



Denham WA09.02.04

Regional Setting

The dominant regional processes are the Mediterranean to arid climate; the El Nino Southern Oscillation (driving sea-level variability); Southern Annular Mode (driving south-westerly swells and storms); strong sea breezes; micro to meso tidal, mainly diurnal; south-westerly swells; southerly seas; and carbonate sediments with moderate northerly longshore transport.

This coastline is susceptible to regional hazards, including extra-tropical cyclones, mid-latitude cyclones (depressions), storm surges, and river flooding (sub-regions only).

This mixed sand and rock coast compartment extends from Goulet Bluff to Cape Peron (N).

Justification of sensitivity

The sensitivity rating is a 4 as the coast is currently stable but likely to start eroding. Spits along the shore indicate phases of northern littoral drift, as well as points where sediment appears to be lost into deeper water. These are likely to change with future variation in climate.

Other comments

Common landform assemblages:

Narrow sandy beach with extensive beachrock (100%) flanks a wide subtidal terrace in places. The beach connects numerous small embayments between rocky headlands or sandy salients, which are partially closed by spits and bars. Landward of the spits and bars are narrow low-lying fordune plains, salt flats and coastal lagoons, including Little Lagoon near Denham, and Big Lagoon further north on the Peron Peninsula.



Geomorphological features include rocky headlands, embayed coast, lagoons, beaches and dunes.

This compartment has a NW aspect.

Confidence in sources

Low confidence: Limited or no information describing landforms or coastal landform change over the historical period is available, except for the coast in the vicinity of Denham. Interpretation of landform assemblages comes from satellite imagery, aerial photography and site visits.

Additional information (links and references)

Australian Beach Safety & Management Program (ABSAMP) database of over 12,000 beaches can be accessed at http://www.ozcoasts.gov.au/coastal/beach_intro.jsp (also see Surf Life Saving site);

Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). (2006) Oil Spills Response Atlas. Australian Government Canberra. Available at <https://www.amsa.gov.au/environment/maritime-environmental-emergencies/national-plan/general-information/OSRA/index.asp>

Baker C, Potter A, Tran M & Heap AD. (2008) Geomorphology and Sedimentology of the Northwest Marine Region of Australia. Geoscience Australia, Record 2008/07. Geoscience Australia, Canberra. 220pp.



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http://www.transport.wa.gov.au/mediaFiles/marine/MAC_R_ShiresOfSharkBayAndExmouthFullReport.pdf.

Eliot I, Nutt C, Gozzard B, Higgins M, Buckley E & Bowyer J. (2011). Coastal Compartments of Western Australia: A Physical Framework for Marine & Coastal Planning. Report to the Departments of Environment & Conservation, Planning and Transport. Damara WA Pty Ltd, Geological Survey of Western Australia and Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia

Gozzard JR. (2011d) WACoast –Gascoyne. Geological Survey of Western Australia

Short AD. (2005) Beaches of the Western Australian Coast: Eucla to Roebuck Bay: A guide to their nature, characteristics, surf and safety. Australian Beach Safety and Management Program. University of Sydney Coastal Studies Unit and Surf Life Saving Australia. Sydney University Press. Sydney, New South Wales.

Sharples C, Mount R, Pedersen T, Lacey M, Newton J, Jaskierniak D & Wallace L. (2009) The Australian Coastal Smartline Geomorphic and Stability Map. Version 1: Project Report. Geoscience Australia & Department of Climate Change, www.ozcoasts.gov.au/pdf/SmartlineProjectReport_2009_v1.pdf