



BIODIVERSITY

Achievements/commitments

Since 2003, there has been a 30% increase in the number of management plans for protected areas under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 and the Wilderness Protection Act 1992. A key nature conservation strategy for South Australia has also been developed, 'No Species Loss' presents policy directions and contains targets that will guide the protection, conservation and sustainable use of South Australia's biodiversity over the next 10 years.

The number of threatened species with completed recovery plans has increased from 21 to 82 since 2003, but due to the large number of recovery actions identified and resource constraints, actions under the plans are not implemented to the extent required.

A number of other programs and strategies have been instrumental in assisting the conservation of biodiversity in this state, such as:

- An Action Plan for the Conservation of Threatened Freshwater Fish in South Australia has recently been prepared. While in its early draft stages, this plan provides significant guidance for conservation efforts for several threatened small-bodied freshwater fish species at risk from wetland habitat drying due to worsening drought conditions.
- Operation Bounceback activities have achieved a decline in numbers of foxes over the last ten years in the Flinders and Gammon Ranges and parts of the Eyre Peninsula, and have at least arrested any growth in numbers in the arid zone.
- The South Australian Deer Strategy was adopted by government in 2005 with objectives to reduce the impact of feral deer. Actions since implemented include inspections of fences on deer farms, appointment of the South East Deer Advisory Committee, landholder surveys for the Mid North and South East on the distribution and impact of feral deer, and an eradication program for feral deer on Kangaroo Island.

Recommendations for Action

- R5.1 Improve revegetation and restoration through detailed information on techniques and selection of species.
- R5.2 Incorporate the protection of important ecosystems into land use planning.
- R5.3 Develop conservation legislation to protect and restore threatened species and communities.
- R5.4 Increase investment in landscape-scale habitat reconstruction to achieve South Australia's Strategic Plan target T3.1 (Lose no species) and to facilitate adaptation of ecosystems and species to climate change.
- R5.5 Improve incentives and support for environmental stewardship on private land, including for the control of invasive plants and feral animals by 2012.
- R5.6 Promote a national weed labelling scheme that identifies the weed potential of species to plant buyers and sellers.
- R5.7 Include the regulation of introduced freshwater fish species under natural resource management legislation.
- R5.8 Improve the early identification of pest incursions to reduce their impacts and the cost of eradication.



Red Mallee (*Eucalyptus oleosa*) over *Triodia*, NW of S.Aust. Photo: Peter Lang

Trends

- The number of vulnerable and endangered plants, animals and ecological communities is INCREASING.
- Abundance of rabbits is INCREASING.
- Abundance of feral camels is INCREASING.
- Distribution of feral olives and silverleaf nightshade is INCREASING.
- Abundance of foxes is DECLINING in high priority conservation areas and where livestock protection is required in response to broadscale management and STABLE in other parts of the state.

Continuing emphasis need to be given to considerations of short- and long-term benefit in balancing protection of remnant native vegetation with developments such as mining and exploration activities. There is a need for incentives for sustainable environmental stewardship on private land including for the control of invasive plant species and feral animals.

Further information

Australian government weeds web portal
www.weeds.gov.au

Biological Survey Program
www.environment.sa.gov.au/biodiversity/biosurveys.html

National feral animal information database
www.feral.org.au

National weeds website
www.weeds.org.au

NatureLinks
www.environment.sa.gov.au/naturelinks

No Species Loss—A Nature Conservation Strategy for South Australia 2007–2017
www.environment.sa.gov.au/biodiversity/pdfs/nsl_strategy.pdf

Threatened Species in South Australia
www.environment.sa.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened.html

Moving forward

A systematic and coordinated approach is required for the identification and reporting of threatened species and communities across South Australia, including the development of benchmarks that provide a baseline to assess change. In addition, there is a need to develop a consistent approach to the assessment of vegetation and collection of more detailed information on revegetation and restoration activities being undertaken.