

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT 2002 OVERVIEW

Below are the topics of the State of the Environment Report along with their status (letter grade) and trend (arrow). For a more in-depth review, please refer to the appropriate page in the report. Although a few resources are improving, it should be noted that the majority of the resources are being severely impacted by human activities and that environmental issues are getting worse, not better. Regardless of the letter grade or trend, the best time to act and conserve these resources or address these issues is now.

RESOURCE OR TOPIC	STATUS	TREND	UPDATE
Marine Resources			
Coral Reefs	C	↑	Reefs are slowly recovering from a series of natural disasters.
Marine Protected Areas	C	↑	Enforcement inadequate. Village conservation expanding.
Pago Pago Watershed	D	↑	Water quality is improving, but serious threats continue.
Reef Fisheries	C	↓	SCUBA fishing ban may improve reef fish populations
Ocean Fisheries	C	↓	Overfishing remains a threat. Catches are decreasing.
Giant Clams	C	↓	Enforcement continues to be a problem with overfishing.
Sea Turtles	C	↓	Laws protecting turtle habitats need to be enforced.
Whales	C	↓	Unexpectedly slow recovery from early fishing pressures.
Terrestrial Resources			
Rainforest	B	↓	Although much forest remains, serious threats exist.
Vertebrate Wildlife	B	↓	Several species becoming rare, fruit bats making a comeback
Wetlands	D	↓	Seriously threatened by development and filling.
Introduced Species	B	↓	Numerous introduced species continue to plague islands
Air & Water Resources			
Air Quality	A	↓	Generally excellent. Cannery odors present in harbor.
Water Quality	C	↓	Threatened by development, lack of enforcement.
Drinking Water	B	↓	Water generally good. Numerous potential threats exist.
Environmental Issues			
Population Trends	D	↓	Rate of population increase cause for serious alarm.
Climate Change & Global Warming Effects	C	↓	Impacts of climate change might be heavily felt in American Samoa.
Solid Waste & Landfill	C	↓	Solid waste increasing. Need for waste reduction measures
Hazardous Materials	C	↓	Amounts climbing as population and development grows.
Plant Diseases	B	↓	Territory recovering from taro blight. Many potential threats.