

Native flora: percentage declining



South Australia's environmental trend and condition report cards 2023

Biodiversity | Terrestrial



Trend
Getting worse



Condition
Unknown

☆☆☆ Reliability
☆☆☆ **Poor**

STATE

Trend

The percentage of terrestrial native flora species declining is getting worse, but this trend has poor reliability.

This assessment is based on results for 1377 of 2793 terrestrial native flora species. Notable examples include Bluebush, Mulga, Sturt Desert Pea, Spiny Everlasting, Apple-bush and Blue Mallee. This report card includes analyses of unstructured data to try to maximise the number of species able to be assessed. The low reliability score reflects potential biases and limitations of this approach, which was still only able to assess 49.3% of species.

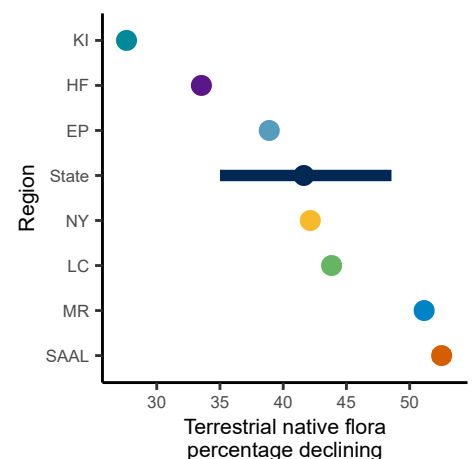
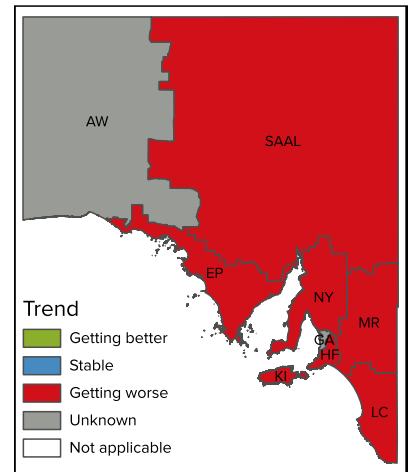
When compared to a 2002 baseline, this 2022 assessment indicates the percentage of species showing a declining trend is getting worse in 7 regions (Hills and Fleurieu (HF), Eyre Peninsula (EP), Kangaroo Island (KI), Northern and Yorke (NY), South Australian Arid Lands (SAAL), Murraylands and Riverland (MR) and Limestone Coast (LC)) and unknown in 2 regions (Alinytjara Wilurara (AW) and Green Adelaide (GA)) (top figure).

Condition

The estimated percentage of terrestrial native flora species declining is 41.6%, however the condition is rated as unknown as there are no agreed benchmarks.

Species were defined as 'declining' if the rate at which they were recorded showed a greater than 90% chance of a reduction, between 2002 and 2022. An estimated 41.6% of terrestrial native flora are declining in South Australia. At the regional level, estimates are 27.6% for KI, 33.5% for HF, 38.9% for EP, 42.1% for NY, 43.8% for LC, 51.1% for MR and 52.5% for SAAL (bottom figure).

The percentage of terrestrial native flora species declining is getting worse, but this trend has poor reliability.



Why are terrestrial native flora important?

Terrestrial native flora is an integral part of First Nations cultures and an important part of South Australia's biodiversity. Native flora provides animals with food, shelter and protection from predators. The state's terrestrial native flora also supports agricultural and pastoral production, protects soils, coasts and wetlands, and helps mitigate the effects of a changing climate. Collectively, native flora helps people connect with nature, contributing to physical and mental wellbeing.

What are the pressures?

Terrestrial native flora is impacted by land use change that leads to the further loss, degradation and fragmentation of habitat.

Land use change is usually accompanied by a suite of other pressures such as changed grazing and fire regimes; changed communities of insects, diseases, pest plants and pest animals; rising water tables; and increasing salinity. Climate change adds a further pressure to native flora if they cannot disperse or adapt.

What is being done?

Terrestrial native flora and their habitats in South Australia are protected by national and state legislation. Terrestrial native flora is also managed through activities such as revegetation, managing access through fencing, controlling pest plants and animals, and through threatened species recovery initiatives. Nearly 85% of the state's threatened flora species have been stored in a seed bank by the South Australian Seed Conservation Centre.

For further information see: [technical information](#)



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Government of South Australia