

## What's New, Webby?



## Save India's Beaches

In June 2009, a popular television news channel in India, NDTV, aired a series called 'India's dying beaches'. These reports drew attention to some of the major threats facing India's beaches, and the impact both on the ecological integrity of coastal areas and on fishing communities, the traditional inhabitants of the coast.

These reports, now available on YouTube, a video sharing website, highlight key issues from different locations along the coast—mangroves, that protect coasts from erosion and fishing communities from storms, are felled to make way for ports in Gujarat; beaches in Kerala are shrinking due to illegal sand mining and rampant tourism; Orissa's fishing hamlets as well as the nesting grounds of the endangered Olive Ridley turtles have been adversely affected by artificial breakwaters and ports; sand dunes and vegetation on Goa's beaches have been wiped off due to tourism and other industrial forces; and an elevated highway threatens the Marina Beach in Chennai. The worst hit are the fishing communities living along India's vast coastline.

The series shows how thousands of livelihoods are being affected each day by development activities on the coast and stresses the need to safeguard the

lives and livelihoods of those who depend on the sea, as well as to protect the environment from further destruction.

"India's dying beaches" was aired against the backdrop of strong protests from fishing communities, environmentalists and non-governmental organizations against moves to replace the 1991 Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification with the controversial Coastal Management Zone (CMZ) Notification 2008, which, many feared, would open up the coasts for economic development activities on a large scale, destroying coastal ecosystems and displacing fishing communities. In the face of relentless protests, the draft CMZ Notification was allowed to lapse in July 2009. India's fishing communities consider this as a major victory.

These videos can be accessed on YouTube through the following links:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDSlqnQSSlU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDSlqnQSSlU)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YgjZ8HwBLg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YgjZ8HwBLg)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOpeF63EJ-0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOpeF63EJ-0)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjU1UPCQjfg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjU1UPCQjfg)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=THGANb5FBvA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THGANb5FBvA)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=-V6RIIB2KGY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-V6RIIB2KGY)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=1J8078xerpk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1J8078xerpk)