

# 2014 Regional Snapshot

## Are the extent and connectivity of our native vegetation improving?

South Australia's native vegetation—from small ground covers and native grasses to large trees and water plants—is fundamental to the health of our environment and the prosperity of our primary industries.

Native vegetation protects our land and water from erosion and dryland salinity, while improving our agricultural productivity and storing [carbon](#). It provides habitat for our native animals, places for recreation and is culturally important for Aboriginal people.

Human developments have degraded the condition of our native vegetation through clearance and fragmentation. Native plants and animals that cannot move between patches become more susceptible to local disturbances that threaten their survival (e.g. fires and [pests](#)).

This report summarises the coverage (extent) and fragmentation (connectivity) of our native vegetation, and should be read alongside reports on vegetation [condition](#) and [protection](#).



Trend in the extent and connectivity of native vegetation



State target

Increase extent & improve condition of native vegetation

Trend (1999-2014)

Stable

Our remaining native vegetation has been protected by legislation since 1991

Our remaining native vegetation has been protected by [legislation](#) since 1991, which intends to stabilise both the extent and connectivity of our native vegetation. Improved land management, re-vegetation, natural regeneration and [pest plant and animal](#) control since that time have also helped to stabilise native vegetation cover, but pressures such as over-grazing has reduced its extent and condition in some areas. Government legislation permits the clearance of native vegetation for some developments, but the clearance must be offset by additional investment in re-vegetation. Some [illegal clearance](#) also occurs.

Natural resource managers prioritise re-vegetation efforts to expand intact areas of native vegetation and to create corridors to connect isolated patches. Together with our network of [protected areas](#), this improves the survival of native plants and animals.

Where we are at (2014)

Fair

Minimal large-scale clearance has occurred in the north of the NRM region, but agricultural and urban development has cleared much of the vegetation in the southern NRM region.

About 54 per cent of our pre-European native vegetation remains (see map on right).

The majority of vegetation is found in the northern SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM region, and is managed for livestock production.

We have severely degraded much of our native vegetation. Substantial conservation investments are required to improve its [condition](#) and to connect patches.

Due to the large scale historical clearance of native vegetation, we do not expect that the extent of native vegetation will change significantly.

Remaining vegetation extent:  
54 per cent  
Percentage of connected patches:  
46 per cent

 Native vegetation  
 Agricultural and urban areas



Reliability of information



Very good

Further information:

[Technical information for this report](#), [DEWNR native vegetation](#), [Nature Conservation Society of South Australia](#)