

2013 State Report Card

Is the condition of our subtidal reefs 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.

This report card measures the condition of subtidal reefs. Reefs are formed from rocky outcrops and provide habitat for invertebrates, algae and fish. Many of these plants and animals are unique to South Australia.

Reefs are threatened by declining water quality due to increases in nutrients, pollutants, sediment loads and turbidity. These are caused by freshwater inputs from stormwater, treated sewage, seepage and agricultural runoff as well as industrial discharges and aquaculture. Physical disturbance, sedimentation, impacts of dredging, introduced marine pests, anchor damage, illegal harvesting and fishing are also threats.

Improvement of reef condition requires management of water quality within catchments, and management of marine pests and physical disturbance.



Regional trends in the condition of subtidal reefs



State target

Improve condition of coastal and marine ecosystems

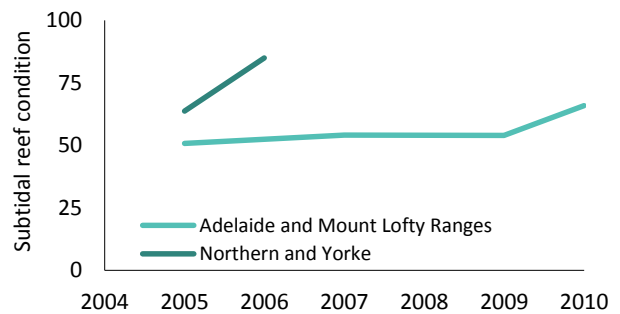
Trend

Unknown

Ongoing efforts will be needed to monitor and protect our subtidal reefs

Trends in the condition of subtidal reefs in most NRM regions are unknown (map above).

Studies of subtidal reef condition have mainly been conducted in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges, and Northern and Yorke NRM regions. The condition of reefs in these regions has improved in recent years (graph on right).



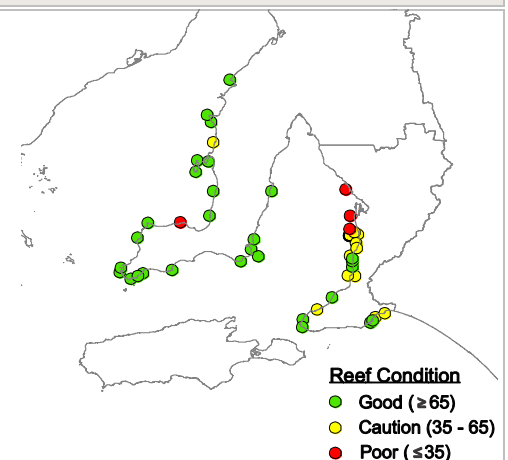
Where we are at (2010)

Unknown

The condition of subtidal reefs in many NRM regions is not known

Subtidal reefs in the Northern and Yorke NRM region were in good condition in 2006 with a score of 85 out of 100 (100 represents pristine, undisturbed condition). In the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM region, subtidal reefs were in good condition in 2010, with a condition score of 66 out of 100, despite the relatively degraded condition of some reefs near metropolitan Adelaide (map on right).

The condition of subtidal reefs in the Alinytjara Wilurara, Eyre Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, South East and the South Australian Murray Darling Basin NRM regions is not known. Information collected by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Reef Watch (coordinated by Conservation Council SA) and ReefLife (University of Tasmania) is being assessed for future reporting in these regions.



Reliability of information



Good

Further information: [Technical information for this report card](#), [ReefLife survey information](#), [Reef Watch information](#)

