

2016 State Report Card

Is the condition of our native vegetation improving?

South Australia's native vegetation—from small ground covers and native grasses to large trees and water plants—is fundamental to the health of our environment and the prosperity of our primary industries.

Native vegetation protects our land and water from erosion and dryland salinity, while improving our agricultural productivity and storing [carbon](#). It provides habitat for our native animals, places for recreation, gives our landscape its identity, and is culturally important for Aboriginal people.

Human development has affected our native vegetation. It has reduced its [extent](#), and decreased its [connectivity](#). Our remaining native vegetation is under pressure from further fragmentation, inappropriate grazing and fire regimes, weeds, pests, and plant diseases. Increasing water use, altered water flows, increasing soil salinity, rising groundwater, pollution and climate change are also threats. Several native vegetation communities in the state are now listed as [threatened](#).

This report card summarises the condition of our native vegetation, and should be read alongside reports on vegetation [extent and connectivity](#), and [protection](#).



Regional trends in the condition of native vegetation



State target

Increase extent and improve condition of native vegetation

Trend (2009–14)

Unknown

This is the first time this information has been collated. Trends will be available in the future.

We monitor the condition of native vegetation to ensure that our management is effective. Management includes controlling vegetation clearance, pests, weeds and grazing and improving land-use practices.

Declines in the condition of our native vegetation since European settlement have largely been a result of agricultural and urban developments. Recent trends in the condition of our native vegetation are not known at regional or state scale (see map above), but its [protection](#) in 1991, and ongoing management, aim to improve its condition and [extent](#).

Where we are at (2014)

Fair

Our agricultural and urban developments have degraded much of our native vegetation.

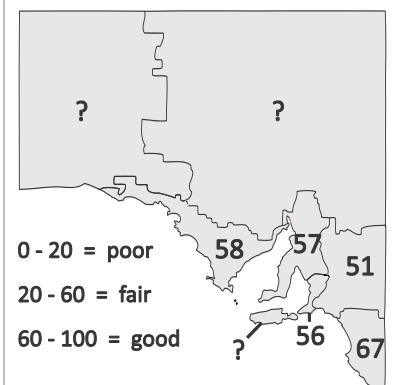
Native vegetation [clearance](#) has been most intense around Adelaide and in the other NRM regions with extensive agricultural development. Monitoring of the remaining vegetation patches in agricultural regions indicates that it is in fair to good condition (see map on right) based on plant species diversity, weed abundance and threat, structural diversity, tree habitat features, regeneration, tree and shrub health, feral animals, total grazing pressure, fauna species diversity and bushland degradation risk.

The condition of native vegetation is not known for the SA Arid Lands, Alinytjara Wilurara or Kangaroo Island NRM regions. A [study](#) in 2011 by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture highlighted that 36, 93 and 26 per cent of these regions, respectively, remain largely unchanged since European settlement; compares to 1 to 16 per cent in other NRM regions

The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) is assessing ways to standardise assessments of native vegetation condition for regional and statewide reporting.

We have severely degraded much of our native vegetation. Substantial conservation investments are required to improve its condition and to [connect](#) patches.

Vegetation condition



Reliability of information



Fair. Information is not available to assess vegetation condition in the SA Arid Lands, Alinytjara Wilurara and Kangaroo Island NRM regions.

Further information: [Technical information for this report card](#), [DEWNR native vegetation](#), [Nature Conservation Society of South Australia](#)

