

# WARNING: SANDY BEACHES TO DISAPPEAR DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE



Researchers estimate that half of all sandy beaches could have disappeared by the end of the century. Sandy beaches are beloved places of recreation, and for many animal species they are an important habitat. But climate change poses a real threat to the sandy coastal sections.

By the year 2050, up to 15 percent of all sandy beaches could be eroded and thus hardly recognizable, writes the team around Michalis Voudoukas from the European Joint Research Center in Ispra, Italy, and colleagues in a study published in the journal *Nature Climate Change*.

**Particularly affected are the beach areas on the east coast of the USA, in South East Asia and Central Europe.** Here the coasts could recede by as much as 100 meters by the end of the century.

"If the erosion exceeds 100 meters, it means that the beach will most likely disappear completely, as most beaches are narrower," the coastal researcher told.

According to the experts, the main reason for beach death is the rise in sea level associated with climate change. Climate change is also changing the weather situation: extreme events such as storms could become more frequent and clog coastlines.

The construction of many coastal regions is also upsetting the ecosystem of the beaches. Apart from climate protection to stop global warming, the researchers are therefore also in favor of a more ecological design of coastal areas.

Beaches cover more than a third of the world's coasts and serve as buffer zones to protect the mainland from storm surges. **Because they enable tourism, sandy beaches are also important economic engines.**

In some countries, beaches are more than just holiday destinations. In Brazil or Australia, for example, life near the coast takes place on the beach almost all year round.

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