

# Coastal saltmarsh

## Percentage cover

South Australia's

Environmental trend and condition report card 2018



STATEWIDE



Trend  
**Stable**



Condition  
**Unknown**



Reliability  
**Very good**

### Trend

**The statewide trend for coastal saltmarsh percentage cover is stable, but it is getting better in two natural resources management (NRM) regions.**

This report card uses data, for six NRM regions with coastal saltmarsh, from the South Australian land cover layers 1990-2015.

The trend in percentage cover of coastal saltmarsh is getting better in two regions (Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges [AMLR] and South East [SE]) and stable in four regions (Eyre Peninsula [EP], Kangaroo Island [KI], Northern and Yorke [NY] and South Australian Murray–Darling Basin [SAMDB]) (top figure). The overall increase is estimated at up to 1,550 hectares.

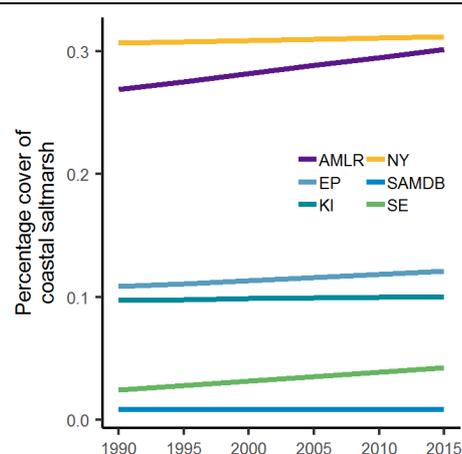
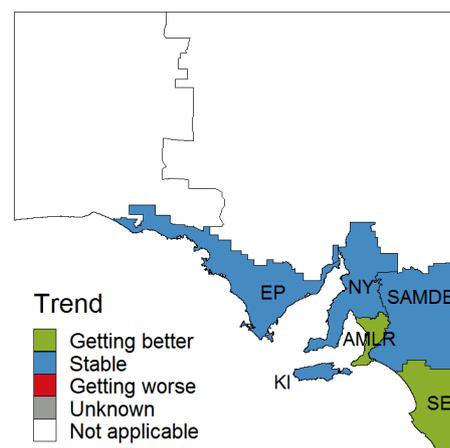
Loss of coastal saltmarsh cover before 1990 was mainly due to coastal developments.

### Condition

**Because there are no agreed benchmarks for the percentage cover of coastal saltmarsh in South Australia, it is not possible to assign a condition rating.**

Across South Australia, the extent of coastal saltmarsh is estimated as 21,120 hectares. At the regional level, estimates are 2,000 hectares in AMLR (0.3% of the region), 6,270 hectares in EP (0.12% of the region), 440 hectares in KI (0.1% of the region), 10,790 hectares in NY (0.31% of the region), 480 hectares in SAMDB (0.01% of the region) and 1,140 hectares in SE (0.04% of the region) (bottom figure).

**The areas covered by coastal saltmarsh is generally stable but has increased in two regions since 1990**



### Why is coastal saltmarsh important?

Saltmarshes trap sediment and prevent coastal erosion. They also help to maintain coastal water quality, cycle nutrients, store carbon, and provide food and habitat for coastal and marine animals in South Australia, such as the critically endangered orange-bellied parrot and the vulnerable slender-billed thornbill.

### What are the pressures?

Coastal saltmarsh is under pressure from clearance and fragmentation, coastal development, construction of tidal barriers and drains, off-road vehicles, decreased water quality, pollution, grazing, invasive species and climate change. An emerging pressure on coastal saltmarsh is sea level rise, particularly where barriers prevent movement to higher ground.

### What is being done?

State and national legislation protects coastal saltmarsh from inappropriate development and clearing.

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



This report is a work in progress. As resource monitoring improves, so too will our ability to describe trends in condition. Licensed under [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#). © Crown in right of the State of South Australia.



Government of  
South Australia