

Marra Sea Country Seagrass Update 2025

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Seagrass biomass decline

99%

since 2023

Sites with seagrass in the meadow

32%

down from 81% in 2023

Sites surveyed

62

in September 2025

What we found

Dense and diverse seagrass recorded in 2021 and 2023 in the Limmen Bight Marine Park (NT) has largely disappeared. In its place is scattered patches of small, pioneering species. This is a sign the meadow is in poor condition, but not completely gone.

Why it happened

A combination of stressors hit in quick succession. Tropical Cyclone Megan in March 2024 stirred up sediment and clouded the water, followed by eight months of unusually warm seas, plus two years of extreme wind and wave energy in autumn. Seagrass needs clear, calm water and moderate temperatures to thrive.

What this means for Country

Seagrass is a foundation of Marra Sea Country. Dugong, turtles, and fish — species of deep cultural and food importance to Marra people — depend on healthy meadows. Poor seagrass condition affects both wildlife and the communities who rely on them.

Reason for hope

Seagrass can and does recover. The small colonising species present in 2025 are nature's first step in rebuilding. As water conditions settle, recovery is possible. Continued monitoring means we will see when that happens.



Why Marra Sea Country?

Marra Sea Country (Gulf of Carpentaria, NT) supports exceptional biological diversity — seagrass, corals, mangroves, and saltmarshes — providing critical habitat for dugong, turtles, dolphins, whales, sea snakes, and diverse fish communities of deep cultural significance to Marra Traditional Owners.

