

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Accretion	Accumulation of sand or other beach material due to the natural action of waves, currents and wind; a build-up of sand.
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: Designated by the Countryside Commission. The purpose of the AONB designation is to identify areas of national importance and to promote the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty. This includes protecting its flora, fauna, geological and landscape features. This is a statutory designation.
Armour	Structural protection (rock or concrete) for the shoreline.
Artificial reef	A man-made marine habitat constructed for the purpose of improving fisheries.
Back beach/ Back Shore	The section of beach extending landwards from the high water mark to the point where there is an abrupt change in slope or material; also referred to as the backshore.
Bar	Fully or partially submerged mound of sand, gravel or other unconsolidated material built on the sea-bottom in shallow water by waves and currents.
Beach face	Upper surface of the beach.
Beach nourishment	Artificial process of replenishing a beach with material from another source.
Beach profile	Side view of a beach extending from the top of the dune line into the sea.
Benefits (related to issue)	The service that the feature provides. In other words, why people value it or use a feature. For example, a nature reserve as well as helping to preserve biodiversity and meet national legislation, may also provide a recreation outlet much like a sport centre provides a recreation function.
Berm crest	Ridge of sand or gravel deposited by wave action on the shore just above the normal high water mark.
Brackish water	Freshwater mixed with seawater.
Breaker	A wave as it collapses on a shore.
Breaker zone	Area in the sea where the waves break.
CASI	Compact Airborne Spectrographic Imager – a remote sensing technique usually deployed in a light aircraft for the purposes of classifying land usage and habitat type
CFMP	Catchment Flood Management Plan. Broadly equivalent to an SMP, for fluvial defence management.
CHaMP	Coastal Habitat Management Plan – a non statutory plan which identifies potential future changes to coastal habitats and potential compensation measures for any losses
Cliff	High steep face composed primarily of rock.
Coastal squeeze	The reduction in habitat area which can arise if the natural landward migration of a habitat under sea level rise is prevented by the fixing of the high water mark. e.g. a sea wall.
Concern	This is a stated actual or perceived problem, raised by an individual or stakeholder. A concern can be strategic or local.

Term	Definition
Conservation	The political/social/economic process by which the environment is protected and resources are used wisely.
Cuspate foreland	A feature consisting of a triangular accumulation of sand projecting seawards from the shoreline.
CV	Capital Value. The actual value of costs or benefits.
Deep water	Area where surface waves are not influenced by the sea-bottom.
Defra	Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs
Downdrift	Direction of alongshore movement of beach materials.
Downdrift Beach	Area of beach towards which material is being moved by alongshore transport.
Dredging	Excavation, digging, scraping, draglining, suction dredging to remove sand, silt, rock or other underwater sea-bottom material.
Dune	Accumulations of wind-blown sand in ridges or mounds that lie landward of the beach and usually parallel to the shoreline.
Ebb-tide	The falling tide, part of the tidal cycle between high water and the next low water.
Ebb-tide delta	An accretionary deposit of sand found on the seaward side of an inlet and usually formed by tidal currents.
Ecosystem	Organization of the biological community and the physical environment in a specific geographical area.
Environmental impact assessment	Detailed studies which predict the effects of a development project on the environment. They also provide plans for mitigation of the adverse impacts.
Equilibrium	State of balance.
Erosion	Wearing away of the land, usually by the action of natural forces.
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area. This is an area where special land management payments are available through agreement with Defra to provide farming practices which are beneficial to the environment. This is a non-statutory designation.
Estuary	Mouth of a river, where fresh river water mixes with the seawater.
Feature	Something tangible that provides a service to society in one form or another or, more simply, benefits certain aspects of society by its very existence. This will be of a specific geographical location and specific to the SMP.
Fetch	Area of water where waves are generated by the wind.
Flood-tide	Rising tide, part of the tidal cycle between low water and the next high water.
Flood-tide delta	Accretionary deposit of sand found on the bay or river side of an inlet and usually formed by tidal currents.
Foreshore	Zone between the high water and low water marks.
Gabions	Wire mesh rectangular containers filled with stones.
Geomorphology/Morphology	That branch of physical geography/geology which deals with the form of the Earth, the general configuration of its surface, the distribution of the land, water, etc.

Term	Definition
Greenhouse effect	Heating of the earth's atmosphere due to an increase in gases like carbon dioxide.
Groyne	Shore protection structure built perpendicular to the shore; designed to trap sediment.
Groyne field	Series of groynes acting together to protect a section of beach.
Heritage Coast	These are coasts designated by the Countryside Commission for their scenic quality, their largely undeveloped nature and their special wildlife and historic interest. Local authorities assist with the management of Heritage Coasts often with Heritage Coast officers. This is a non-statutory designation
High water mark	The highest reach of the water at high tide. It is sometimes marked by a line of debris, e.g. seagrass, pieces of wood.
Issue	All issues and aspirations are related to flood and coastal defence and grouped or categorised under the three main themes: Technical; Environmental; or Socio-economic
Jetty	Structure projecting into the sea for the purpose of mooring boats; also solid structure projecting into the sea for the purpose of protecting a navigational channel.
Key Stakeholder	A person or organisation with a major interest in the preparation of, and outcomes from, a shoreline management plan. This includes agencies, authorities, organisations and private bodies with responsibilities or ownerships that affect the overall management of the shoreline in a plan.
Land reclamation	Process of creating new, dry land on the seabed.
LLA	Local Landscape Areas. An area identified by the local authority as being important to the appearance and environment of the local area.
LNR	Local Nature Reserves. These are established by local authorities in consultation with English Nature. These sites are generally of local significance and also provide important opportunities for public enjoyment, recreation and interpretation. This is a statutory designation.
Location	A discrete point on the coast or a length of coastline between two defined points.
Longshore current	A movement of water parallel to the shore, caused by waves.
Longshore transport	Movement of material parallel to the shore, also referred to as longshore drift.
Low water mark	The highest reach of the water at low tide.
Managed realignment	The reintroduction of tidal waters to previously enclosed or reclaimed land
MDSF	Modelling and Decision Support Framework. Mapping linked computer tool used in the evaluation of assets at risk from flooding or erosion.
Mean sea level	Average height of the sea surface over a 19-year period.
MHW	Mean High Water. The average of all high waters observed over a sufficiently long period
MLW	Mean Low Water. The average of all low waters observed over a sufficiently long period.
Monitoring	Systematic recording over time.

Term	Definition
NNR	National Nature Reserves. Designated by English Nature. These represent some of the most important natural and semi-natural ecosystems in Great Britain, and are managed to protect the conservation value of the habitats that occur on these sites. This is a statutory designation.
Objective	An objective is set, through consultation with key parties, to encourage the resolution of the issue or range of issues. It is a desired state to be achieved in the future.
Ocean current	Flow of water in a given direction in the ocean.
Offshore breakwater	Structure parallel to the shore, usually positioned in the sea, which protects the shore from waves.
Offshore zone	Extends from the low water mark to a water depth of about 15 m (49 ft) and is permanently covered with water.
Pile	Long heavy section of timber, concrete or metal, driven into the ground or seabed as support for another structure.
Policy	In this context, "policy" refers to the generic shoreline management options (No Active Intervention, Hold the Existing Line of Defence, Managed Realignment and Advance the Existing Line of Defence).
Policy Scenario	The combinations of policies selected against the various feature / benefit objectives for the whole SMP frontage.
PV	Present Value. The value of a stream of benefits or costs when discounted back to the present day. For this SMP the discount factors used are the latest provided by Defra for assessment of schemes, i.e. 3.5% for years 0-30, 3.0% for years 31-75, and 2.5% thereafter.
Ramsar	Designated under the, "Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat." 1971. The objective of this designation is to stem the progressive encroachment onto, and loss of wetlands.
Retaining wall	Wall built to hold back the earth.
Retreat	Movement backwards towards the land.
Revetment	Shore protection structure made with stones/ rock laid on a sloping face.
RIGS	Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites. These are identified by locally developed criteria, and are currently the most important places for geology and geomorphology outside statutorily protected land such as SSSI's. This is a non-statutory designation.
SAC	Special Area of Conservation. This designation aims to protect habitats or species of European importance and can include Marine Areas. SACs are designated under the EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and will form part of the Natura 2000 site network. All SACs sites are also protected as SSSI, except those in the marine environment below the Mean Low Water (MLW).
SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The main legislation concerning archaeology in the UK is the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. This Act, building on legislation dating back to 1882, provides for nationally important archaeological sites to be statutorily protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
Sand bar	Accretionary deposit of sand formed across a river mouth or bay by wave action and joined to the shore at both ends.

Term	Definition
Scour	Removal of underwater material by waves or currents, especially at the toe of a shore protection structure.
Seagrass bed	Area of the offshore sea-bed colonized by seagrasses.
Seawall	Massive structure built along the shore to prevent erosion and damage by wave action.
Sediment	Particles of rock covering a size range from clay to boulders.
Setback	Prescribed distance landward of a coastal feature (e.g. the line of existing defences).
Shore	Narrow strip of land in immediate contact with the sea.
Shoreline	Intersection of a specific water height with the shore or beach, e.g. the high water shoreline is the intersection of the high water mark with the shore or beach.
Siltation	Deposition of silt-sized particles.
SLA	Special Landscape Area. An area identified as having a strategic landscape importance.
SMA	Sensitive Marine Area. A generic term used to describe nationally important locations around our coast which require a cautious and detailed approach to management. They are identified by English Nature for their important benthic populations, spawning or nursery areas for fish, fragile intertidal communities, or breeding, feeding, and roosting areas for birds and sea mammals. This is a non-statutory designation.
SMP	Shoreline Management Plan. It provides a large-scale assessment of the risks associated with coastal processes and presents a policy framework to reduce these risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment in a sustainable manner.
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Importance. These sites are defined by the Wildlife Trusts and Local Authorities as sites of local nature conservation interest. These are non-statutory but form an integral part of the formulation of planning policies relating to nature conservation issues.
SPA	Special Protection Area. These are internationally important sites, being set up to establish a network of protected areas of birds. This is a statutory document.
Spit	Accretionary deposit of sand or stones located where a shoreline changes direction, formed by wave action and joined to the shore at one end only.
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest. These sites, notified by English Nature, represent some of the best examples of Britain's natural features including flora, fauna, and geology. This is a statutory designation.
Stakeholder	A person or organisation with an interest in the preparation of a shoreline management plan or affected by the policies produced. This broad interpretation has been taken to include agencies, authorities, organisations and private persons. See "Key stakeholder".
Storm surge	A rise in the sea surface on an open coast, resulting from a storm.
STW	Sewage Treatment Works
Swell	Waves that have travelled out of the area in which they were generated.
SWS	Storm Water System

Term	Definition
Tidal current	Movement of water in a constant direction caused by the periodic rising and falling of the tide. As the tide rises, a flood-tidal current moves in one direction and as the tide falls, the ebb-tidal current moves in the opposite direction.
Tidal inlet	A river mouth or narrow gap between islands, within which salt water moves landwards during a rising tide.
Tidal prism	The volume of water within the estuary between the level of high and low tide, typically taken for mean spring tides.
Tide	Periodic rising and falling of large bodies of water resulting from the gravitational attraction of the moon and sun acting on the rotating earth.
Toe protection	Material, usually large boulders, placed at the base of a sea defence structure like a seawall to prevent wave scour.
Topography	Configuration of a surface including its relief and the position of its natural and man-made features.
Transgression	The landward movement of the shoreline in response to a rise in relative sea level
Updrift	Direction opposite to the predominant movement of longshore transport.
Vegetation edge	Place where the vegetation (e.g. grasses, vines) meets the bare sand area of the back beach.
VMCA	Voluntary Marine Conservation Areas. Their purpose is to protect the marine conservation importance of the site and to provide a focus for liaison, co-operation and education for a sustainable marine environment. This is a statutory designation.
Water table	The upper surface of groundwater; below this level, the soil is saturated with water.
Wave direction	Direction from which a wave approaches.
Wave refraction	Process by which the direction of approach of a wave changes as it moves into shallow water.
Wetlands	Low-lying areas that are frequently flooded and which support vegetation adapted to saturated soils e.g. mangrove swamps.