

Fish stocks

Proportion of stocks sustainable

SA trend and condition report card 2020



STATEWIDE



Trend
Stable



Condition
Good



Reliability
Excellent

Trend

The proportion of fish stocks that are classified as sustainable has remained stable at more than 75% since 2012.

This assessment compares the status of fish stocks between 2012 and 2020. In this period, at least 75% of fish stocks were classified as sustainable each year. In 2020, this proportion was 76% (38 stocks) (top figure).

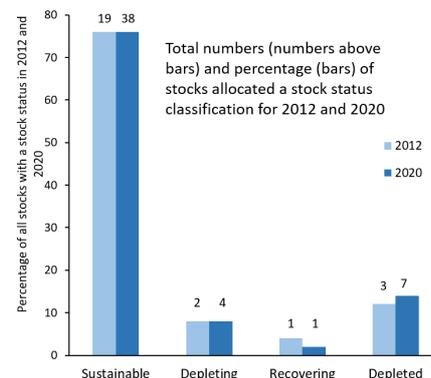
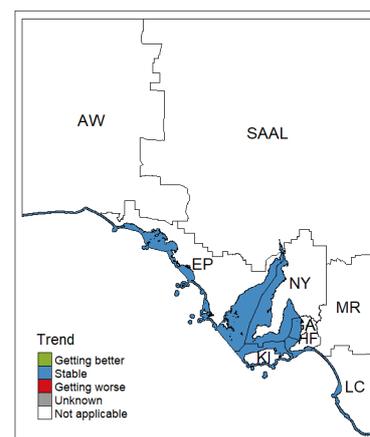
Seven South Australian stocks transitioned to a worse category between 2012 and 2020 (central and western zone blacklip abalone, western zone greenlip abalone, Gulf St Vincent snapper, Spencer Gulf/west coast snapper, northern Gulf St Vincent snapper and Spencer Gulf garfish), while one stock transitioned to a better category (west coast western king prawn).

Condition

The condition of fish stocks in 2020 is good.

The latest stock assessments indicate that 38 out of 50 fishery stocks are currently sustainable. Seven (14%) stocks classified as depleted (black bream and greenback flounder in the Lower Lakes and Coorong fishery, northern Gulf St. Vincent garfish, central zone blacklip abalone, Spencer Gulf/west coast and Gulf St. Vincent snapper and Port River Vongole), four (8%) as depleting (western zone green and blacklip abalone, west coast western king prawn, Coffin Bay Vongole) and one (2%) is recovering (garfish-northern Spencer Gulf). Depleting stocks are not necessarily overfished, but rather this status provides a requirement for management action to prevent overfishing.

**In South Australia,
76% of fishery stocks
are classified as
sustainable; 14% are
depleted.**



Why are fish stocks important?

Maintaining healthy fisheries is an important part of maintaining healthy marine ecosystems and supporting local industries and communities.

South Australia's fisheries support regional economies, tourism, and commercial and recreational fishers. About one in five South Australians go recreational fishing each year, and, in 2018–19, commercial fishers caught 49,000 tonnes of seafood valued at \$546 million.

What are the pressures?

Natural variations in recruitment, environmental conditions and fishing pressure all affect the status of fish stocks. Improvements in technology can increase the catch potential for recreational and commercial fishers.

Other pressures are associated with population growth, climate change, coastal development and pollution. These issues can affect habitats like mangroves and seagrass that support fish stocks.

What is being done?

The 11 stocks classified as depleting or depleted are being managed to promote their recovery. In the last decade, management changes for commercial and recreational fishers such as changes to fishable areas, gear restrictions and changes to size and bag limits have been implemented for garfish, King George whiting and snapper. The Western Zone Abalone Fishery licence holders have voluntarily cut their harvest significantly since 2015 and the total allowable commercial catch in this fishery has been reduced in 2020.

For further information, see [Technical information](#)



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