

Legal requirement	<p>Drainage management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No new drainage systems have been established without first obtaining a water use licence under the National Water Act, 36 of 1998 and, where necessary, an environmental authorisation under the National Environmental Management Act, 107 of 1998 	<p>Drainage</p> <p>Draining wetlands constitutes a water use (section 21(c) and 21(i) of the National Water Act, 36 of 1998, and possibly others) and requires a water use licence as well as Environmental Authorisation in terms of the EIA Regulations (December 2014). Such authorisation is unlikely to be granted. If these are identified as wetlands or riparian areas they must not be planted to sugarcane.</p> <p>Where drainage exists, no obvious soil loss or other harmful effects on the environment should be evident, as required by the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act Regulations</p> <p>Subsurface drainage may be provided in cases where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irrigation is practiced and natural drainage is insufficient to maintain a uniform and adequate water table, and/or providing adequate leaching of salts, and where electrical conductivity is 2.5 or more, or exchangeable sodium percentage is 15 or more (see SASRI Information Sheets 5.11 and 5.12). Wet agricultural land is presently under cultivation. Although such land may be drained (provided it is considered lawful under the NWA, CARA and the EIA Regulations), the costs and effort to drain should be weighed carefully against any increase in yield likely to be obtained from the drained area.
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Better Management Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing drainage systems are managed to maintain flow • Existing drains are stabilised with grass • Drain outlets are protected to prevent erosion • An annual maintenance programme exists 	<p>Maintenance Programme</p> <p>An annual maintenance programme of the drainage system is necessary. Where soil has been deposited in existing drains no mechanical means are allowed to be used to clean the drains; the deposit may only be removed by hand. This is to prevent the reshaping of drainage structures or alterations of flow paths by machines. In addition, mechanical machines are likely to leave the drains bare which pose the risk of erosion before the sides are re-vegetated. A good vegetative cover that does not hinder the flow of water should be maintained.</p>
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