

2014 Regional Snapshot

Are the extent and condition of our saltmarshes improving?

The marine environment provides valuable resources for regional economies, supporting tourism, commercial and recreational fishing, aquaculture, shipping and mining. Most South Australians live near the coast, and many coastal and marine systems are under pressure from human impacts.

Saltmarshes are low coastal shrublands comprised of salt-tolerant plants that are frequently inundated by tides or storm-induced water surges. Like mangroves, saltmarsh habitats form a transition zone between land and marine ecosystems.

Saltmarshes trap sediment and prevent coastal erosion. They also maintain coastal water quality, cycle nutrients, store carbon and provide food and habitat for coastal and marine animals in South Australia, such as the critically endangered orange-bellied parrot.

Saltmarsh is nationally listed as a [threatened ecological community](#). Threats in the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region include clearance and fragmentation, coastal development, construction of tidal barriers and drains, off-road vehicles, decreased water quality, pollution, grazing and invasive species.

The health of saltmarsh habitats relies on the management of recreational activities, coastal development, stock grazing pressure and water quality within catchments.



Trends in saltmarsh
extent and condition



State target

Improve condition of coastal and marine ecosystems

Trend in extent and condition

Unknown

Ongoing efforts will be needed to monitor and protect our saltmarsh

Changes in the extent of saltmarsh in the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region are not known (map above).

Trends in the condition of saltmarsh across South Australia are not known.

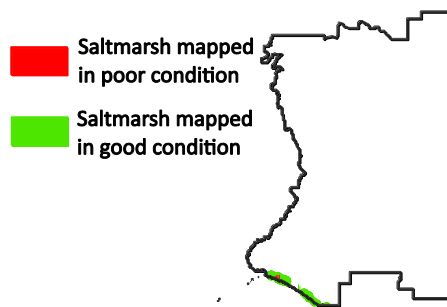
Where we are at (2007)

Good

Nearly all saltmarsh is in 'good' condition in the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region

Approximately 6 per cent of the saltmarsh in South Australia is in the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region.

Broad-scale mapping across South Australia by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources between 1997 and 2007 classed nearly all saltmarsh in 'good' condition (map on right). Detailed field surveys of saltmarsh condition have not been undertaken in any NRM region in South Australia.



Reliability of information



Fair

Further information:

[Technical information for this report](#), [Coast Protection Board](#)