



The National Estuarine, Coastal and Marine Habitat Map Series

The project aimed to:

- Discover and negotiate access to all existing GIS (electronic) ECM habitat maps
- Collate the GIS maps and then apply the relevant national classification schemes
- Develop new nationally consistent habitat classification schemes where not available
- Conduct quality assurance and document the national map series.

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National Intertidal/Subtidal Benthic Habitat

Habitat: Mangrove Dominated

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Habitat extent summary for: Australia

Coastline length for region selected: 59,679 km

Mangrove Dominated
Mapped habitat area: 397,564 ha

[+] Click to view other habitat areas in selected region:

50km Grid Legend

- Present
- Unknown

Access to the National Habitat Map Series is via OzCoasts: www.ozcoasts.org.au

Background

The National Land & Water Resources Audit was committed to developing the information base needed to track the extent, distribution and condition of key habitats including:

- dunes and dune vegetation
- saltmarsh
- mangrove
- seagrass
- unconsolidated substrate (including sand and mud)
- rock substrate (cobbles to boulders and outcrops)
- coral and coral reef.

These habitats were selected as they are:

- considered key habitats sustaining ecological functioning
- likely to change in response to climate change and
- relatively tractable to current mapping methods and effort.

An assessment of available data showed that the national holdings of habitat mapping were distributed across agencies in the states and Northern Territory. The Audit set out to draw these holdings together and fortunately, the Department of Climate Change (DCC) was seeking to do a similar task for the 'first pass' Australian Coastal Vulnerability to Climate Change (ACV) project. The Audit and the DCC entered into a partnership to achieve this goal.

Products

The ECM National Habitat Map Series consists of two main groups of information products.

Firstly, a series of three national habitat maps based on the collaboratively developed National Intertidal/Subtidal Benthic (NISB) Habitat Classification Scheme:

- thematically simplified, high spatial resolution National Intertidal/Subtidal Benthic Habitat Map
- a set of 10km grid cell ECM Key Habitat Distribution Maps depicting the regional and statewide distribution of each key habitat type
- a set of 50km grid cell ECM Key Habitat Distribution Maps depicting the national distribution of key habitat types.

Secondly, four additional information products were compiled covering the remaining habitat types of dune vegetation, estuaries, coastal wetlands and shorelines (beaches):

- Dune and Dune Vegetation Map collection
- National Estuaries Map collection
- National Coastal Wetlands Map collection, and
- National Shoreline Map.

The final nationally-consistent coastal habitat map series is intended to be a publicly available and will be managed by the Australian Government with full attribution of the various original mapping sources used to build the final map. It is expected to be made available through the OzCoasts web site www.ozcoasts.org.au.

Learnings from the program

- A systematic and logical approach was needed, as harmonising a large number of existing schemes is a challenging intellectual and practical problem
- Data licensing agreements are a serious impediment to sharing habitat data sets
- There are large areas of Australia with little mapping, particularly the photic zone (well lit zone) of the open coast
- The temporal resolution (repeat period) of the maps is very poor, with most areas only receiving one visit. This is a serious problem given the dynamic nature of these environments and an objective of measuring change.

Project Team

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Further information

All project reports and publications from the Estuarine, Coastal and Marine program are available online from the National Land & Water Resources Audit website: www.nlwra.gov.au.

To find current national estuarine, coastal and marine data and information visit www.ozcoasts.gov.au.

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