

# 2014 Regional Snapshot

## What is the ecological condition of our rivers, streams and drains?

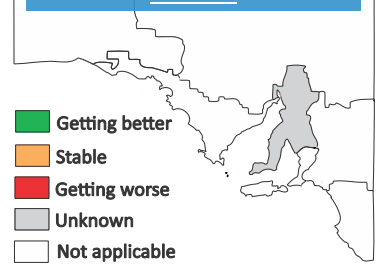
Our rivers, streams and drains provide water for agriculture and domestic use, habitats for native plants and animals, places for recreation and are culturally important for Aboriginal people.

Aquatic plants and animals function together as ecological communities and improve water quality in rivers, streams and drains. These ecosystems are impacted by nutrients, sediments and pollutants in agricultural runoff and wastewater discharges. Feral and domestic animals, which graze and trample vegetation, and reductions in flow, due to dams, weirs, droughts, [consumptive use](#) and weeds, also impact rivers, stream and drains.

In 2008 and 2012, the Environment Protection Authority assessed the condition of rivers and streams in the Northern and Yorke NRM region based on water quality and the condition of invertebrate and plant communities. Assessments have been made at 14 sites, across the Broughton River, Wakefield River and Willochra Creek catchments. This report card summarises the information by catchment basins.



Trends in the ecological condition of rivers and streams



State target

Improve the condition of terrestrial aquatic ecosystems

### Trend (2008–12)

Unknown

River and stream condition was assessed in 2008 and 2012. A trend will be available in future versions of this report card.

Because most sites have only been assessed once, recent trends in river and stream condition are not known (see map above). Future monitoring will determine trends in condition of our rivers and streams.

The Government of South Australia and the regional NRM board are investing in on ground works to improve the condition of rivers and streams to improve water quality and the condition of invertebrate and plant communities. Management efforts focus on controlling feral animals and weeds, fencing stream edges, working with land holders to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff and, where possible, restoring more natural flows.

### Where we are at (2012)

Fair

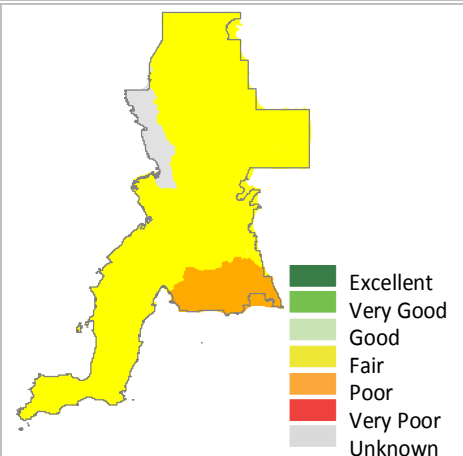
Substantial investments are required over many years to improve water quality, and the condition of aquatic invertebrate and plant communities

Across the Northern and Yorke NRM region, our rivers and streams are in fair condition (map on right).

Broughton River and Willochra Creek catchments are in fair condition, and the Wakefield River catchment is in poor condition.

Rivers and streams that are in poor condition typically have elevated levels of nutrients, salt and fine sediment as well as sparse vegetation and abundant weeds along their banks.

Our use of aquatic environments for economic and recreation purposes has affected the features that make them so attractive and valuable. In some areas, consumptive use of [surface water](#) and other impacts are at critical levels, and these are intensified during droughts. It is crucial that we continue to improve our rivers, streams and drains.



### Reliability of information



Very Good

#### Further information:

[Technical information for this report](#) and [EPA Aquatic Ecosystems Water Quality reports](#)

