

# China: Millions of coastal acres polluted

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China's State Oceanic Administration said pollution contaminated about 34.5 million acres -- about 5 percent -- of China's coastal areas.

Officials attribute the problems to "negative impacts of a fast-growing economy" and lack of technical and financial resources to address them, Xinhua said Friday.

Because of the pollution, the country's coastal areas sustained damage to their ecosystems, a drop in oceanic resources and a reduction in biodiversity, Xinhua said.

During 2005, Chinese officials said, about 31.7 billion tons of waste water -- nearly four times the average for the last century -- discharging more than 25 million tons of pollutants into the water, Xinhua said.

Environmental officials said coastal wetland areas and coral reefs have decreased by 50 percent and 80 percent, respectively, since the 1970s, Xinhua said. The incidents of red tides, in which large amounts of algae kill sea inhabitants, also increased over the years.

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