

Native fauna: percentage declining



Biodiversity | Inland waters

South Australia's environmental trend and condition report cards 2023



STATE

Trend

The percentage of inland waters native fauna species declining is stable, but this trend has poor reliability.

This assessment is based on results for 125 of 181 inland waters native fauna species. Notable examples include black swan, water rat, Murray cod, southern bell frog and long-necked tortoise. 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 69.1% of species. Note that this assessment does not include any invertebrates.

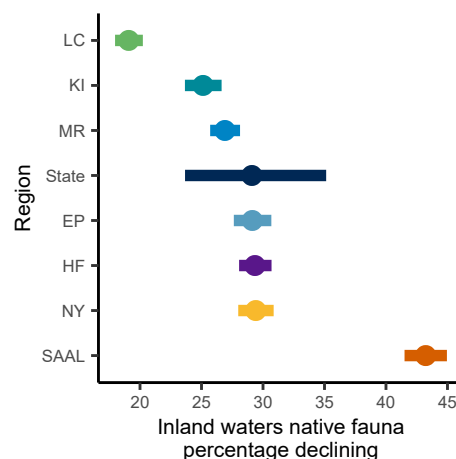
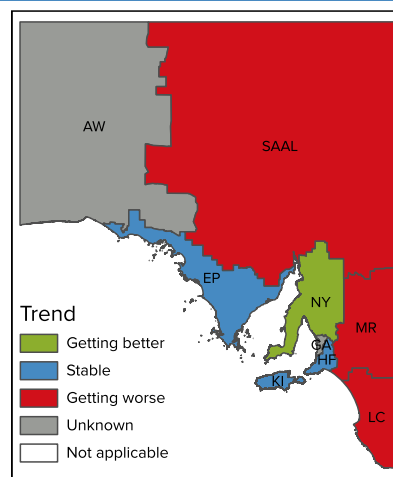
When compared to a 2002 baseline, this 2022 assessment indicates the percentage of species showing a declining trend is getting better in one region (Northern and Yorke (NY)), stable in 3 regions (Hills and Fleurieu (HF), Eyre Peninsula (EP) and Kangaroo Island (KI)), getting worse in 3 regions (South Australian Arid Lands (SAAL), Murraylands and Riverland (MR) and Limestone Coast (LC)) and unknown in 2 regions (Alinytjara Wilurara (AW) and Green Adelaide (GA)) (top figure).

Condition

The estimated percentage of inland waters native fauna species declining is 29.1%, 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 29.1% of inland waters native fauna are declining in South Australia. At the regional level, estimates are 19.1% for LC, 25.1% for KI, 26.9% for MR, 29.1% for EP, 29.3% for HF, 29.4% for NY and 43.2% for SAAL (bottom figure).

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Why are inland water native fauna important?

Inland waters native fauna is an integral part of First Nations cultures and an important part of South Australia's biodiversity. Species such as Murray cod are iconic, and many species are found nowhere else on Earth. Native fauna in inland waters contribute to ecological food webs and ecosystem health. They also provide economic value to fishing industries. Collectively, native fauna helps people connect with nature, contributing to physical and mental wellbeing.

What are the pressures?

Native fauna in inland waters are impacted by changes to water flows and quality. They can also be impacted by habitat degradation and fragmentation, the introduction of weeds and pest animals, fishing and farming practices, and pollution. A changed climate adds to these pressures.

What is being done?

Legislation protects habitat for inland water native fauna by protecting native vegetation and guiding the sustainable management of water resources.

Activities aimed at improving native fauna in inland waters include: restoring more natural patterns of flow and water level, reducing nutrient and sediment run-off, controlling invasive animals and weeds, managing access through fencing, and threatened species recovery initiatives.

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



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