

2014 Regional Snapshot

What is the ecological condition of rivers, streams and drains?

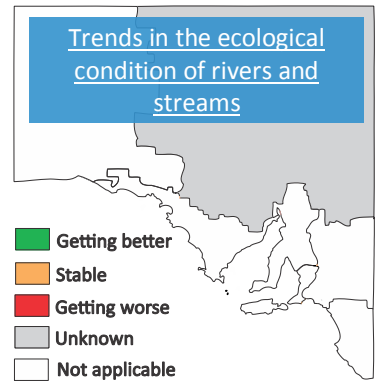
Our rivers and streams provide water for agriculture and domestic use, habitats for native plants and animals, places for recreation and are culturally important for Aboriginal people.

Aquatic plants and animals function together as ecological communities and improve water quality in rivers, streams and drains. These ecosystems are impacted by nutrients, sediments and pollutants in agricultural runoff and wastewater discharges. Feral and domestic animals, which graze and trample vegetation, and reductions in flow, due to dams, weirs, droughts, [consumptive use](#) and weeds, also impact rivers, stream and drains.

In 2012, the Environment Protection Authority assessed the condition of rivers and streams in the South Australian Arid Land NRM region based on water quality and the condition of invertebrate and plant communities. Assessments have been made at 57 sites, across the Cooper Creek, Diamantina River, Finke River, Lake Frome and Lake Torrens catchments. This report card summarises the information by catchment basins.



Trends in the ecological condition of rivers and streams



State target

Improve the condition of terrestrial aquatic ecosystems

Trend (2012)

Unknown

River and stream condition was assessed in 2012. A trend will be available in future versions of this report card.

Because most sites have only been assessed once, recent trends in river and stream condition are not known (see map above). Future monitoring will determine trends in condition of our rivers and streams.

The Government of South Australia and the regional NRM board are investing in on ground works to improve the condition of rivers and streams to improve water security and the condition of invertebrate and plant communities. Management efforts focus on controlling feral animals and weeds and installing alternative watering points.

Where we are at (2012)

Fair

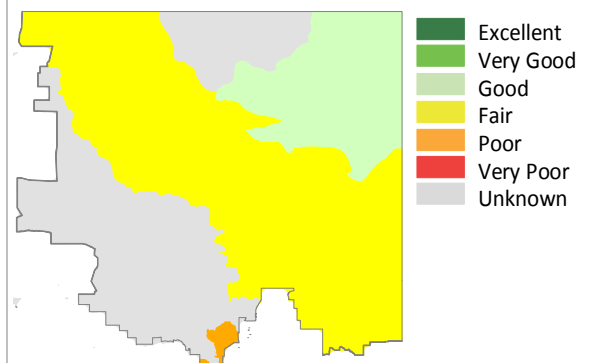
Substantial investments are required over many years to improve water quality, and the condition of aquatic invertebrate and plant communities

Across the SA Arid Lands NRM region, our rivers and streams are in fair condition (map on right).

Finke River, Lake Frome and Lake Torrens catchments are in fair condition. Cooper Creek and Diamantina River catchments are in good condition.

Most streams have elevated levels of nutrients, which may be natural for these catchments. Rivers and streams in good condition have largely intact vegetation and show little to no damage caused by stock or feral animal grazing.

Our use of aquatic environments for economic and recreation purposes has affected their condition to an extent that threatens the features that make them so attractive and valuable. Water diversions and other impacts are at critical levels, and are intensified by periods of drought. It is crucial that we take steps to improve the condition of our rivers and streams.



Reliability of information



Very Good

Further information:

[Technical information for this report](#) and [EPA Aquatic Ecosystems Water Quality reports](#)