

# River Murray: Floodplain trees



## Tree condition index

SA trend and condition report card 2020

STATEWIDE



Trend  
**Getting better**



Condition  
**Fair**



Reliability  
**Poor**

### Trend

**River Murray floodplain tree condition is getting better.**

The condition of river red gum and black box has been relatively stable since 2006, and has improved since 2018.

This assessment is based on observations at Chowilla, Pike and Katarapko floodplains. These sites are actively managed and are not necessarily representative of the broader floodplain in South Australia.

### Condition

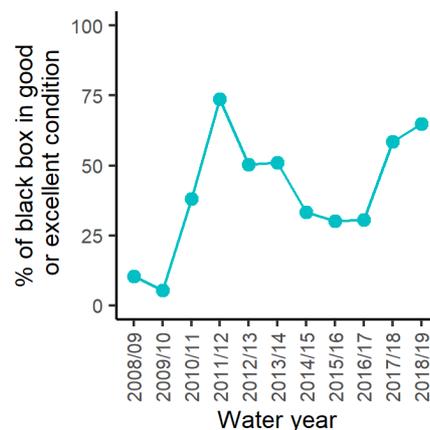
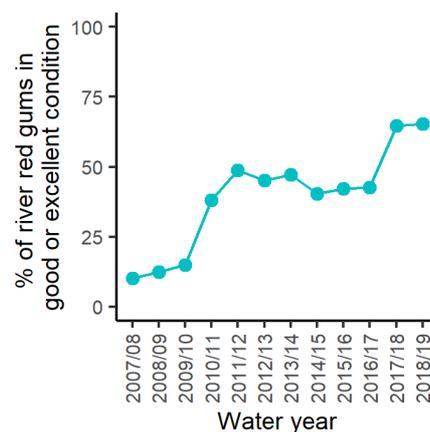
**River Murray floodplain trees are in fair condition.**

The health of floodplain trees across the South Australian River Murray floodplain is determined using a standardised tree condition index (TCI).

A TCI score above 10 suggests a tree is in good health. A TCI score of 4–9 suggests that a tree is in fair condition and likely to respond to environmental water.

The condition of individual trees varies, ranging from poor condition to good condition. On average, tree condition is considered fair or better. River red gum (top figure) is showing slightly higher TCI scores than black box (bottom figure).

**The condition of river red gum and black box is showing signs of improvement.**



### Why are River Murray floodplain trees important?

River red gum and black box are two iconic species of floodplain trees along the River Murray in South Australia. These species are important because they support ecological food webs and provide important habitat for diverse species of birds, reptiles, bats, insects and amphibians.

Floodplain trees are also an important part of the South Australian River Murray aesthetic and cultural landscape.

### What are the pressures?

The health of floodplain trees in the Murray–Darling Basin has been significantly affected by river regulation, consumptive use of water resources and drought. This has led to changes in flow patterns in the river. These changes have altered the connections between the river and its wetlands and floodplains. Some areas of the floodplain are now permanently wet, while others do not get inundated as often as they used to. This continues to adversely affect the health of River Murray floodplain trees.

### What is being done?

Delivery of environmental water aims to improve flows for improving the condition of floodplain trees.

Managed overbank flows are being implemented under the Murray–Darling Basin Plan to support the health of floodplain trees. Engineering works, such as regulators and pumps, on South Australian wetlands and floodplains are also being used to deliver more water to floodplain trees. Rainfall and unregulated high flows are also critical for the resilience and recovery of these trees.

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



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