New classification of the world's coastlines to improve climate action

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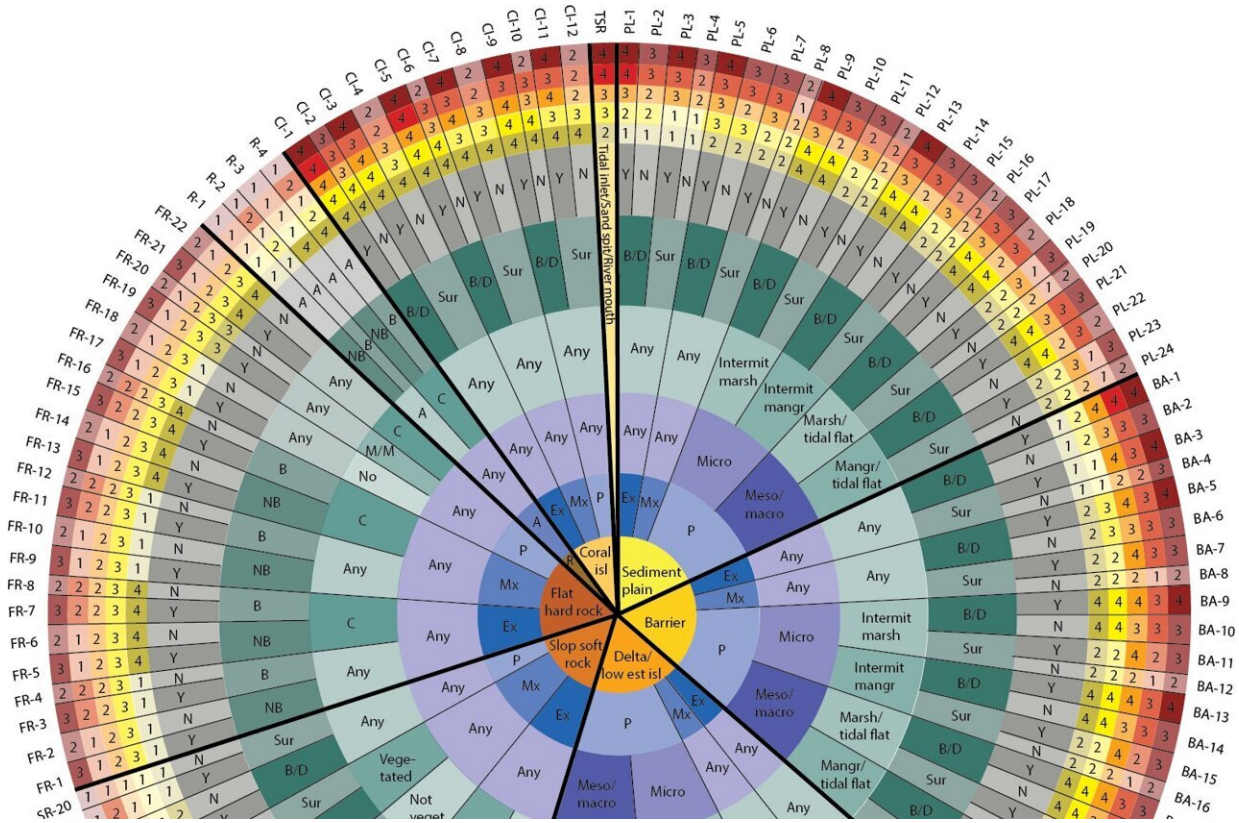

The Coastal Hazard Wheel 3.0 consisting of six coastal classification circles, five hazard circles and the coastal classification codes. It is used by starting in the wheel center moving outwards through the coastal classification. Credit: Rosendahl Appelquist

A new classification of the world's coastlines has been released to

improve coastal climate change adaptation at the local, regional and national level and strengthen coordinated climate action worldwide. The classification builds on the Coastal Hazard Wheel that is a universal coastal management framework and is developed by the Coastal Hazard Wheel initiative involving Deltares, the UN Environment Programme-DHI Centre (UNEP-DHI Centre) and the UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre, with contributions from University of Copenhagen, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Novo Nordisk Foundation.

The new global coastal classification can be used by public authorities, planners and researchers to determine the key characteristics of a specific coastal location, identify relevant adaptation measures and map the full spectrum of coastal hazards, including ecosystem disruption, gradual inundation, salt water intrusion, erosion and flooding, from local to global level.

The classification makes use of the latest global geodata from remote sensing, on-site observations and modeling. It thereby provides coastal classification, hazard information and adaptation guidance for coastal stretches down to about 200 meters. The global coastal classification and adaptation guidance is made freely available as a web-application, the Coastal Hazard Wheel App, which is available via regular web browsers.

"With close to 2 billion people now living in coastal areas worldwide, timely and appropriate adaptation action is critical," says Dr. Lars Rosendahl Appelquist, Head of the Coastal Hazard Wheel initiative. "The new global coastal classification and adaptation guidance can help public authorities and planners with identifying relevant management measures and can facilitate integrated coastal management and communication worldwide."

Building proper resilience and reducing disaster risk in coastal areas is a major global challenge and particularly urgent for Small Island Developing States (SIDS). FAO and the Coastal Hazard Wheel initiative are therefore working together to test and further develop the new global coastal classification system in its efforts to support SIDS and other coastal countries with adaptation through healthy coastal ecosystems and resilient communities.

The new global coastal classification can improve and broaden the awareness and understanding of coastal challenges and the impacts of climate change. Moreover, the classification can support multi-stakeholder processes from local to global level as well as investment plans to address bottlenecks and needs. Furthermore, the classification and coastal coding system can be used as a common coastal language to facilitate communication between local, regional and national authorities, policy-makers, international organizations, researchers and practitioners.

More information: Coastal Hazard Wheel App: www.coastalhazardwheel.org

Provided by Coastal Hazard Wheel initiative

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