

Native vegetation

Percentage cover

SA trend and condition report card 2020



STATEWIDE



Trend
Stable



Condition
Unknown



Reliability
Very good

Trend

The statewide percentage cover of native vegetation is stable.

This assessment uses data on native vegetation from the South Australian Land Cover 1987–2015 dataset.

Across vegetation regions, the trend in percentage cover of native vegetation is stable in three regions (Nullarbor [NB], Kangaroo Island [KI] and Outback [OB]) and getting worse in five regions (Flinders/Lofty [FL], Eyre Peninsula [EP], Yorke Peninsula [YP], Murray Mallee [MM] and South East [SE]) (top figure).

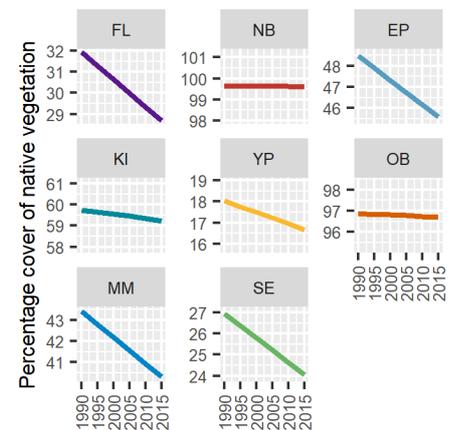
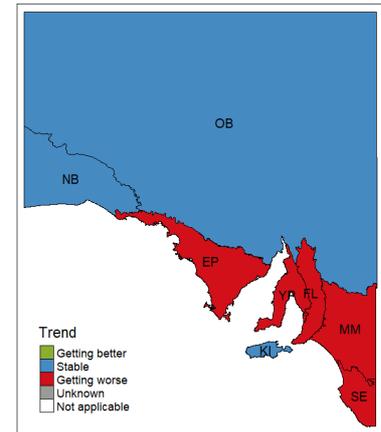
Extensive reduction in native vegetation occurred before 1990. For example, more than 60% of native vegetation in the Mount Lofty Ranges had been cleared before 1990.

Condition

The condition of native vegetation percentage cover is unknown because there are no agreed statewide benchmarks.

Across South Australia, the extent of native vegetation in 2015 was estimated to be 84,953,160 hectares. At the regional level, estimates were 132,700 hectares in FL (29% of the region), 28,161,730 hectares in NB (100% of the region), 2,285,380 hectares in EP (46% of the region), 260,570 hectares on KI (59% of the region), 630,620 hectares in YP (17% of the region), 50,883,700 hectares in OB (97% of the region), 1,950,880 hectares in MM (40% of the region) and 647,580 hectares in SE (24% of the region) (bottom figure).

The percentage cover of native vegetation is declining in the agricultural zone.



Why is native vegetation important?

Native vegetation provides habitat for South Australia's plants and animals, including those that are threatened. Native vegetation protects soils, coastlines and waterways from erosion and salinity, and stores carbon. It supports agricultural production through windbreaks, shelter for stock, and habitat for pollinators and predators of agricultural pests. Native vegetation helps connect people with nature.

What are the pressures?

Native vegetation is under pressure from clearance for urban and agricultural development, grazing, invasive species, changed fire regime, and climate change. Ageing vegetation populations and lack of regeneration are also having an effect.

What is being done?

Native vegetation in South Australia is protected under native vegetation, protected areas and pastoral legislation. Approval to clear native vegetation can be coupled with conditions to provide an environmental gain over and above the clearing activity.

Native vegetation is also cared for by activities such as revegetation, fencing, management of grazing and fire regimes, and controlling pest plants and animals.

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



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