

New incursions of invasive species



Biodiversity | Coastal and marine

South Australia's environmental trend and condition report cards 2023



PRESSURE

Trend

The trend in the number of new incursions of marine invasive species is stable across South Australia.

The reported new incursions detected during 2019–2022 included: 3 confirmed exotic species (light bulb sea squirt, false kelpfish and Asian paddle crab), 2 possible reports of exotic species (Asian bag mussel and basket shell clam), and one exotic species on a transit vessel (Asian green mussel).

The regional trend for Green Adelaide landscape region, where all confirmed detections occurred, was assessed as 'getting worse' (top figure). The other landscape regions were assessed as stable.

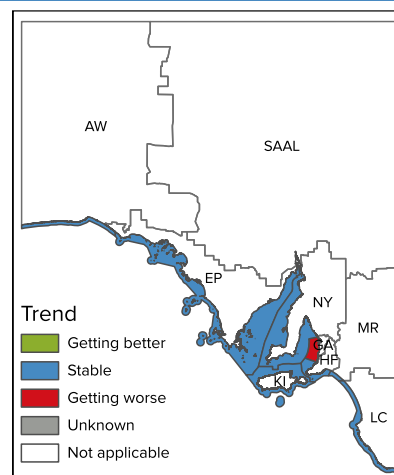
By comparison, in the previous reporting period (2015–2019) there were 2 new exotic species detected.

Condition

At a statewide scale, the current condition of invasive species incursions in the coastal and marine environment is good.

South Australia is largely free of marine pests, with minimal impacts from marine pests reported. Boats and vessels regularly pass through the state's waters from different locations, posing a high risk of spreading marine pests. The highest detections are generally found at high vessel traffic areas, such as ports and marinas.

New incursions of marine invasive species are stable in South Australia.



Why is managing coastal and marine invasive species important?

Marine invasive species can cause ecological, social and economic harm. Marine pests can affect biodiversity (e.g. compete with native species), damage coastal areas and structures, restrict access to waterways and marine infrastructure, spread disease, and impact human health.

Biosecurity is important to prevent the introduction and spread of pest animals, plants and disease. The impact of invasive marine species can be devastating to our seafood industries and environments.

What are the drivers?

Marine invasive species can disperse beyond their natural range and become established naturally or by human activity, either deliberate or accidental. The primary means of introduction is through biofouling and ballast water. With increasing trade, shipping transport and development, the risk of new incursions is high.

Changes in climate can also alter the distribution and abundance of pests and diseases, and the severity and frequency of outbreaks.

What is being done?

Marine biosecurity is managed through the prevention, control and management of marine pests in South Australia. Activities include industry and community education, monitoring, regulating high-risk species, management of introduction pathways including ballast water and biofouling, enforcing quarantine measures and developing response measures (e.g. eradication or containment) in the event a new marine pest is detected.

For further information see: [technical information](#)



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Government of South Australia