

## Satellite Remote Sensing for Monitoring Coastal Erosion and Sea Level Rise

Marius Liviu\*

Institut Halieutique et des Sciences Marines, Université de Toliara, Madagascar

### Abstract

Coastal erosion and sea level rise are pressing issues affecting coastal regions worldwide, posing significant risks to ecosystems, infrastructure, and human settlements. Traditional ground-based monitoring methods are often limited in scope and efficiency. Satellite remote sensing provides a robust alternative, offering comprehensive and high-resolution data on coastal changes. This article explores the application of satellite remote sensing technologies in monitoring coastal erosion and sea level rise. It highlights key satellites and methods used for shoreline mapping, change detection, sediment dynamics assessment, altimetry, gravimetry, and thermal infrared sensing. Case studies from the Mississippi Delta and the Maldives illustrate the practical benefits and critical insights gained from satellite data. Future directions point towards advancements in satellite technology and the integration of artificial intelligence, enhancing the predictive capabilities and accuracy of remote sensing for coastal management.

**Keywords:** Satellite remote sensing; Coastal erosion; Sea level rise; Shoreline mapping; Change detection; Altimetry; Gravimetry; Sediment dynamics; Climate change; Coastal management

### Introduction

Coastal zones, where land meets ocean, are dynamic environments subject to natural and anthropogenic forces. Coastal erosion and sea level rise are two significant phenomena threatening these regions, impacting ecosystems, human settlements and economic activities. Traditional ground-based methods for monitoring these changes are often labor-intensive, time-consuming and limited in spatial coverage. Satellite remote sensing offers a powerful alternative, providing comprehensive, frequent and accurate observations of coastal areas on a global scale [1].

### Methodology

**Satellite remote sensing:** Satellite remote sensing involves the acquisition of information about the Earth's surface through sensors onboard satellites. These sensors capture data in various spectral bands, enabling the analysis of physical and environmental parameters. Key satellites used for coastal monitoring include Landsat, Sentinel, TerraSAR-X, and RADARSAT. These platforms provide high-resolution imagery, multi-spectral data, and synthetic aperture radar (SAR) capabilities, essential for detailed and consistent monitoring [2].

**Monitoring coastal erosion:** Coastal erosion, the process of shoreline retreat, is driven by factors such as wave action, sea level rise, and human activities. Remote sensing techniques facilitate the measurement and analysis of coastal erosion through several methods [3].

**Shoreline mapping:** High-resolution optical and SAR imagery are used to delineate shorelines accurately. By comparing historical and current shoreline positions, rates of erosion or accretion can be determined [4].

**Change detection:** Multi-temporal satellite images allow for the detection of changes in coastal landforms over time. Techniques like image differencing, principal component analysis, and machine learning algorithms enhance the detection of subtle changes [5].

**Sediment dynamics:** Optical and multispectral sensors help in assessing sediment transport and deposition patterns. These data are

crucial for understanding erosion processes and predicting future changes.

**Monitoring sea level rise:** Sea level rise, driven by global warming and melting ice caps, poses a significant threat to coastal regions. Remote sensing technologies provide critical insights into sea level trends and impacts

**Altimetry:** Satellite altimeters, such as those on the Jason series and Sentinel-6, measure sea surface height with high precision. These measurements are essential for monitoring global and regional sea level changes.

**Gravimetry:** Missions like GRACE (Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment) detect variations in Earth's gravity field, which can be used to infer changes in ocean mass and ice sheet dynamics [6].

**Thermal infrared sensing:** Thermal sensors measure sea surface temperatures, providing data on ocean warming and its contribution to sea level rise.

**Case studies: The mississippi delta:** The Mississippi Delta, a region of significant economic and ecological importance, has experienced substantial land loss due to coastal erosion and sea level rise. Remote sensing analyses using Landsat and Sentinel imagery have documented the retreat of shorelines and subsidence of land. These data inform restoration and management efforts, highlighting areas needing intervention [7].

**The maldives:** The Maldives, an archipelago highly vulnerable to sea level rise, relies on satellite data for its survival strategies. Altimetric data from Jason satellites indicate a rising trend in sea levels around

\*Corresponding author: Marius Liviu, Institut Halieutique et des Sciences Marines, Université de Toliara, Madagascar, E-mail: liviumarius627@yahoo.com

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the islands. This information is crucial for planning adaptive measures, such as constructing sea walls and elevating critical infrastructure [8].

Advancements in satellite technology and data processing are expected to enhance the capabilities of remote sensing for coastal monitoring. The integration of artificial intelligence and machine learning with remote sensing data will improve the accuracy of predictions and the identification of critical trends [9]. Furthermore, the development of new satellites with higher resolution and advanced sensors will provide even more detailed observations [10].

## Discussion

Satellite remote sensing has revolutionized the monitoring of coastal erosion and sea level rise, offering unparalleled spatial and temporal resolution. Key technologies include high-resolution optical imagery, synthetic aperture radar (SAR), and satellite altimetry. These technologies enable precise shoreline mapping, detection of subtle changes in coastal landforms, and accurate measurement of sea surface height. For instance, the Landsat and Sentinel satellites provide detailed imagery for assessing erosion patterns, while the Jason and GRACE missions offer critical data on sea level changes and ocean mass distribution.

Case studies such as the Mississippi Delta and the Maldives underscore the importance of satellite data in informing coastal management strategies. In the Mississippi Delta, remote sensing has documented significant land loss and subsidence, guiding restoration efforts. In the Maldives, altimetric data are essential for planning adaptive measures against rising sea levels.

Looking ahead, advancements in satellite technology and data processing are expected to further enhance remote sensing capabilities. The integration of artificial intelligence and machine learning with satellite data will improve the accuracy of predictions and trend analysis. New satellites with higher resolution and advanced sensors will provide even more detailed and frequent observations, supporting more effective coastal management and mitigation strategies.

## Conclusion

Satellite remote sensing has emerged as an indispensable tool for monitoring coastal erosion and sea level rise. It offers unparalleled advantages in terms of coverage, frequency, and accuracy. As coastal zones face increasing pressures from climate change and human activities, the role of remote sensing in providing timely and reliable data will become even more critical. By leveraging these technologies, we can better understand, mitigate, and adapt to the challenges facing our coastal environments.

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