



MEDIA RELEASE

What's happening on Australian coasts?

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Questions regarding the current state of Australian coasts and estuarine waterways are being addressed with the development of a comprehensive coastal information website called *OzCoasts*.

Launched this morning at Australia's biennial *Coast-to-Coast* conference, the website enables scientists, natural resource managers and policy organisations to download maps, satellite images, reports and data to assist with estuary and coastal management.

The website was designed with input from more than 100 scientists and resources managers from over 50 agencies including government, universities and the National Estuaries Network.

"*OzCoasts*, and its predecessor *OzEstuaries*, has been accessed by visitors from more than 180 countries, and has important links to strategic priority areas in the Australian implementation plan for a national cooperative approach to coastal zone management", said Dr Phil O'Brien, a senior marine scientist with Geoscience Australia.

"Anyone with a keen interest in their community can read easily accessible fact sheets on current issues such as declining water quality, ocean acidification, beach erosion and habitat loss. We have also had strong interest from education institutions seeking information to contribute to environmental studies", he said.

The site has been developed by Geoscience Australia, in collaboration with the National Land and Water Resources Audit, National Estuaries Network, the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency, and the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change.

"The *OzCoasts* data and information repository will become an important national resource as the debate on climate change increases the demand for evidence-based decision-making", Dr O'Brien said.

An interactive map highlighting the potential impacts of climate change, including sea level rise and shoreline erosion will also soon be available through *OzCoasts*.

OzCoasts can be viewed online at www.ozcoasts.org.au

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact:
Geoscience Australia 24 hour Media Hotline 1800 882 035