Native flora: percentage declining

Biodiversity | Coastal and marine

South Australia's environmental trend and condition report cards 2023

Trend
Getting worse

Condition
Unknown

Reliability
Poor

STATE

Trend

The percentage of coastal and marine native flora species declining is getting worse, but this trend has poor reliability.

This assessment is based on results for 113 of 179 coastal and marine native flora species. Notable examples include seagrasses, mangroves, coastal samphire and coastal dune vegetation. This report card includes analyses of unstructured data to try to maximise the number of species able to be assessed. The low reliability score reflects potential biases and limitations of this approach, which was still only able to assess 63.1% of species.

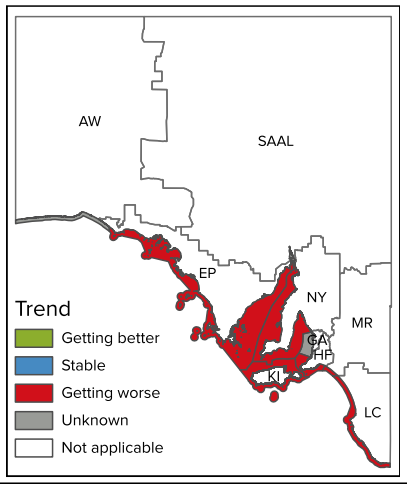
When compared to a 2002 baseline, this 2022 assessment indicates the percentage of species showing a declining trend is getting worse in 6 regions (Hills and Fleurieu (HF), Eyre Peninsula (EP), Kangaroo Island (KI), Northern and Yorke (NY), Murraylands and Riverland (MR) and Limestone Coast (LC)) and unknown in 3 regions (Alinytjara Wilurara (AW), South Australian Arid Lands (SAAL) and Green Adelaide (GA)) (top figure).

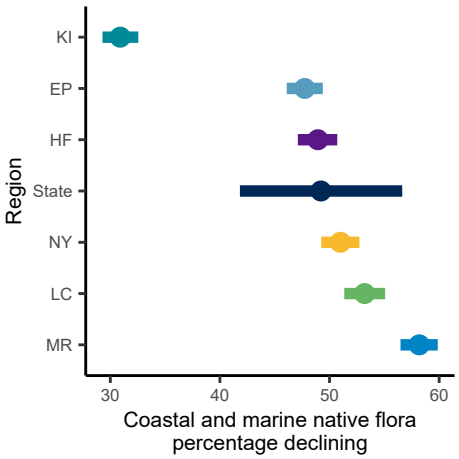
Condition

The estimated percentage of coastal and marine native flora species declining is 49.2%, however the condition is rated as unknown as there are no agreed benchmarks.

Species were defined as 'declining' if the rate at which they were recorded showed a greater than 90% chance of a reduction, between 2002 and 2022. An estimated 49.2% of coastal and marine native flora are declining in South Australia. At the regional level, estimates are 30.9% for KI, 47.7% for EP, 48.9% for HF, 51.0% for NY, 53.2% for LC and 58.2% for MR (bottom figure).

The percentage of coastal and marine native flora species declining is getting worse, but this trend has poor reliability.





Why are coastal and marine native flora important?

The state's coast and marine native flora is an integral part of First Nations cultures, an important part of South Australia's biodiversity, and plants such as mangroves and seagrasses are iconic. 85% of southern Australia's marine species occur nowhere else in the world. The state's native flora is important to the ecosystems that support marine industries such as commercial fishing. Collectively, native flora helps people connect with nature, contributing to physical and mental wellbeing.

What are the pressures?

Coastal and marine native flora can be impacted by development, pollution, invasive species, habitat loss and fragmentation, over-harvesting of species, interaction with commercial fisheries and climate change.

What is being done?

State and national legislation and land use planning measures provide some protection for coastal and marine flora and their habitats from development and clearing. Implementation of the Adelaide Coastal Water Quality Improvement Plan is improving water quality for coastal and marine native flora by reducing nutrient and sediment inputs to Adelaide coastal waters. Other activities that help protect coastal and marine native flora include fencing (including beach access), weed control, signage, revegetation, and through threatened species recovery initiatives.

For further information see: technical information

Government of South Australia