

2013 State Report Card

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 grasslands that are frequently overflowed by the tide. 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 environments are nationally listed as a [threatened ecological community](#). Threats 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 and water quality within catchments.



Regional 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

Saltmarshes are present in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges, Eyre Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, Northern and Yorke, SA Arid Lands, SA Murray-Darling Basin and the South East NRM regions.

Changes in the extent of saltmarsh in most NRM regions are unknown. In the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM region, saltmarsh covers 74 per cent of its former extent (map above).

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

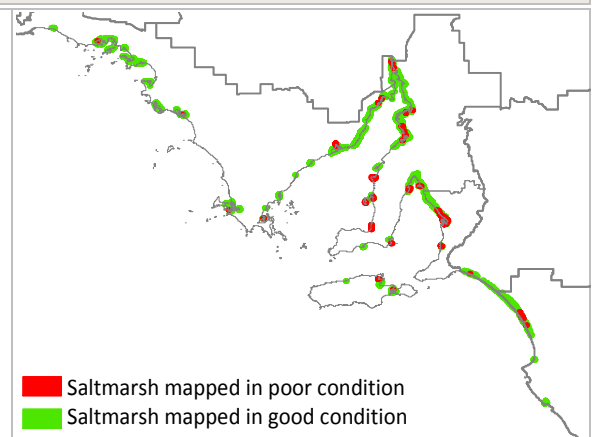
Where we are at (2007)

Good

Over 90 per cent of saltmarsh is in 'good' condition

Approximately 68 per cent of the saltmarsh in South Australia is in the Northern and Yorke (45 per cent) and Eyre Peninsula (23 per cent) NRM regions. Broad-scale mapping across South Australia by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources between 1997 and 2007 classed most saltmarsh in 'good' condition (map on right).

Detailed field surveys of saltmarsh condition have not been undertaken in any NRM region in South Australia.



Red: Saltmarsh mapped in poor condition
Green: Saltmarsh mapped in good condition

Reliability of information



Fair

Further information:

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