

Thursday, 30 July 2020

Health check on aquatic ecosystems shows nutrient hotspots in South East and West Coast

The latest rounds of Aquatic Ecosystem Condition Reports (AECRs) for the South Australia have revealed room for improvement in water run-off sites in the South East and West Coast.

EPA Director Science and Information Keith Baldry said results of the latest survey on the West Coast showed conditions had deteriorated at several isolated locations.

“In areas near human settlement we have seen a rise in nutrient levels from stormwater, agricultural run-off, septic tank leakage and nutrient-rich groundwater seepage,” Mr Baldry said.

Several sites in Coffin Bay and one in Streaky Bay registered very poor quality.

“Townships located on sheltered bays can result in discharges not being flushed from the coves, and nutrients accumulating.

“It’s important to note the rise in nutrients is not harmful to local shellfish stocks and production, but the EPA will work with the local community to improve the situation.

“The EPA has shared the survey results with other government agencies, local councils and industry so that steps can be taken to reduce the influx of nutrients into these areas,” Mr Baldry said.

Data from the AECRs will be used by the Department for Environment and Water, Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board, EPA, local councils and industry organisations to identify and manage the causes of nutrient rises.

Inland waterways were also surveyed in the South East, with minimal changes recorded.

“We recorded better conditions in the small coastal creeks in the Lower South East, though there were several poor results for inland and northern areas,” Mr Baldry said.

The 2020 AECRs are available at epa.sa.gov.au