

# Agricultural land

## Days protected from soil erosion

SA trend and condition report card 2020



STATEWIDE



Trend  
**Stable**



Condition  
**Good**



Reliability  
**Excellent**

### Trend

**The protection of agricultural land from soil erosion has stabilised at around 345 days each year.**

The number of days that agricultural land was protected from soil erosion improved between 2002 and 2013 in all four landscape regions that are monitored: Limestone Coast (LC), Murraylands and Riverland (MR), Northern and Yorke (NY), and Eyre Peninsula (EP) (bottom figure).

Since 2013, the improving trend has stabilised (top figure).

Improvements over time relate to the adoption of 'no-till' cropping methods, where surveys indicate that the proportion of crop area sown using no-till increased from 16% in 1999 to 83% in 2016.

Protection from erosion has been consistently high in the Limestone Coast region (bottom figure) because the main land use here is grazed pastures rather than annual cropping. While the Hills and Fleurieu (HF) and Kangaroo Island (KI) regions are part of the agricultural zone, they are not monitored because they are not part of the main broadacre cropping areas.

### Why is agricultural land important?

Protecting land from soil erosion is critical to maintaining South Australia's \$7.4 billion agricultural industry. Protected agricultural land also minimises dust storms and the amount of sediments and nutrients that reach our waterways.

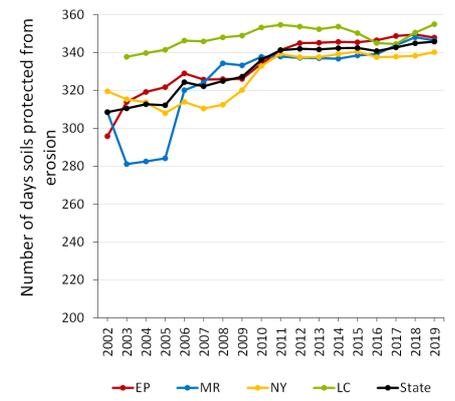
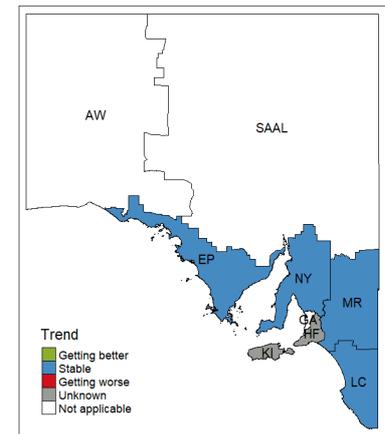
### Condition

**The level of protection of agricultural land from soil erosion is good.**

The level of erosion protection averages around 340–355 days each year across the agricultural regions. Localised erosion is still occasionally triggered by very strong winds or intense rainfall and run-off.

Ongoing erosion protection requires continuous implementation of sustainable land management practices.

**South Australian agricultural soils are protected from erosion on around 345 days each year.**



### What are the pressures?

About 60% of South Australia's agricultural soils are susceptible to wind erosion, and 32% are susceptible to water erosion. Soils can be exposed to erosion in very dry seasons when there is not enough plant growth to cover the soil. Tilling, bushfires and managed burns (for pest and weed management) also remove plant cover, increasing the risk of erosion.

Future climate predictions forecast warmer temperatures and reduced rainfall across most agricultural areas in South Australia, which could increase the likelihood of erosion events.

### What is being done?

The South Australian Government works with agribusiness, advisers, industry and farmer groups to improve soil management and assist farmers to adopt practices that protect the soil from erosion.

Agricultural soils are regularly assessed during field surveys to estimate the number of days each year that they are protected from erosion.

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



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