New incursions of invasive species

Biodiversity | Inland waters

South Australia's environmental trend and condition report cards 2023

PRESSURE

Trend **Unknown**

Condition **Unknown**

Reliability **Poor**

Trend

Insufficient information is available to determine a trend in the number of new incursions of invasive species in inland waters.

This assessment is of new incursions of invasive species (fish, invertebrates and weeds) in inland waters from 2019 to 2022. Information was drawn from public reports by the general public and land managers.

There were 9 reported new incursions of invasive aquatic species (1 invertebrate and 4 plant species). Detections were found in Green Adelaide (6), Hills and Fleurieu (2), and Northern and Yorke (1) landscape regions.

The trend is unknown (top figure), and the information reliability score is poor because the data are limited. The previous approaches to reporting considered invasive fish only, however this assessment also includes invertebrates and weeds. Increases in reported incursions are not necessarily indicative of actual invasive species trends, e.g. public education campaigns can lead to increases in detections of targeted invasive species.

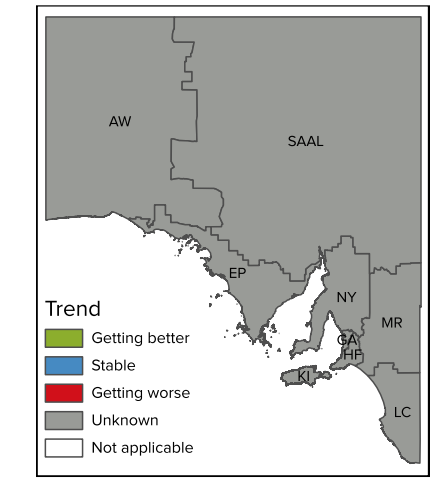
Condition

At a statewide scale, the current condition of invasive species incursions in inland waters is unknown.

There were 9 incursions from 2019–2022 of 5 species. These were red claw (invertebrate), sagittaria, salvinia, horsetail and water hyacinth (aquatic weeds). These species have all previously been detected in South Australia. Each incursion was investigated, and the specimens destroyed.

These incursions were reported by the public and were in backyard ponds and retail settings. No new incursions were reported in the environment.

From 2019 to 2022, 9 new incursions of invasive species were reported in inland waters, but there is insufficient information to determine a trend.



Why is managing inland waters invasive species important?

Invasive aquatic species can cause environmental, social and economic harm. They can alter the structure and function of aquatic ecosystems, compete with native species, reduce water quality, spread disease, and impact recreation and tourism. For example, European carp is estimated to cost the recreational fisheries sector $44 million annually in the Murray–Darling Basin. Once an invasive aquatic species is established in a natural waterway, it is difficult to eradicate.

What are the drivers?

Aquatic invasive species enter South Australia through range expansion of existing invasive species from other states, incorrect disposal of aquarium and ornamental pond species, stocking of dams, and intentional introductions of recreational fishing species.

Some invasive species are not easy to detect or identify and are more likely to establish and spread without early detection.

What is being done?

Invasive aquatic species are managed through environment and fisheries legislation, and biosecurity policies. Aquatic biosecurity activities include education, monitoring, regulating high-risk species, and developing response measures (e.g. eradication or containment) in the event a new aquatic invasive species is detected. At a local scale, control options may include removal, smothering and chemical treatment.

For further information see: technical information

Government of South Australia