 respondents · \$75,000 – \$175,000

**\$115,000**

A broad spread of specialisms given the small sample. The NT level is lower than WA despite a similarly resource-influenced economy, though the small sample makes this hard to interpret with confidence.

## ● AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY · ACT

Median base · 1 respondent · single respondent

**\$197,500**

A single respondent - a Senior Principal / Manager in EIA / Approvals working in consulting. No further analysis is possible from one data point.

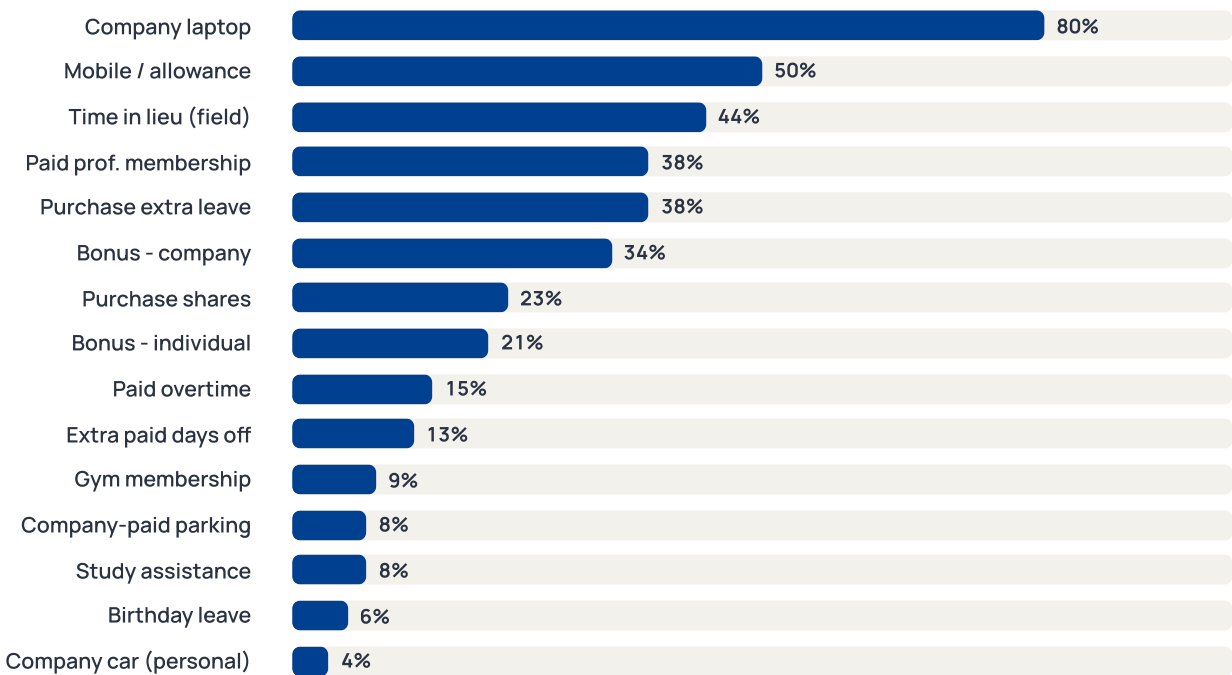
# 11 Benefits & Perks

Beyond base salary, what respondents reported receiving as part of their current package.

A company laptop is near-universal (80%) and a baseline expectation rather than a genuine differentiator. The more meaningful differentiators are time in lieu for fieldwork, paid professional-association membership, company performance bonuses, and the ability to purchase extra leave - all of which vary significantly between employers.

## Benefits received

Share of 440 respondents receiving each benefit



## Superannuation

The statutory superannuation rate increased to 12% from 1 July 2025. 80% receive the statutory 12% minimum. Enhanced super above 12% is rare and appears mostly in government and large ASX-listed firms. Note that some respondents at large international firms reported super deducted *from* base salary rather than paid on top - an important distinction to clarify in any offer.

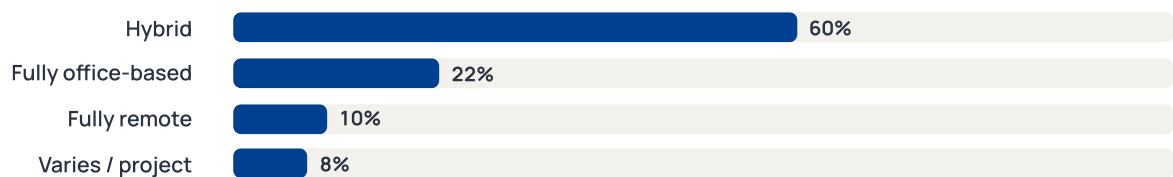


# 12 Working Arrangements

Working flexibility is now a standard expectation, and the data confirms hybrid is firmly the norm across the sector.

## How environmental professionals work

Share of 440 respondents



Hybrid is dominant at 60%, with most working 2–3 office days and field days considered separately. Fully remote remains a minority at 10%, more common in senior and principal roles where output is easier to assess independently of location.

The 22% who are fully office-based are disproportionately in Mining / Industry client-side roles, where site attendance or company policy drives a more regular on-site presence. Consulting firms have largely accepted hybrid as the default, though most still expect staff in for client meetings, collaboration and graduate mentoring.

# 13 The Gender Pay Gap

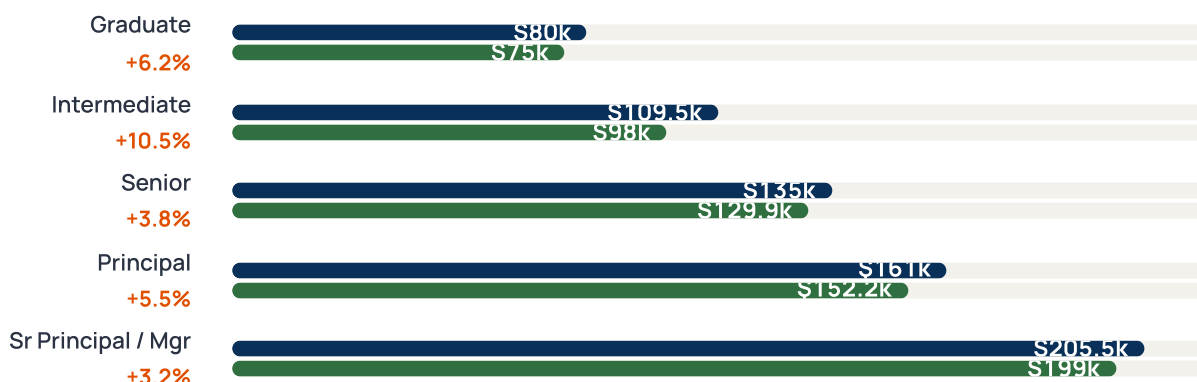
Female respondents reported a median salary 13.3% below that of male respondents. This figure is unadjusted and may be influenced by career stage, specialism, working patterns and respondent mix.

|                                                                          |                                                                            |                                                      |                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>\$150,000</b><br><small>MALE MEDIAN</small><br><small>n = 225</small> | <b>\$130,000</b><br><small>FEMALE MEDIAN</small><br><small>n = 189</small> | <b>13.3%</b><br><small>MEDIAN GAP (M OVER F)</small> | <b>31%</b><br><small>OF WOMEN FEEL UNDERPAID</small> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|

## Median base salary by career level & gender

AUD, excluding super

■ Male ■ Female



The gap is widest at Intermediate (10.5%) - the stage where many move from junior practitioner into independent project work. At Senior level it narrows considerably to 3.8%, and stays relatively small (3.2–5.5%) at Principal and above. This suggests the headline gap is partly explained by a concentration of female respondents at earlier career stages, rather than a uniform disparity at every level.

That said, the sentiment data reinforces that something is going on: **31% of female respondents believe they are underpaid, versus 21% of male respondents**. Only 36% of women feel confident they are paid at market rate, against 41% of men.

**Important note.** This survey did not ask whether respondents work full or part time. All figures are treated as full-time-equivalent, but part-time working may be more prevalent among female environmental professionals and could be influencing these figures. Future editions will include a working-hours question.

# The Gender Pay Gap: A Deeper Look

## Where the gap actually lives

The headline 13.3% gender pay gap looks like a sector-wide problem. The employer breakdown tells a different story. Female respondents in Mining / Industry report an identical median salary to their male counterparts - \$170,000 each, a gap of exactly zero. Government shows a modest gap of 3.8%. The 13.3% headline is almost entirely driven by consulting, where male respondents earn a median of \$136,250 versus \$120,000 for female respondents - an 11.9% difference.

|                                                                          |                                                                              |                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>0%</div> <div>MINING / INDUSTRY GAP</div> <div>\$170,000 each</div> | <div>11.9%</div> <div>CONSULTING GAP</div> <div>\$136,250 vs \$120,000</div> | <div>3.8%</div> <div>GOVERNMENT GAP</div> <div>\$135,000 vs \$129,870</div> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### Gender pay gap by employer type

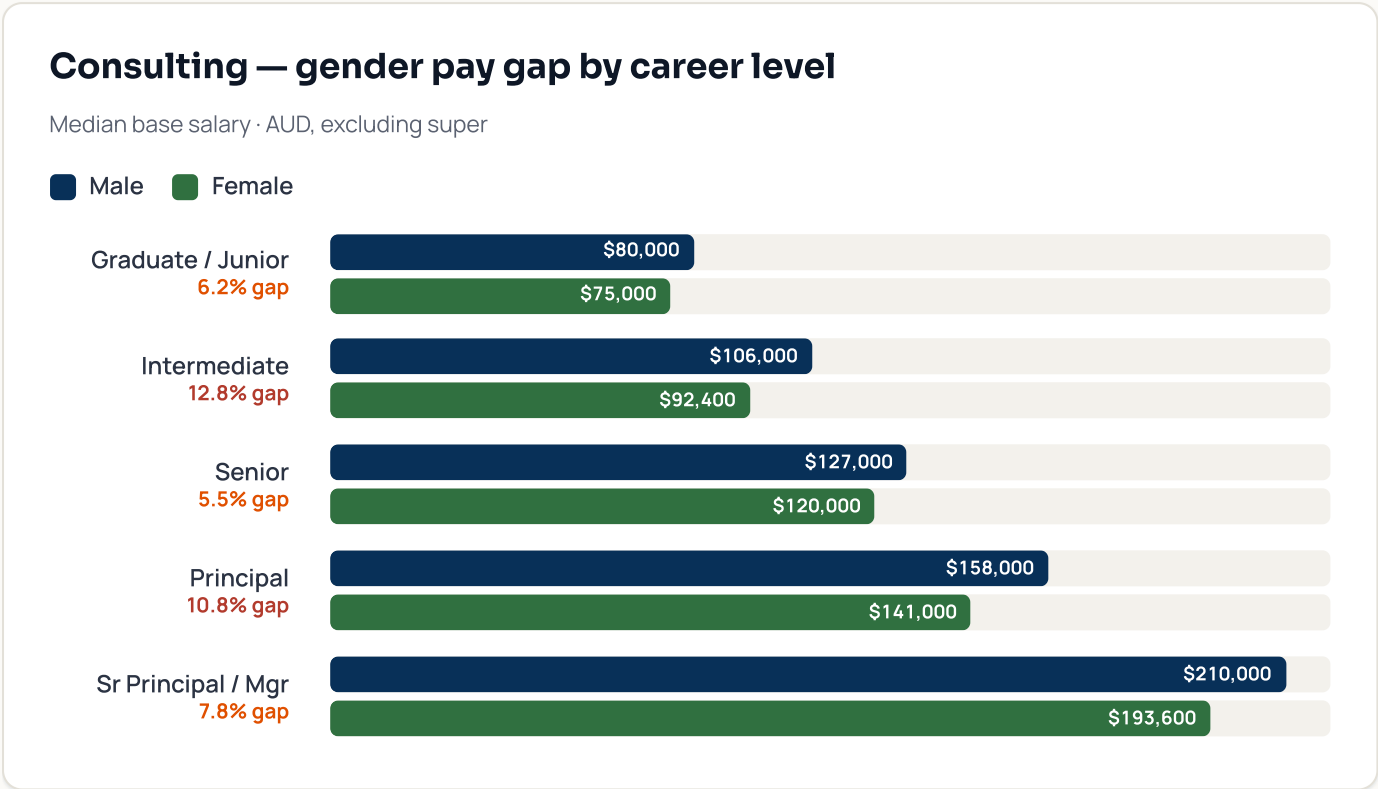
Median base salary · AUD, excluding super



This matters for how the gap is interpreted and addressed. The problem is not evenly distributed across the sector - it is concentrated in consulting, where the majority of environmental professionals work. Whether this reflects differences in negotiation patterns, part-time working prevalence, seniority progression rates, or something else is not captured in this survey, but it is a more targeted finding than the headline figure alone.

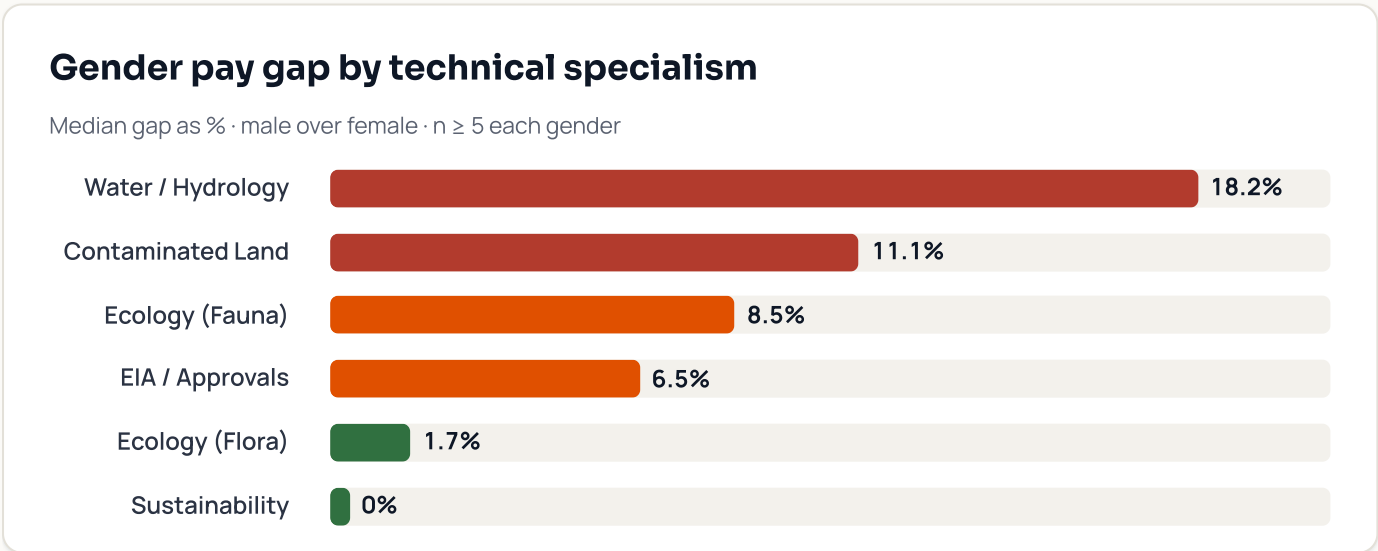
# Within consulting, the gap is widest at Intermediate and Principal level

Breaking the consulting gap down by career level shows it is not uniform. The largest gaps appear at Intermediate (12.8%) and Principal (10.8%) - the two levels where salary negotiation and career progression decisions have the biggest long-term impact. The gap narrows at Senior level (5.5%) before widening again at Principal.



## By specialism, Water / Hydrology has the largest gap

Across specialisms, Water / Hydrology shows the widest gender pay gap at 18.2% - the largest of any discipline in the survey. Contaminated Land follows at 11.1% and Ecology (Fauna) at 8.5%. Ecology (Flora) and Sustainability show near-zero gaps (1.7% and 0% respectively), though sample sizes are smaller.

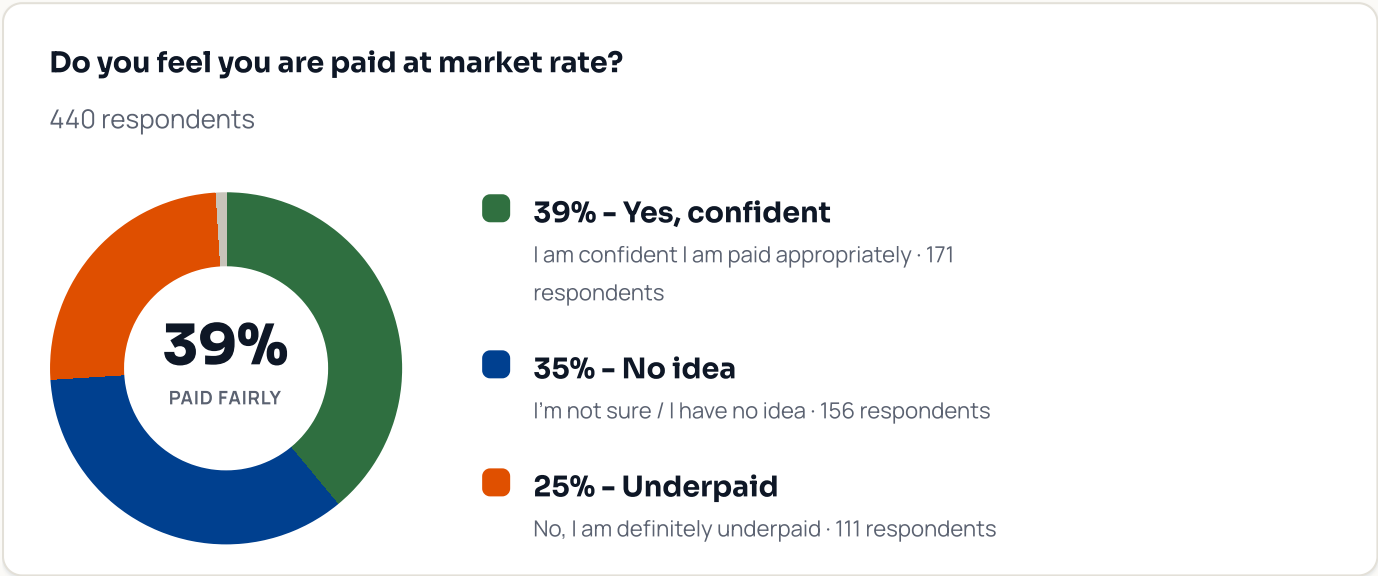


The EIA / Approvals gap of 6.5% is below the national average - notable given that this is the highest-paid specialism overall, with a large female cohort (n=83 female vs n=52 male in this survey).

EIA / Approvals is 61% female - it is the only female-majority specialism in the survey, and by a significant margin. This is the highest-paid discipline in the report. Contaminated Land (72% male) and Water / Hydrology (70% male) are the most male-dominated. Ecology is close to even - Fauna is 54/45 male/female, Flora is essentially 50/50.

# 14 Pay Sentiment

Respondents were asked: do you feel you are paid enough, paid fairly, and paid at market rate? The answers are striking. To our knowledge, no publicly available Australian environmental salary survey currently provides this level of discipline-specific benchmarking.

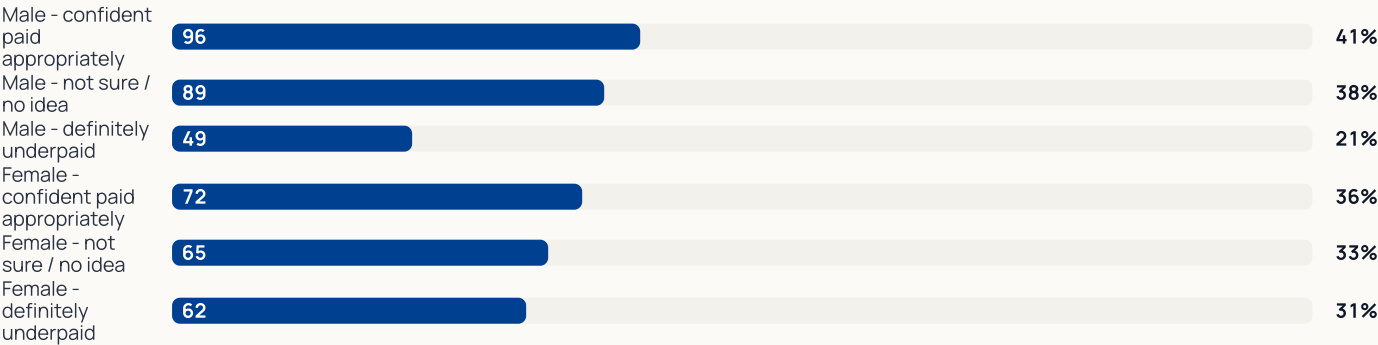


Only 39% feel confident they are paid at market rate. A quarter believe they are definitely underpaid. The most striking number is the **35% who simply have no idea** - they cannot assess whether their salary is fair because they have no reliable reference point.

### WHY THIS SURVEY EXISTS

Environmental professionals have historically had very limited access to sector-specific salary data. The result is that a significant portion of the workforce is making career and salary decisions without adequate information. This report is one step toward changing that.

## Pay sentiment by gender



# 15 About Gather Recruitment

Gather specialises in executive search and white-collar technical roles for the Mining & Resources, Engineering & Technology and Environment & Water sectors.

## We Bring People Together.

**gather.**

1. to bring together
2. to collect from a variety of sources
3. to increase in speed or momentum
4. to understand

We spend our days exploring all available sources to find talented individuals who can add value to our clients' businesses, then advising them and offering them the best opportunities available for their careers.

We are proactive in our approach, but not aggressive. We believe the value of a good recruiter comes from properly understanding the needs of both the client and the candidate, and being able to articulate this to get a good outcome for everyone.

At Gather, our consultants work hard to ensure a hassle-free recruitment process for you. They possess specialised knowledge and expertise in their respective industries, guaranteeing that you receive the best advice and options available.

## Our services

A full range of recruitment and workforce solutions tailored to the technical and resources sectors.



### Executive Search

Retained, confidential search for board, C-suite and senior leadership roles.



### Permanent Recruitment

Engaged and contingent search for permanent technical and professional roles.



### Contract & Labour Hire

Flexible contract and labour-hire resourcing for projects and peak demand.



### Third Party Payroll

Compliant payroll and contractor management for your own sourced workers.



### Outplacement Support

Career transition and outplacement support for departing employees.

# Our industry specialisations

We recruit across four core sectors, covering roles from graduate level through to board and C-suite.

## Mining & Resources



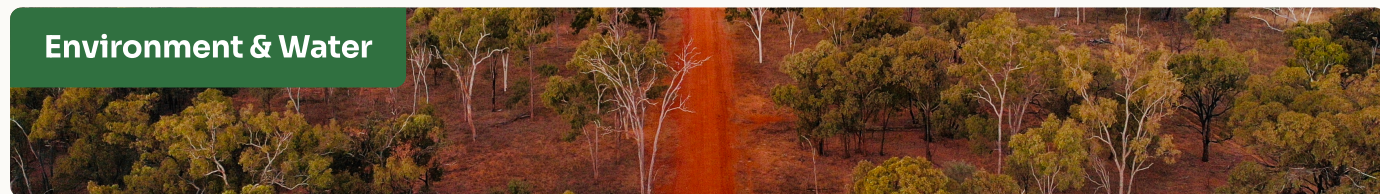
- Senior Management
- Exploration Managers
- Mine Managers
- Exploration Geologists
- Exploration Field Assistants
- Camp Logistics Managers
- Field Supervisors
- Mine Engineers
- Mine Surveyors
- Mine Geologists
- HSE Managers
- Environmental Advisors

## Engineering & Technology



- Senior Management
- Civil Engineers
- Structural Engineers
- Geotechnical Engineers
- Mechanical Engineers
- Electrical Engineers
- Building Services Engineers
- Industrial Engineers
- Manufacturing Managers
- Project Engineers
- Project Managers
- Designers & Drafters

## Environment & Water



- Environmental Engineers
- Environmental Scientists
- Environmental Advisors
- Botanists & Zoologists
- Geoscientists
- Bushfire Consultants
- Geochemists
- Archaeologists
- Hydrogeologists
- Hydrologists
- Water Engineers
- Flood Modellers

## Executive & Senior Management



- Chief Executive Officers (CEO)
- Chief Operating Officers (COO)
- Chief Financial Officers (CFO)
- Chief Information Officers (CIO)
- Board Appointments
- Managing Directors
- General Managers
- Business Unit Managers
- Commercial Managers
- State Managers
- Group Managers
- Principals

# Thank you.

Thank you for reading the 2026 Australian Environmental Salary Survey. We hope it gives you a clearer, more confident picture of where you - or your team - sit in the market.

## Looking for your next role, or looking to hire?

Whether you are an environmental professional weighing up your next move, or an employer building a team, we would love to hear from you. Get in touch with the Gather team for a confidential, no-obligation conversation.

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### EMAIL

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### LET'S CONNECT



# 16 Methodology & Notes

## Survey design

15 questions covering location, gender, career level, years of experience, job title (optional), company name (optional), base salary, super rate, benefits, working arrangement, employer type, specialism, qualifications, company size and pay sentiment. All questions were optional.

## Distribution

LinkedIn (Gather personal and company pages), direct email to the Gather candidate database, and the ECA, GEMG and EIANZ member networks. Survey responses were collected between 1 May and 31 May 2026.

## Sample

446 total responses; 440 valid after excluding 6 overseas / non-Australian respondents.

## Geographic representation

WA accounts for 59% of responses, reflecting Gather's primary market and network rather than the national distribution of professionals. East-coast results - particularly VIC (n=38) and SA (n=10) - should be treated with more caution than WA (n=259) or the combined QLD/NSW datasets. Results for WA should be considered the most reliable due to the larger sample size.

## Salary definition

All figures are base salary in AUD, excluding superannuation. Total remuneration can be calculated by adding the applicable super rate.

## Salary data cleaning

Salary responses were free-text numeric entries. Responses below \$40,000 or above \$500,000 were excluded as implausible. Entries with decimals, commas or dollar signs were cleaned programmatically.

## Small sub-groups

Where a career-level sub-group has fewer than 5 respondents, treat results as directional. Specialism-by-state combinations below 3 respondents are not reported. N/A indicates no responses for that career level.

## Part-time and working hours

This survey did not ask whether respondents work full or part time. All figures are treated as reported and may not represent full-time equivalents in all cases. Future editions will include a working-hours question.

## Employer-type classification

Consolidated into three buckets - Consulting / Professional Services, Government / Public Sector, and Mining / Industry. A small number of "Other" responses are excluded from employer-type tables.