

ECOSYSTEMS AND BIODIVERSITY OF THE ARABIAN GULF



SAUDI ARABIAN WATERS

Fifty Years of Scientific Research

A Publication by Saudi Aramco and King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals

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Fifty Years of Scientific Research



جامعة الملك فهد للبترول والمعادن
King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals

أرامكو السعودية
saudi aramco



Preface

For nearly five decades, the King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM) has partnered with Saudi Aramco to document and explore the wondrous ecosystem that exists in the Arabian Gulf. The book before you offers a comprehensive and up to date guide on the fruits of that work and its findings.

Through its pages, marine scientists, decision makers, students and indeed anyone with an interest in marine environmental protection, will have access to a wealth of scientific information.

The Arabian Gulf is environmentally challenged because of the natural stressors of salinity and temperature fluctuations. Rapid population growth and associated developmental activities along its coasts, particularly those related to the urban and industrial development, are adding additional stress on the Arabian Gulf's fragile environment.

The partnership between KFUPM and Saudi Aramco, has resulted in a greater understanding of the Arabian Gulf's natural ecosystems, ensuring greater protection of biodiversity and natural resources. The backbone of this partnership has been the Marine Environmental Sustaining Research Program, which has produced fundamental knowledge on the Arabian Gulf's marine environment. In addition, detailed and in-depth environmental impact assessments have been systematically conducted for proposed development projects as well as environmental monitoring during construction and commencement of operations, all contributing to our knowledge of the ecosystems. This information has contributed to the protection of the ecosystems and the development of a fisheries management framework in the Arabian Gulf.

We are grateful for the collaboration and efforts of the interdisciplinary teams of the Environmental Protection Department of Saudi Aramco and the Marine Studies Section of KFUPM in preparation of this book. A deep and sincere appreciation is extended to each and every person who, for nearly five decades, has played a part in this partnership in marine environment protection. This book is a testament to your hard work and our collective desire to preserve the beautiful ecosystem that flourishes in the Arabian Gulf.

AMIN H. NASSER
Saudi Aramco President & CEO

Foreword

The Arabian Gulf has always been a special component of the Kingdom's economy and culture. Aside from its rich oil and gas resources, it is also an important source of food and water, and is a major transportation point. But not to be undermined or forgotten is the fact that it also supports vital and thriving ecosystems. In its waters are seagrass, coral reefs, salt marshes, and mangroves, as well as intertidal and subtidal sediments and deeper water areas. These interacting habitats provide the essential components for a vibrant and productive marine ecosystem. However impressive this may sound, the Arabian Gulf is also facing natural and human-induced stress, such as elevated seawater temperature and salinity; coupled with coastal urbanization and rapid industrialization. These stresses, if not managed, can impact the long-term ecosystem services currently provided by the Arabian Gulf.

Scientific research on its marine environment is the result of collaboration between industry and academia. It was in 1982 that the Environmental Protection Department of Saudi Aramco and the Marine Studies Section of the King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals began joint research into the Arabian Gulf's ecosystem. This partnership involved the development of research programs to study the Arabian Gulf's ecosystem values, interactions, and reduce the impact of stress. Currently, the sixth phase of this sustaining research program is focusing on the biodiversity status across the Arabian Gulf's ecosystems. This book gathers the results and the major scientific findings of this long-term collaborative program and provides a detailed, updated review on the state of the marine ecosystems and biodiversity of the Western Arabian Gulf. For anyone who has an interest in the topic, it serves as the current definitive work, and is a reminder of the importance of marine ecosystems.

PROF. SAHEL N. ABDULJAUWAD
*Rector of King Fahd University
of Petroleum & Minerals*

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Intertidal Mud Habitats

THADICKAL V. JOYDAS¹, PERIYADAN K. KRISHNAKUMAR¹, MIKE POPE², and KARUPPASAMY P. MANIKANDAN¹

Introduction

The intertidal zone is a section of a shoreline between the lowest low tide mark and the highest high tide mark. This habitat is covered with water at high tide and exposed to air at low tide. This is the place where land and sea meet, and therefore, this is considered to be a transition zone. According to substrata, intertidal zones can be divided into rocky, sandy and muddy shores. These habitats differ in levels of abiotic and biotic factors.

Intertidal mud habitats, also called intertidal mud flats, represent shoreline deposits of fine-grained silty or clayey material that accumulates in areas of restricted wave and current action. Intertidal muds cannot exist where there is much wave action, and therefore, the mud flat habitat is limited in its extent. Broad mud flats do not commonly develop in areas of significant shoreline relief because cliff face erosion adds a coarse-grained component to the sediment and the high wave energy along these areas of exposure removes fine particles.

Intertidal mud flats are often thought to be dreary, lifeless and barren yet they are one of the most important coastal biomes, which actually teem with marine life (Jones, 1986). The preservation and conservation of mud flats is critical as they are the larders of the seashore world providing food for a multitude of species. Rotting vegetation is also a part of the mud flats and as a result, the mud is rich in nutrients and is anything but barren, supporting a large diversity of species.

Unlike rocky shores, one of the noteworthy features of the soft sediment habitat is the availability of depth as a habitable dimension and many muddy habitat inhabitants are adapted for burrowing. Mud flats are often layered with a green colored top layer, which is supersaturated with oxygen and is occupied by primary producers. This top layer is covered with a dense microalgal community that is dominated by microbial mats of diatom/cyanobacteria (Hoffman, 1996). In mud flats, oxygen can penetrate only slowly to the interstitial spaces and is not sufficient for the complete oxidation of organic matter. Although organic matter accumulates on the surface, sediment below that is mostly anoxic and usually contains free sulfide.

At low tide, epifaunal organisms undergo intense heating and drying due to significantly reduced water levels and more intense exposure to sunlight and are sometimes exposed to salinity reduction during periods of rainfall. At high tide, these same organisms are exposed to inundation in saline waters with associated changes in temperature and light. Therefore, the organisms living in the intertidal zone have

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adapted in a multitude of ways that allow them to survive in this ever-changing environment. These adaptations may be behavioral (i.e., movements or actions), morphological (i.e., characteristics of external body structure), or physiological (i.e., internal functions of cells and organs) (Somero, 2002).

Vertical zonation is a remarkable feature of the intertidal zones. The gradient of climate with tide height leads to patterns of intertidal zonation, with high intertidal species being more adapted to emersion stresses than low intertidal species. Generally, the intertidal zone is divided into three vertical zones: (1) supra littoral fringe the upper level of the high tide zone that receives regular splashing of the waves during the high tides, (2) mid-littoral zone the major part of the intertidal zone below the high tide mark that is exposed during the normal tidal cycle, and (3) infra littoral fringe the lowest level only exposed during the extreme spring tides; the base of the fringe marks the point of the lowest tide (or the beginning of the marine environment below the tides).

The common fauna seen on the surface of the mud flats are crabs, shrimp, mollusks and some seaweed that may grow on a hard substrate like a pebble or empty shell. Another unique species, which thrives in a healthy mud flat biome, is an amphibious fish known as a Mudskipper, belonging to the family Gobiidae. This unique species has adapted to living in the intertidal or mud flat zone by being able to stay out of water for extended periods.

Both resident and migratory shorebirds are dependent on the fauna living on the surface and in the mud. Each has different leg lengths, a suitable and unique bill (size, shape and length) and a feeding strategy adapted for the specific organisms they feed on, which live in these tidal flats. One of the main sources of food for these avian consumers is the variety of worms that are the primary inhabitants under the mud surface.

One of the notable features of the western Arabian Gulf is its extremely low relief of the seabed. The average slope is only 35 cm per km and this results in an extensive intertidal zone, the width of which in many places can be measured in kilometers.

In the western Arabian Gulf, sheltered bays contain large areas of mud flats, protected from wave action, which become sites of mud deposition. Due to the absence of significant freshwater flow into these bays, they tend to be more hypersaline, experiencing extreme temperature variation (17 °C to 40 °C). Tidal flats in general are considered to be the most productive of all natural ecosystems (Odum, 1971). In spite of the harsh environmental conditions, intertidal mud flats are the highly productive marine biotopes in the western Arabian Gulf (Basson, et al., 1977). The occurrence of mud flats in large areas contributes significantly to the high pelagic and benthic productivity in the Arabian Gulf (Jones, 1986).

Tidal mud flats are mostly characterized by a series of well-defined zones, each occupied by a different community of organisms. According to Basson, et al. (1977) these zones (Figure 3.36), from landward to seaward, are:

1. The marsh grass zone.
2. The halophyte zone.
3. The mangroves.
4. The algal mat zone.
5. The *Macrophthalmus* zone.
6. The *Cerithidae* zone.

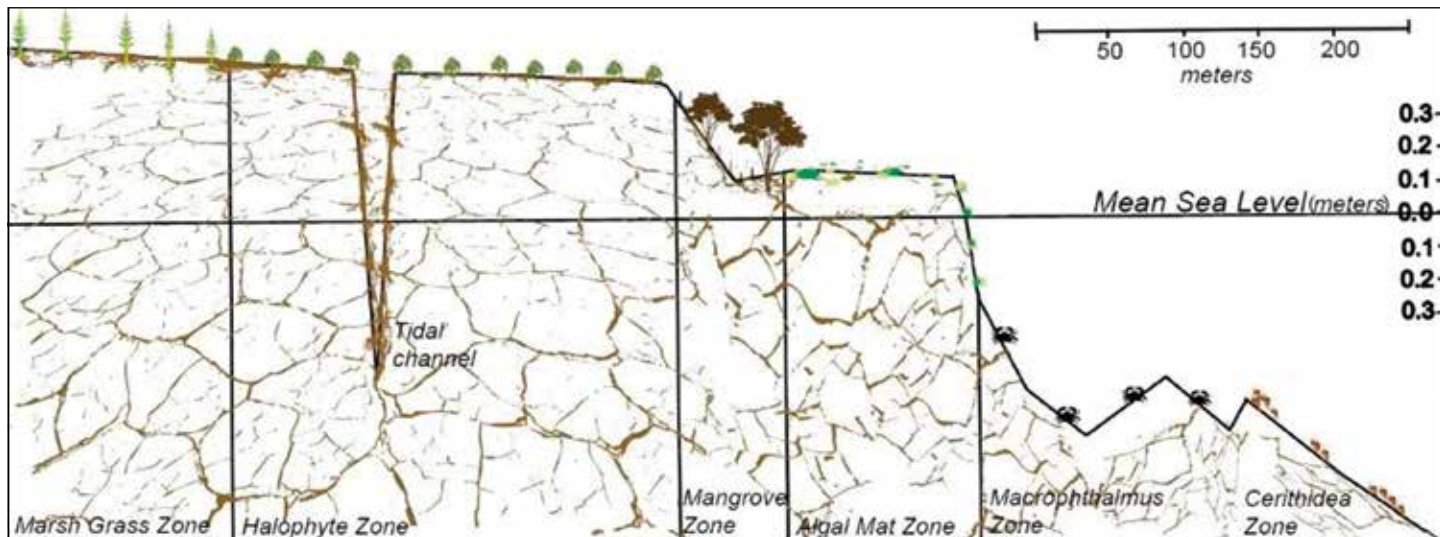


FIGURE 3.36. Diagram of zonation in the intertidal mud habitats of the Saudi coast of the Arabian Gulf (Modified from Basson, et al., 1977).

Depending on local factors such as the shoreline topography, sediment properties and the nature of the adjacent terrestrial and marine environment, variation in this zonation pattern may be expected in other areas (Basson, et al., 1977). Subsequently, such variations will usually be limited to the reduction or suppression of one or another of the zones, rather than any drastic change in the sequence.

The intertidal ecosystem, from Kuwait to Abu Ali Island of Saudi Arabia, particularly the sheltered bays, was severely affected by the 1991 Gulf oil spill (Jones, et al., 1998; Price, 1998). Initial studies after the spill revealed complete absence of key species from the littoral fringe of all but mangrove habitats, and between 80% and 100% loss in species diversity in the upper eulittoral zone (Jones and Richmond, 1992; Watt, et al., 1993). Jones, et al. (1994) reported a reduction in tar cover on the upper shores over the period 1991–1992 together with the appearance of algal mat cover on most soft substrate shores. Apart from this major destruction, reclamation of the coastal area is a key threat to the intertidal mud habitats of this region (Loughland, et al., 2012). Large areas of mature and slow growing mangroves have been reclaimed for the urbanization in various parts of the western Arabian Gulf.

This chapter presents the various ecological features of the intertidal mud ecosystem with a special reference to the resident communities. It focuses on the intertidal mud ecosystems other than salt marsh zone and halophyte ecosystem (Chapter 3.3), and mangroves (Chapter 3.6), however, whenever required, features of flora and fauna of the latter ecosystems have been briefly mentioned.

Methods of Obtaining Data

Intertidal habitats were surveyed by a team of biologists driving along the coast. Upon encountering the mud habitat, the biologists measured its length based on the vehicle's odometer and obtained GPS positions at both ends of the habitat. The biologists walking around the habitat made observations on obvious biological characteristics of the site such as the distribution of organisms and the intertidal zonation.

Distribution of Ecosystem

Along the Saudi coast of the Arabian Gulf, the intertidal mud habitats measuring more than 500 m width are prevalent in the sheltered bays situated between Tanajib to Abu Ali. Mud flats together with sand flats and rock flats, occupy 30% to 40% of these bays, while mud flats are the most common habitat. The mud flats are common in the bays of Manifa, Musallamiyah, Khursaniyah, Abu Ali, Tarut Bay and the Gulf of Salwa. In most of the intertidal mud habitats, ecosystems formed by mangroves (e.g., Tarut Bay Dammam, Gurmah Island, Abu Ali Island and Khafji area) and salt marshes (Gulf of Salwa, Abu Ali Island, Musallamiyah Bay, Safaniyah and Ras Al-Mishab) are present. As usual, mangroves and salt marshes are progressively reduced in size toward the low tide mark. Barth (2002) estimated that mud flat with salt marshes occupy about 490 km of the Saudi coast, of which 145 km has a width greater than 15 m and 45 km has a width smaller than 15 m. Mangroves occupied only a 6 km length in this region.

Abiotic Characteristics

The abiotic parameters such as solar radiation, sea surface temperature, salinity, sediment organic load and contaminants evidently influence the distribution of organisms in the intertidal mud habitats. A description of the major parameters of the intertidal mud habitats of the western Arabian Gulf is given next.

Physical Characteristics

Sunlight is vital in the intertidal habitat. Part of the radiation is used in the conversion of inorganic compounds to organic compounds by the coastal marine plant communities and the remainder is responsible for the temperature regime in water (Ahmad and Sultan, 1991). Even though high solar radiation (monthly average of 136 to 271 W m⁻²) results in extreme temperatures and higher evaporation rates, they support the benthic primary productivity in the mud flats of the western Arabian Gulf (Ahmad and Sultan, 1991). Studies have shown that desiccation is not much affected by the microbial mats in the mud flats of this region (Jones, et al., 1996; Al-Zaidan, et al., 2006).

The composition and distribution of floral and faunal assemblages in the intertidal zone is determined largely by the movement of water. Tidal range, wave action and the slope of the shore are the major factors that determine the vertical extent of the tidal zone. Due to the low topographic relief, a large area is available as the intertidal area in the western Arabian Gulf (KFUPM/RI, 2014). Over most of the Gulf, tidal range is 1 m to 2 m near land, but is reduced to 0.5 m in the south of the Gulf of Salwa (Sheppard, et al., 1992).

Hydrographical Parameters

The sea surface temperature and salinity play pivotal roles in the distribution of flora and fauna in the intertidal zone of the Arabian Gulf. The annual fluctuations in temperature exceed 20 °C in the nearshore waters with a maximum temperature of 36°C (Jones, et al., 1994; KFUPM/RI, 2014). Higher salinity of

56 psu to 74 psu are characteristics of mud flats in this region. The pH in the interstitial water is normally within a range of 6.7 to 8.8 in winter and 6.9 to 8.3 in summer (Al-Bakri and Kittaneh, 1998).

Sediment Characteristics

Due to the sheltered nature, continuous deposition of silt and clay occurs in the mud flat. The finest grained sediment is found at the lower, seaward end and the grain size increases progressively at the more landward areas (KFUPM/RI, 2014). Vertical profile of the substratum indicates that grain size is finest (1.8 Φ) at the surface and increase with depth in the sediment (1.4 Φ at 22 cm deep) (Basson, et al., 1977).

The nutritional quality of sediment measured as organic carbon is one of the important factors determining the community structure of benthic organisms. In mud flats, the total organic carbon (TOC) may have originated from a number of sources such as decay of marine organisms, industrial and domestic effluents, and oil spills. Generally, the levels of TOC in the mud flats are higher than the subtidal areas. Al-Bakri and Kittaneh (1998) recorded TOC values ranging from 0.2% to 3.1% from the mud flats of Kuwait.

Contaminants

Inorganic contaminants include trace metals and nutrients when it exceeds the stipulated limits. The major contributors of inorganic contaminants in the Arabian Gulf include discharges from power and desalination plants, effluents from agriculture and livestock production plants, food and chemical manufacturing, ship ballast water, and seaport activities. Municipal source effluents from sewage outfalls lead to hypoxia, eutrophication, toxic algal blooms and fish kills. As most of these municipals discharge effluents in the intertidal zone, this zone is severely affected, especially in Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman, where 63% to 94% of the population is concentrated in the coast (Khan, 2002).

With regard to metals in sediments, KFUPM/RI has conducted several studies, including the analysis of metals in sediments throughout the Saudi coast of the Arabian Gulf and found that most concentrations were below the accepted natural background levels, while localized hotspots were noticed in Bahrain for Cu, Hg, Pb and Zn and the UAE for As, Co, Cr and Ni (De Mora, et al., 2004).

The main source of oil to the intertidal environment could be attributed to historical spills, accidental damage to pipelines, tanker de-ballasting and natural seepages in certain areas (Massoud, et al., 1996). One of the severe impacts on the coastal habitats was by the massive oil spill during the 1991 Gulf War (KFUPM/RI, 1991). The intertidal regions and sheltered bays were severely affected by the spill (Hayes, et al., 1993; KFUPM/RI, 1991). About one year after the spill, the total petroleum hydrocarbon (TPH) concentrations up to 47,000 mg kg⁻¹ were reported from the sheltered habitats like tidal flats, marshes and mangroves of Saudi Arabia (Sauer, et al., 1993; KFUPM/RI, 1994). The levels of total polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons up to 175,000 ng g⁻¹ (dry weight) were reported by Fowler, et al. (1993) from the sheltered muddy basins along the Saudi Arabian coast during this period. The results of the post-spill study indicate that spilled oil in the surface layer of the sediment was substantially degraded within a few months of the spill. Consequently, core samples collected more than two years after the 1991 Gulf oil spill reveal a contaminated layer a few centimeters below the sediment surface at many sites in the shallow regions (Price, et al., 1994). Eleven years after the oil spill, the TPH concentrations in subtidal sediments close to

the intertidal region of sheltered bays such as Abu Ali and Manifa Bays show high levels of TPH (ND–89,000 mg kg⁻¹) (KFUPM/RI, 2003). The high concentration of TPH was observed at 10 cm to 15 cm below the sediment surface during this period. This suggests that due to the increased sedimentation rate and low wave action in the bays, there has been considerable accumulation of sediments over the years.

Biotic Characteristics

Flora

Plant communities such as common reeds, flowering plants, halophytes, mangroves and algal mats are usually found in the intertidal mud habitats along the Saudi Gulf coast. The distribution of halophytes and mangroves are already covered in detail in separate chapters of this book (Chapters 3.3, 3.5 and 3.6). In this section, microbial mats and macrophytes are briefly discussed.

Microbial Mat

The intertidal muddy area in the western Arabian Gulf supports a dense micro algal community referred to as microbial mat, often dominated by diatom or cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) (Clayton, 1986; Jones, 1986; Hoffman, 1996). Diatoms, and cyanobacteria in the algal mat play important roles in grazing food chains, in carbon dioxide (CO₂) assimilation and also in adding mechanical stability to the muddy substratum (Al-Zaidan, et al., 2006). The cyanobacteria-dominated algal mats in the tidal flats are supposed to be a greater contributor to the primary productivity in the Gulf than are mangroves (Price, et al., 1993). They also fix nitrogen and contribute greatly to overall productivity due to their enormous extent in the western Arabian Gulf. The cyanobacteria are widely distributed in the intertidal zone (from upper to lower intertidal) but never occur above the supratidal zone.

Of the numerous small- and medium-sized diatoms forming the mat, *Amphora* and *Nitzschia* are the predominant ones (Al-Zaidan, et al., 2006). The dominant cyanobacteria species reported from the mud flats of the western Arabian Gulf are *Microcoleus chthonoplastes*, *Oscillatoria nigro-viridis*, and *Lyngbya aestuarii*, *Chroococcus* sp., *Schizothrix* sp. and *Phormidium* sp. (Al-Thukair and Al-Hinai, 1993; Al-Mohanna, et al., 2007). Figure 3.37 shows the algal mat in the intertidal mud habitats of Tarut Island. Further details of the micro algae are provided in Chapter 3.5.

Macrophytes

Macrophytes are prevalent in the salt marsh, halophyte and mangrove zones. The marsh grass zone usually lies above the average high tide level and salt tolerant grass and grass-like plants such as *Phragmites communis* (the common reed), *Aeluropus lagopoides* and *Bienertia cycloptera* grow in this region. These plants usually are found in the coastal belts of the temperate deserts. In the halophyte zone, salt tolerant flowering plants or halophytes are seen in abundance. This zone is usually covered with seawater during only a short period of each tidal cycle. Flowering plants such as *Arthrocnemon macrostachyum* and *Halocnemon*



FIGURE 3.37. Green algal mat in the intertidal muddy habitats of Tarut Island, Saudi Arabia.

Strobilaceum usually grow in this region. The interlacing root system of these halophytes provides a suitable habitat for several marine organisms, including burrowing crabs (Basson, et al., 1977). Depending on other environmental conditions, the next mud flat zones along the Gulf coast are occupied with *Avicennia marina*, the black mangroves (KFUPM/RI, 1994). Often they occur in association with salt marsh halophytes, mainly *Arthrocnemum macrostachyum* and *Salicornia europaea*. The mangroves in the Gulf are poorly developed compared to their counterpart at the Red Sea because of the cold winter temperatures.

Typical for salt marshes is the presence of halophytic plants in the upper eulittoral zone and additionally some flowering herbs and grasses, fringing the coast above the littoral fringe. Such salt marsh halophytes are prevalent along the Gulf coast and often form the only coastal vegetation. Members of the *Zygophyllaceae* and *Chenopodiaceae* are the dominant salt marsh families. The typical vegetation zones controlled by tidal inundation, soil and groundwater salinity are the cyanobacteria zone, the *Salicornia* zone, *Arthrocnemum* zone, *Halocnemum* zone, and landward of the littoral fringe follows the *Limonium - Suaeda - Seidlitzia - Halopeplis* zone (Basson, et al., 1977). A recent study shows that the dominant vascular plants in the mud flats in the sheltered bays of Saudi Arabia are two succulent perennials, *A. macrostachyum* and *H. strobilaceum*, and two succulent annuals, *Salicornia europaea* and *Suaeda maritime* (Langman, et al., 2012). Figures 3.38 to 3.40 show some macrophytes found in Rahima, Furayah and Tarut Island.

Fauna

The most abundant and widely distributed faunal components in the intertidal mud habitats of the Arabian Gulf are brachyuran decapods (of the families Ocypodidae and Grapsidae) and gastropods (family Cerithidae) (Basson, et al., 1977; Apel and Turkay, 1999; Al-Zaidan, et al., 2003; Langman, et al., 2012). Apel and Turkay (1999) reported 21 taxa of ocypode crabs and six species of grapsid crabs from the Arabian Gulf. They found higher numbers of crab species, particularly ocypodes, in the coasts of the UAE (UAE: Ras al-Khaimah and Umm al-Quwain) and Kuwait, 14 and 15 species each, respectively, and lower numbers in Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia, 5 to 7 species, respectively. According to Apel and Turkay (1999), salinity is the controlling factor in the distribution of crabs, because the majority of the crabs cannot withstand the higher salinities of the western and southern Gulf (>40 psu) unlike the comparatively lower salinities in the other parts of the UAE and Kuwait (<39 psu). In a review, Sheppard, et al. (2010) by quoting a study of Medio (2006) reported the richness of invertebrates in the intertidal mud habitats of UAE with >800 individuals m² for the hermit crab *Diogenes avarus*, sting rays (as much as one *Dasyatis* spp. in each five linear meter) and high densities of juvenile fishes (belonging to more than five families).



FIGURE 3.38. *The common reed, Phragmites communis recorded at the intertidal mud habitats of Rahima, Saudi Arabia.*



FIGURE 3.39. A common macrophyte, *Arthrocnemum macrostachyum* recorded at the intertidal mud habitats of Furayah, Saudi Arabia.



FIGURE 3.40. Scattered mangroves and *A. macrostachyum* and tide pools noticed in the intertidal mud habitats of Tarut Island, Saudi Arabia.

Although the intertidal communities in the Saudi coasts are comparatively less rich than that of the other parts of the Arabian Gulf, conspicuous communities have been reported from this region. From the intertidal mud habitats of the Tarut Bay, Basson, et al. (1977) reported two distinct faunal communities based on the semi-quantitative studies conducted by Saudi Aramco biologists. The details of these communities are described here:

1. *Macrophthalmus* community: This community is situated between the mangrove belt and the extreme low tide level. Deposit feeding crabs are the major groups in this community and of these crabs, the most abundant is *Macrophthalmus depressus* (up to 3 cm in body width) (Figure 3.41), after which the community is named. Its density was estimated to be about 50 ind. m⁻². This crab inhabits in a permanent burrow in the mud, and mostly a male and a female share the same burrow. At low tide they come out for feeding on organic particles on the sediment. The smaller crabs associated with this zone include *Ocypode saratan*, *Scopimera crabricauda*, *Cleistostoma dotilliforme*, *Paracleistostoma* sp. and *Scopimera* spp. The community also occasionally includes the largest of the mud flat crabs *Eurycarcinus* sp. (body width over 5 cm), which is a predator, feeding on other smaller crabs.
2. *Cerithidae* community: This zone is located between the *Macrophthalmus* zone and the level of the lowest spring tides. A snail *Cerithidae cingulata* (Figure 3.42) is the dominant species, having density up to 2,100 ind. m⁻². A gradual transition occurs between *Macrophthalmus* and *Cerithidae* zones. Because



FIGURE 3.41. A dominant crab, *Macrophthalmus depressus*, recorded in the intertidal mud habitats of Gurmah Island, Saudi Arabia.



FIGURE 3.42. *Mud creeper Cerithidea cingulate along with algal mat and mangrove pneumatophores in Abu Ali, Saudi Arabia.*

of this, both the communities co-exist in some places. The other members of this community are predatory snails *Murex kusterianus*, echiuroid *Ikeda taenioides* and a number of burrowing bivalves.

Thirteen species of macrofauna have been recorded from the intertidal mud habitats of Abu Ali (KFUPM/RI, 1988, 1994). A large number of *C. cingulata* and *M. depressus* were observed at the mid-intertidal stretch about 500 m from the shoreline in this region. In a review, Barth (2002) reported the dominance of crab *Cleistostoma dotilliforme* in the upper eulittoral zone of the mud flats of the Saudi coast of the Arabian Gulf. This crab lives in the burrows excavated by it in the mud (up to 50 cm deep). A distinct mound around the entrance of the burrow can be seen due to the piling up of excavated material. In the Saudi Arabian shores, up to 40 burrows per m² are common. Another crab *Metopograpsus messor*, is occasionally seen, which does not build burrows, but seeks shelter in open burrows of other crabs.

Recent studies from the Saudi coast showed that the crustacean community's main constituent were *Nasima dotilliforme*, with *Macrophthalmus* sp. and the predatory *Metopograpsus messor*, *Metaplax indica*, and

Eurycarcinus orientalis appearing sporadically (Langman, et al., 2012). Other invertebrates included the snails *Pirinella conica* and *Nodilittorina* sp., and numerous burrowing polychaetes and amphipods.

Nevertheless, polychaetes have been reported as the most numerically dominant infaunal groups in the intertidal soft bottom habitats, including mud flats of the western Arabian Gulf (Prena, 1996). Generally, it is assumed that elevated salinity favors the abundance of a few salt tolerant species resulting in significantly lower total species diversity in the muddy shore. Jones, et al. (1994) noted that the greatest diversity and abundance of fauna occurs in the lower eulittoral of muddy shores.

In the intertidal mud flats of Kuwait, *C. cingulata* is abundant in areas between the mean highest high water and below area of mean lowest low water, and *M. depressus* between the water table and the lowest annual tide (Jones, 1986; Al-Zaidan, et al., 2003). *Meretrix meretrix* was also common at the sea level down to the lowest annual tide in this region. From the northern region of Kuwait, along with *C. cingulata* and crabs, Al-Bakri, et al. (1997) reported oyster *Saccostrea cucullata*, and fish mud skipper as the common organisms. This province is also a significant nursery ground for fish and shrimps.

In the intertidal mud habitats of Bahrain, *C. cingulate* and numerous Brachyuran crabs are common (Al-Sayed, et al., 2008). A recent study conducted in the intertidal mud habitats of Duwhat Arad Bay, Bahrain, shows the predominance of molluscs (88%) followed by polychaetes (11%) and crustaceans (1%) (Al-Sayed, et al., 2008). The dominance of molluscs is attributed to large numbers of grazer gastropods (mainly *Potamides conicus* that contributed to 35% of the molluscs) that feed on the widespread algal mats in the bay. Al-Sayed, et al. (2008) are of the opinion that the lower abundance of polychaetes compared to molluscs can be due to intensive feeding of birds on polychaetes. This is because, in the Duwhat Arad Bay, dominant birds, Black-headed Gull (a winter visitor to the Region) and Common Ringed Plover (passage migrant) prefer polychaetes as the main food (Moreira, 1995; Perez-Hurtado, et al., 1997). The common invertebrates recorded from the intertidal mud habitats of the western Arabian Gulf are summarized in Table 3.9.

Generally, the fauna associated with the cyanobacterial mat are microscopic and includes gastropods, ostracods, copepods, flatworms, nematodes, and oligochaete worms (Barth, 2003). Larger animal life is usually absent in the mud flat areas where cyanobacterial mats are established. Where a mat is established, crabs have difficulties in tunneling and fail to become established. In other areas, the crab *M. depressus* and gastropods such as *C. scabridum* and *Pirinella conica* keep the substrate constantly bioturbated and the mud surface churned up, preventing the cyanobacteria from forming a mat.

Shorebirds

The term “shorebird” or “wader” refer to any bird that relies on beaches or wetlands for feeding, roosting and nesting habitat. Around the world, the tidal flats are key staging habitats for tens of millions of migratory shorebirds. Many shorebirds breed in the Northern Hemisphere and migrate to the Southern Hemisphere to escape harsh winters. They begin to arrive in the Arabian Gulf from mid-August and depart by mid-October. On their return migration, these shorebirds begin to arrive back to the Arabian Gulf from

TABLE 3.9. List of common invertebrate taxa recorded from the intertidal mud habitats of the western Arabian Gulf.

Species	Species
Ascidacea (Sea Squirts)	<i>Tylodiplax indica</i>
<i>Polyclinum</i> sp.*	<i>Cleistostoma dotilliforme</i> *
Sponges	<i>Paracleistostoma</i> sp.*
<i>Dictyoceratida</i> *	Xanthidae (Family)
<i>Hadromerida</i>	<i>Medaeus</i> sp.*
Malacostraca (Crabs)	Pilumnidae (Family)
Grapsidae (Family)	<i>Eurycarcinus</i> sp.*
<i>Metopograpsus messor</i> *	Cirripedia (Infra class)
<i>Metaplax indicus</i> *	<i>Euraphia</i> sp.
<i>Ilyograpsus paludicola</i> *	Bivalvia
<i>Parasesarma plicatum</i>	<i>Brachidontes</i> sp.*
<i>Chiromantes boulengeri</i>	<i>Meretrix meretrix</i> *
Ocyropodoidea (Super Family)	<i>Pinctada radiata</i> *
<i>Macrophthalmus depressus</i> *	<i>Trapezium</i> sp.*
<i>Macrophthalmus sulcatus</i> *	<i>Saccostrea cucullata</i>
<i>Macrophthalmus dentipes</i>	<i>Dosinia hepatica</i>
<i>Uca annulipes iranica</i>	<i>Solen vagina</i>
<i>Uca sindensis</i>	<i>Macrocallista umbonella</i>
<i>Ocyropode rotundata</i> *	Gastropoda
<i>Ocyropode saratan</i>	<i>Cerithidea cingulata</i> *
<i>Nasima dotilliformis</i> *	<i>Nassarius</i> sp.*
<i>Leptochyseus kuwaitense</i>	<i>Trochus</i> sp.*
<i>Manningis arabicum</i> *	<i>Nodilittorina</i> sp.*
<i>Scopimera crabricauda</i> *	<i>Pirinella conica</i> *
<i>Scopimera</i> sp.*	<i>Potamides conicus</i>
<i>Dotilla blanfordi</i>	<i>Mitrella blanda</i>
<i>Ilyoplax frater</i> *	Polychaeta
<i>Ilyoplax stevens</i> *	Amphipoda

Source: Basson, et al. (1977); KFUPM/RI (1988, 1994); Jones, et al. (1994); Apel (1994a, 1994b); Al-Bakri, et al. (1997); Apel and Turkey (1999); Al-Sayed, et al. (2008).

* Recorded from the Saudi coast of the Arabian Gulf.

the southern wintering grounds in mid-March and depart by mid-May to reach their northern breeding grounds in June. Migratory birds are seen in Khursaniyah, Jubail, Abu Ali, Rahima, Saihat, Dammam, al-Khobar and the Gulf of Salwa of the Saudi coast of the Arabian Gulf (Gregory and Al-Suhaibany, 2011). The tidal flats in the Arabian Gulf act as the last refueling stopover for thousands of migrants coming from the Northern Hemisphere breeding grounds to their Southern Hemisphere wintering grounds

before crossing the Arabian Desert. These tidal flats again provide a stopover for when these migrants fly back north to commence breeding at their sites back in the Northern Hemisphere. The tidal flats provide both the necessary foraging (= fat loading) and roosting (= energy sparing) sites for migrants before they continue their long migratory journeys (Medio, 2006; Gregory and Al-Suhaibany, 2011).

The mud flats are rich and abundant with worms and amphipods that make up the bulk of the diet of migratory shorebirds. Shorebird behavior follows the tides, not the sun. At high tide, they will be generally resting on the high tide roosts and at low tide they will be out on the tidal flats feeding.

A typical shorebird has a slender bill, long legs and long pointed wings and many have specific habitat requirements for feeding and roosting (Figure 3.43). Many species of shorebirds appear confusingly similar, although they typically have differences in bill shapes and sizes. The variety of bill shapes and sizes are indicative of their different feeding strategies and food preferences. The examples of waders that find their food in mud flats and salt marshes include plovers, avocets, godwits, sandpipers, stints, oystercatchers and curlews.

For some birders, shorebirds include the most spectacular of migratory species that come in a variety of shapes and sizes and do not have webbed feet. Charadriiformes shorebirds are conspicuous members of coastal avifauna during spring and autumn migration and are a diverse order of small to medium-large birds. It includes about 350 species and has members in all parts of the world. Most Charadriiformes live near water and eat invertebrates or other small animals; however, in intertidal ecosystems, it is not just



FIGURE 3.43. *Marsh Sandpiper*, a typical shorebird characterized by its long legs, bill, wings and a streamlined body.

shorebirds that are reliant on this unique habitat for food and rest, as a wide variety of birds utilize this organism rich habitat. Other coastal and aquatic birds that are found in and use this habitat for both feeding and roosting include flamingos, ducks, herons, egrets, gulls, pratincoles and terns.

Feeding strategies is another mechanism of classifying shorebirds and these are split into two broad categories, namely probers and gleaners. Probers use long beaks to probe down into the sand for buried clams, worms and other animals, while gleaners scurry back and forth along the beach feeding on invertebrates they find on the sandy surface.

The majority of these migratory species eat a wide variety of small invertebrates picked out of mud or exposed soil. Different lengths of bills enable different species to feed in the same habitat, particularly on the coast, without direct competition for food. Many waders have sensitive nerve endings at the end of their bills, which enable them to detect prey items hidden in mud or soft soil and some species also use their feet to detect prey or disturb the surface to expose prey. Because the migratory birds have a very high metabolic rate they have to eat vast quantities compared to their body weight, often doubling the amount of fat in their body tissues, which is fuel for long migratory flights.

Although not considered a true shorebird, one of the iconic species of intertidal zones is the large and elegant Greater Flamingo, which gather in large flocks in shallow intertidal water. What makes this species unusual is that it is a filter feeder. They feed with their heads upside down in the water, which is why their bills have such a unique shape. This filter traps crustaceans, mollusks and insects not more than an inch in length. This bill is different in another way in that the upper jaw is not rigidly fixed to the skull, allowing the upper bill, rather than the lower bill, to move up and down. Part of the filter feeding is accomplished by the bird simply swinging its head back and forth and letting water flow through the bill. The tongue sucks water in through the filter as it is pulled back and forces water out from the beak as it is pushed forward this happens up to four times a second.

Table 3.10 shows a typical selection of shorebirds that utilize the intertidal mud flats of the western Arabian Gulf. Table 3.11 shows a typical selection of other bird species that can be recorded on the intertidal mud flats of the western Arabian Gulf.

The predators of shorebirds on migration in the Arabian Gulf include some mammals (Arabian red fox, feral cats), and other birds, such as Jaegers and larger Gulls, Kites and Harriers.

Discussion

Ecosystem Goods and Services of Intertidal Mud Habitats in the Western Arabian Gulf

At a very fundamental level, all ecosystem goods and services are underpinned by biodiversity. Carbon, oxygen, nutrient cycling and decomposition of dead matter or waste materials are the important processes driven by the biodiversity (Snelgrove, et al., 1997; Austen, et al., 2002).

TABLE 3.10. List of typical shorebirds that can be expected on the intertidal mud flats of the western Arabian Gulf.

Species	
Eurasian Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>)	Marsh Sandpiper (<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>)
Crab-plover (<i>Dromas ardeola</i>)	Common Greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>)
Black-winged Stilt (<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>)	Wood Sandpiper (<i>Tringa glareola</i>)
Pied Avocet (<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>)	Terek Sandpiper (<i>Xenus cinereus</i>)
Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>)	Common Sandpiper (<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>)
Kentish Plover (<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>)	Ruddy Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>)
Common Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>)	Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>)
Greater Sand Plover (<i>Charadrius leschenaultia</i>)	Little Stint (<i>Calidris minuta</i>)
Lesser Sand Plover (<i>Charadrius atrifrons</i>)	Curlew Sandpiper (<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>)
Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) – Near Threatened	Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>)
Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>)	Broad-billed Sandpiper (<i>Limicola falcinellus</i>)
Whimbrel (<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>)	Ruff (<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>)
Eurasian Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) – Near Threatened	Red-necked Phalarope (<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>)
Common Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>)	

TABLE 3.11. List of other species that can be expected on the intertidal mud flats and beaches of the western Arabian Gulf.

Species
Greater Flamingo (<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>)
Lesser Flamingo (<i>Phoeniconaias minor</i>)
Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>)
Western Great Egret (<i>Ardea alba</i>)
Western Reef Heron (<i>Egretta g. schistacea</i>)
Little Egret (<i>Egretta garzetta</i>)
Striated Heron? (<i>Butorides striata</i>)
Eurasian Spoonbill (<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>)
Black Stork (<i>Ciconia nigra</i>)
Great White Pelican
Great (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) and Socotra (<i>Phalacrocorax nigrogularis</i>) Cormorants
Cream-colored Courser (<i>Cursorius cursor</i>)
Great Crested (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) and Black-necked (<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>) Grebes
Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) and Common Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>)
Slender-billed (<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>), Common Black-headed (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>), Great Black-headed (<i>Larus ichthyaetus</i>), Caspian (<i>Larus cachinnans</i>), Armenian (<i>Larus armenicus</i>) and Baltic (<i>Larus f. fuscus</i>) (including Heuglin's (<i>Larus f. heuglini</i>) and Steppe (<i>Larus f. barabensis</i>)) Gulls
Gull-billed (<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>), Caspian (<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>), Little (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>), Saunders (<i>Sternula albifrons saundersi</i>), Whiskered (<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>), White-winged (<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>) and Black (<i>Chlidonias niger</i>) Terns
Others less so; Swift (<i>Sterna bergii</i>), Lesser Crested (<i>Sterna bengalensis</i>), White-cheeked (<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>), Bridled (<i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i>), Arctic (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) and Common (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) Terns
Western Osprey (<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>) and Black Kite (<i>Milvus migrans</i>)

The ecosystem services provided by or derived from intertidal mud habitats may be divided into four categories: provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting services (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005; Beaumont, et al., 2007; Foster, et al., 2013 (Table 3.12).

Provisioning Services

They are the products obtained from the intertidal mud habitats. Unlike in the other parts of the world, the mud flats in the western Arabian Gulf have not been exploited for agricultural and horticultural purposes. In this region, they are important nursery grounds for fish and other marine organisms, which provide food for humans and other animals. Mud flats in the western Arabian Gulf also provide feeding grounds for thousands of migrant birds coming from Northern Hemisphere breeding grounds on route to their Southern Hemisphere wintering grounds and again the return journey back to their breeding sites (Medio, 2006).

Production of fuel wood from the intertidal mud habitats, including mangroves, may not be significant in the western Arabian Gulf due to the better living standard of the society. Consequently, a vast area of intertidal mud habitats in this region has been reclaimed to provide land expanding urbanization and for

TABLE 3.12. *Goods and services provided by or derived from intertidal mud habitats in the western Arabian Gulf.*

Services	Comments and Examples
Provisioning	
Food	Production of fish and feeding ground for migratory birds
Fiber and fuel	Production of logs and fuel wood
Raw material	Extraction of medicines and other materials from biota
Regulating	
Gas and climate regulation	Source of and sink for greenhouse gases; influence local and regional temperature, precipitation, and other climatic processes
Bioremediation of waste	Retention, recovery, and removal of excess nutrients and other pollutants
Disturbance prevention	Retention of soils and sediments, flood control, storm protection
Cultural	
Recreational	Opportunities for recreational activities
Educational	Opportunities for formal and informal education and training
Supporting	
Biodiversity	Provision of habitat for resident and transient species, including important bird species
Soil formation	Sediment retention and accumulation of organic matter
Nutrient cycling	Storage, recycling, processing, and acquisition of nutrients by organisms

(Based on Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005; Beaumont, et al., 2007; Foster, et al., 2013.)

oil-related industrial developments upon which humans depend for materials and fuel (Allen and Pye, 1992; Doody, 1992; Foster, et al., 2013).

A wide variety of raw materials are provided by marine biodiversity for a variety of different uses, for example, seaweed for industry and fertilizer, fishmeal for aquaculture and farming, pharmaceuticals and ornamental goods such as shells (Beaumont, et al., 2007). Subsequently, any such utilization of the mud flat ecosystem, either commercially or experimentally, has so far not started in this region.

Regulating Services

They are the benefits obtained from the regulation of mud flat. One important regulating service is the gas and climate regulation. The organisms in the mud flats play a significant role in climate control through their regulation of carbon fluxes, by acting as a reserve or sink for CO₂ in living tissue and by facilitating burial of carbon in the sediment (Beaumont, et al., 2007). The changes in marine biodiversity can affect the capacity of marine environment to act as a carbon sink.

Another regulatory service that mud flats provide is the removal of pollutants through storage, burial and recycling. This is important as far as the western Arabian Gulf is concerned, which is known for high level of human pressures, and the release of oil and heavy metals in to the marine environment. The sediment in the mud flats adsorbs many organic compounds and metals during the flood tide. The bioturbation activity (reworking and mixing of sediments) of mega- and macrofaunal organisms within the seabed can bury, sequester and process waste material through assimilation and/or chemical alteration. The slow passage of water through the mud flat provides time for pathogens to lose their viability or be consumed by other organisms in the system (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).

Intertidal mud habitat may be a natural and sustainable form of coastal erosion protection (Foster, et al., 2013). Algal mats in the mud flats, halophytes in the salt marshes and mangrove forest stabilize the sediments and can prevent the impact of tidal surges, storms and floods (Beaumont, et al., 2007).

Cultural Services

They are the nonmaterial benefits people obtain through spiritual enrichment, cognitive development, reflection, recreation, and aesthetic experiences associated with intertidal mud habitats. For example, the biodiversity in the intertidal mud habitats provides the basis for some recreational activities, such as shorebird watching, walking and sport fishing.

Academics value intertidal mud habitats as dynamic natural environments, in which the interaction of natural physical, chemical and biological processes can be observed, monitored and demonstrated for teaching purposes (Allen and Pye, 1992). The marine diversity can provide a long-term record of environmental resilience and stress (Beaumont, et al., 2007). Understanding the diversity, community composition and standing stock of flora and fauna are important for assessing and monitoring changes in the habitat by human impact. The fossil record can provide an insight into how the environment has changed in the past, enabling us to determine how it will change in the future (Beaumont, et al., 2007).

Supporting Services

Supporting services are those that are necessary for the production of all other mud flat services. One important supporting service is the provision of habitat for resident and transient species, including nationally and internationally important bird species and stocks of flora adapted to survive on extreme saline conditions and worth protecting for their intrinsic value (McMullon, 2008). The mud flats in the western Arabian Gulf provide an essential breeding and nursery space for plants and animals, which are particularly important for the continued recruitment of commercial and/or subsistence species. Living habitat plays a critical role in species' interactions and regulation of population dynamics, and is a prerequisite for the provision of many goods and services (Beaumont, et al., 2007). It has been documented that establishing natural protected areas is one means of protecting coastal and marine environments and preventing degradation of their ecosystems (Krupp, 2002). The Jubail area of Saudi Arabia has experienced rapid coastal development since the establishment of the Royal Commission in 1975. The 1991 Gulf oil spill severely affected the Jubail area and in response to this catastrophe, the Saudi Government established the "Jubail Marine Wildlife Sanctuary" on the eastern seaboard of Saudi Arabia, which covers an area of more than 2,000 km². Marine protected areas contribute significantly to both preservation and conservation of genetic characteristics, species, and habitats in marine environments (Kelleher and Phillips, 1999). Different protected areas have been established in other parts of the western Arabian Gulf, for example, in Bahrain, Duwhat Arad a tidal mud flat was designated as a natural marine protected area in 2003 due to its importance as a feeding and roosting ground for important shorebirds (Al-Zayani, 2003) and in Kuwait, the northern part of Bubiyan Island was designated as a marine protected area.

Being a less dynamic environment, mud flats contribute heavily to soil formation through accumulation of fine sediments and organic biomass. Intertidal mud habitats act as both a nutrient sink and source, through the accumulation of minerals in soil, and the provision of minerals that plants take from the soil and air, which are returned again when they or their consumers die. The storage, cycling and maintenance of a supply of essential nutrients, for example, nitrogen, phosphorus, sulfur and metals, are crucial for life. There is a transfer of organic matter from mud flats to the pelagic ecosystem. As discussed earlier, the low energy intertidal mud habitats in the western Arabian Gulf are very productive and accumulate an excess of organic matter. The sediment dwelling organisms get energy from the degradation of organic matter by bacteria. A major share of this energy is transferred to the water column by the tidal action. This may be rated as important as about 190 km of coastline of the Saudi coast along the Arabian Gulf with an average width of ca. 200 m to 300 m has mud flats. Subsequently, because of the absence of concerted studies in this field, an estimate of the transfer is so far not known.

Human Pressures on Intertidal Mud Habitats

Human pressures experienced on the intertidal region are in the form of oil-related activities and urbanization. Nevertheless, the single incident that severely affected the intertidal habitats was the 1991 Gulf oil spill. The intentional release of oil by the Iraqi military happened in Kuwait in January 1991. The spilled oil moved slowly southwards and accumulated on the north coast of Saudi Arabia, endangering fragile coastal ecosystems. By December 1991, it was established that the oil had been deposited on the intertidal areas, essentially between the high water springs mark and the high water neaps (Jones and Richmond, 1992). Total mortality of the intertidal biota occurred at higher shores and diversity was

reduced on the lower shores in 1991, up to Abu Ali Island (Jones, et al., 1998). In some areas such as the shoreline along Dauhat ad-Dafi and Dauhat al-Musallamiya, about 22% of salt marshes were covered with dead, tar-sealed plants, and in some 380 hectares of salt marshes, less than 1% of plants survived (Warnken, 1996). Studies based on quantitative surveys of intertidal areas between Ras al-Khair and Abu Ali reported 50% to 100% mortality of biota on their upper shores (Jones, et al., 1998).

The plants and animals of the seafloor, which are the basis of the food chain, were destroyed and this had a direct impact on the fish and shrimp nurseries. This consequently impacted the multimillion dollar fisheries industry in this region. On muddy shores, over 90% reductions in the original oil cover had occurred by the first half of 1995 (Jones, et al., 1998). On Abu Ali Island, large numbers of marine birds were killed as there were no procedures in place to save and rehabilitate the oiled birds. According to the World Wildlife Fund, UAE, an estimated 30,000 marine birds were killed by the oil spill.

The first stage in the recovery of the Gulf shores from oil impact was indicated by the appearance and colonization of upper shore tar by algal mats. In the sheltered mud flats of Abu Ali area, one and a half years after the spill, initial colonization of a blue-green algal mat was observed (Watt, et al., 1993). Here, the combination of blue-green algal mat and the tar layer delayed the settlement of burrowing fauna (Barth, 2003). The mangrove tree *Avicennia marina*, largely survived the pollution and its seedlings observed in the Qurma Island two years after the oil spill indicated the tolerance of these plants to oil pollution (Boer, 1994). Regarding intertidal fauna, by the end of 1992, intertidal mud habitats witnessed the initial colonization of polychaete *Perinereis vancaurica* and crab *Cleistostoma dotilliforme* (Watt, et al., 1993). By 1995, 92% of the typical species had returned to the top and 83% to the lower part of the intertidal mud habitats and during this period heavy settlement of polychaete *Owenia* sp. and bivalve *Dosinia hepatica* were also observed (Jones, et al., 1998). About 95% of the salt marshes were oiled in 1991. Only 20% of these could be considered as fully recovered in 2001, whereas about 25% were still completely dead without any sign of regeneration (Barth, 2002). A more recent study by Bejarano and Michel (2010) on the large-scale risk assessment of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in shoreline sediments from Saudi Arabia, 12 years after the oil spill, revealed around 67% of the samples had ESBTU (FCV, 43) >1 indicating potential adverse effects as per benthic sediment toxicity tests. Sediments from the 0 cm to 30 cm layer from tidal flats and the >30 cm to <60 cm layer from the heavily oiled halophytes and mangroves had high frequency of categorizing into high risk samples. Sediments south of Tanajib were likely to pose adverse ecological effects as compared to the north of Safaniyah.

Currently, oil pollution is not the most harmful ecological disturbance in this region (Sheppard, et al., 2010). The combination of coastal dredging and conversion of mud flats into land presently represents a much more serious threat (Al-Ghadban and Price, 2002; Loughland, et al., 2012). Many mud flat areas important for nursery ground for fishes and shrimp have been reclaimed for the construction of corniche roads, buildings or other invasive coastal infrastructure, which are unlikely to become biologically productive again (Sheppard, et al., 1992; Costanza, et al., 1997; Krupp, et al., 2006; Beaumont, et al., 2008; Al-Yamani, et al., 2008; Loughland, et al., 2012). The oil-related activities comprise of dredging/trenching for the installation of pipelines and cables in the shore access portion; however, in most cases, such removal of habitats will be minimal and the habitat may be restored quickly.

Conclusions

In spite of the harsh environmental conditions, intertidal mud habitats of the western Arabian Gulf are highly productive. The 1991 Gulf oil spill impacted these habitats, particularly in the sheltered bays, more than any other habitats of the western Arabian Gulf. Although oil spills are not serious issues in the present time, human pressures continue to happen in the form of reclamation as part of the urbanization and oil-related constructional activities, which include trenching and dredging. The intertidal mud habitats play a major role in the overall functioning of the marine environment and provide feeding grounds and staging areas for internationally important migratory birds. Therefore, conservation strategies have been planned by designating some of these habitats as protected areas in various parts of the western Arabian Gulf. Future studies may focus on updating the biodiversity and the valuation of the ecosystem services provided by the organisms in the various intertidal mud habitats of this region.



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APPENDIX I

Environmental Studies

**of the Sustaining Research Project Conducted
by Research Institute of King Fahd University
of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM/RI) and Funded
by Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco).**

Project	Project Title	Project Start	Project End
GST E-4009	Meteorological and Oceanographic Data Report	01-Sep-77	01-Mar-79
CEW0000	Preliminary Benthic Biology Survey	01-Jan-80	01-Jan-12
24004	Simulation of an Oil Spill in the Arabian Gulf	01-Jul-80	31-Dec-80
TC-4030	Pollutant Pathways Characterization in Shallow Bay Systems	01-Jul-81	01-Jul-83
24010	Ambient Air Suspended Particulate Sampling and Characterization	01-Oct-81	30-Nov-82
TSI 57-111	An Analysis of the Impact of the Ghazlan Generating Station on Benthic Marine Communities	01-Dec-81	01-Jan-82
RP878-1	Methodology for Evaluation of Multiple Cooling System Effects	01-Jan-82	01-Jan-83
24011	Trace Metals in Marine Sediments and Water Columns	20-Feb-82	30-Nov-82
AER-5229	A Survey of Infaunal Communities of the Western Arabian Gulf	01-Jun-82	01-Jun-83
TC-3598	Marjan Offshore Gas/Oil/Pipeline Current Data Analysis and Numerical Simulation	01-Oct-82	01-Oct-83
24028	Estimating Oil Spill Size by Visual Observation	13-Nov-82	15-May-83
24038	Ballast Discharge Evaluation at Yanbu' Natural Gas Liquids Facility	01-Nov-83	13-Jul-85
24058	Mixing Heights for Three Cities in the Eastern Province	01-Jan-84	30-Jun-85
24059	Marine Environmental Investigation in the Arabian Gulf with Emphasis on the Northern Area of Saudi Arabia	01-Feb-84	30-Sep-86
24065	Solid Waste Planning Guide	01-Mar-84	31-Dec-84
24079	Saudi Aramco Sustaining Research Project Marine Environmental Studies I	01-Oct-84	30-Oct-90
GST E-4032	Sampling and Monitoring Report	10-Nov-84	11-Nov-84
24108	Marine Environmental Effect of the Abu Ali-Berri Causeway Extension	01-Aug-87	28-Feb-88
24114	Groundwater Resources Evaluation in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia	31-Dec-87	31-Mar-88
24120	Wave Climate Study in the Arabian Gulf	15-Aug-89	15-Aug-91
24129	Marine Environmental Study at the Safaniyah GOSP-4 Offshore Facility	11-Dec-89	30-Sep-90

Project	Project Title	Project Start	Project End
24131	Sustaining Research Project Marine Environmental Studies	18-Aug-90	30-Sep-94
24137	Gulf Atmospheric Pollution 1991	01-Feb-91	30-Sep-92
24138	Arabian Gulf Oil Spill Research Program 1991 (also called Gulf Atmospheric Pollution 1991)	01-Feb-91	30-Sep-92
24142	Ras Tanura Refinery/Terminal Upgrade: Environmental Impact Assessment	15-Aug-92	15-Apr-93
21132	Solubility of Calcium Carbonate in Synthetic and Natural Oil Field Brines	01-Apr-94	31-Mar-96
24150	Contaminant Transport Model for the Ras Tanura Groundwater Investigation	22-Aug-94	15-Dec-95
24154	Sustaining Research Project Marine Environmental Studies Phase III	01-Jul-95	31-Mar-01
24162	Investigation of Ambient Concentrations of Automotive Emissions in Three Major Cities	01-May-97	30-Apr-98
24164	Development of Red Sea Biotope Maps Using Remote Sensing Imagery	01-Jul-97	30-Jun-99
CEW2217	Marine Biological and Oceanographic Database Development	15-Nov-00	15-Nov-02
CEW2236	Environmental Impact Assessment for Abu Safah Offshore AM Producing Facilities	01-Jun-01	31-Jul-01
CEW2233	Saudi Aramco/KFUPM-RI Sustaining Research Project Marine Environmental Studies Phase IV	01-Oct-01	30-Sep-06
CEW2242	Conceptual Estimate of Environmental Impacts of Existing and New Arabia-Bahrain Pipeline Routings	28-Oct-01	24-Apr-02
CEW2259	Duba Marine Terminal Permanent Berth (BI-8232) Environmental Impact Assessment for the Construction and Removal of Temporary Roads	15-Jan-03	31-Oct-06
CEW2269	Offshore MP Facilities Berri-119 Pipeline (BI-8294) Environmental Impact Assessment Study	01-Apr-03	31-Oct-03
CEW2278	Offshore MP Facilities 15 kV Cable (BI-8294) Environmental Impact Assessment	15-Sep-03	31-Dec-03
CEW2285	Environmental Impact Assessment North Safaniyah Artificial Lift (BI-10-0047)	12-Jul-04	09-Feb-05
CEW2287	Offshore MP Facilities Qatif QV Cable (BI-8294) Environmental Impact Assessment	26-Jul-04	29-Sep-04
CEW2310	Environmental Impact Assessment of the New Khursaniyah 30" Dia. Pipeline (BI-10-08022)	04-Jun-05	30-Nov-05
CEW2311	Environmental Impact Assessment Upgrade Northern Area Oil Operations Offshore Platforms Wastewater (BI-01-00197).	13-Jun-05	31-Oct-05
CEW2303	Environmental Impact Assessment for the Berri Causeway and Associated Drill Site Landfilling	24-Dec-05	12-Apr-06
CEW2325	Operational Marine Modeling System (OMMS)	01-Jan-06	31-Dec-08
CEW2328	Environmental Impact Assessment for Manifa Field Development (NAFD/L-001-06): Causeway Construction	11-Mar-06	30-Sep-06
CEW2329	Environmental Impact Assessment for Abu Ali Flanks Scraped Water Handling (BI-10-00220)	01-Apr-06	31-Jul-06
CEW2338	Environmental Impact Assessment for Manifa Field Development Program: Platforms, Pipelines and Submarine Cables (BI-01-00452 and BI-01-00453)	11-Nov-06	30-Jun-07
CEW2336	Marine Environmental Monitoring of the New Khursaniyah 30" Dia. Pipeline (BI-10-08022) Project	01-Jan-07	31-Dec-09
CEW2345	Environmental Impact Assessment for the King Abdullah University of Science & Technology Development Project	02-Jun-07	30-Jul-08
CEW2342	Marine Environmental Monitoring of the Manifa Causeway	12-Jun-07	30-Jun-10
CEW2343	Assessment of Ras Tanura Marine Environment and Bioaccumulation Monitoring along the Saudi Coastal Waters of the Arabian Gulf	21-Jul-07	30-Dec-10
CEW2350	Environmental Impact Assessment for Tanajib Channel and Basin Dredging	31-Jul-07	31-Oct-07

Project	Project Title	Project Start	Project End
CEW2344	Saudi Aramco/KFUPM-RI Sustaining Research Project, Marine Environmental Studies Phase V	15-Aug-07	16-Aug-12
CEW2353	Biodiversity of the Offshore Saudi Islands of the Arabian Gulf	21-Oct-07	31-Jul-11
CEW2354	The Western Arabian Gulf Ecosystem: A Reference for Researchers, Planners and Environmental Managers	21-Oct-07	31-Jul-11
CEW2355	Marine Atlas of the Western Arabian Gulf Phase I: Coastal and Marine Surveys and Photo Documentation	21-Oct-07	31-Jul-11
CEW2352	Environmental Impact Assessment for a Seawater Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Plant at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology	03-Nov-07	31-Mar-08
CEW2343-01	Assessment of Ras Tanura Marine Environment and Bioaccumulation Monitoring along the Saudi Coastal Waters of the Arabian Gulf Additional Scope	01-Jan-08	30-Nov-08
CEW2357	Environmental Impact Assessment for Karan Platforms, Power (BI-10-00579) and Pipelines (BI-10-00580) Construction	01-Jan-08	31-Aug-08
CEW2359	Environmental Impact Assessment for Drill Cutting Disposal at Manifa	01-Jun-08	31-Dec-08
CEW2360	Environmental Impact Study for Channel Dredging at Safaniyah	07-Jun-08	31-Dec-08
CEW2370	Environmental Impact Assessment for Land Filling and Reclamation at Ras Tanura Refinery	15-Nov-08	31-Dec-09
CEW2373	Environmental Impact Assessment for the Upgrade of Crude Gathering and Power Supply Facilities Phase I: Safaniyah Field	27-Jun-09	31-Mar-10
CEW2380	Conduct LC-50 Drilling Fluid Sampling and Toxicity Testing	11-Nov-09	31-Dec-11
CEW2379	Environmental Impact Assessment for Installing Instrument Scraping Facilities at Zuluf and Marjan Oil Fields (BI-10-00187)	20-Feb-10	20-Apr-10
CEW2381	Environmental Impact Assessment for Upgrade of the Fire Protection System, Ju'aymah Offshore Platform (BI-10-00185)	24-Apr-10	31-Aug-10
CEW2382	Environmental Impact Assessment for Arabiyah-Hasbah Platforms, Power (BI-10-00916) and Subsea Pipelines (BI010-00917)	19-Jun-10	19-Dec-10
CEW2374	Fisheries Program: Population Dynamics and Stock Assessment of the Major Fisheries Resources in Saudi Arabian Waters	01-Jan-11	30-Nov-13
CEW2375	Fisheries Program Assessment and Management of Essential Fish Habitats in Saudi Arabian Waters	01-Jan-11	30-Nov-13
CEW2376	Fisheries Program Environmental Impacts of Fishing Methods in Saudi Arabia: Toward Mitigation and Management	01-Jan-11	30-Nov-13
CEW2377	Fisheries Program Development of a Strategic Framework for Fisheries Management in Saudi Arabia	01-Jan-11	30-Nov-13
CEW2385	GMARS Development of GIS Compatible Marine Database and Analysis System (GMARS)	01-Feb-11	31-Jul-12
CEW2389	Red Sea Environmental Impact Assessment for Drilling Exploration in the Shallow Waters of the Northern Red Sea	11-Jun-11	03-Jun-12
CEW2390	Tarut Bay Environmental Assessment Report for Tarut Bay Pipelines & Structural Support System	02-Jul-11	31-Dec-11
CEW2392	Safaniyah Pier Environmental Assessment for the Safaniyah Pier Trestle Replacement	23-Jul-11	31-Mar-12
CEW2399	Environmental Impact Assessment for Dredging (Category III) for Upgrade of Electrical Power Supply to Abu Ali Plants	15-Feb-12	15-Aug-12

APPENDIX II

Checklist of marine invertebrates

Checklist of marine invertebrates occurring in the area of the Arabian Gulf. Bold Arabic numbers (1 to 34) indicate the references of record of the species. Note that the list represented in this appendix has been modified from those published in the references used. Some non-identified species or only identified to the order/family level were excluded from the present list. Taxa identified to only genus level (noted as Genus sp.) were kept but they may refer to one or many species (belonging to the same genus) recorded in one or various references; more details about this can be obtained from the original references of record. The species belonging to each class are listed in alphabetic order. 1 Price (1991), 2 KFUPM/RI (1987), 3 Al-Yamani et al. (2012), 4 Hasam (1994), 5 Al-Naser et al. (2010), 6 Nithianandan (2012), 7

Smythe (1972), 8 Al-Khayat and Al-Ansi (2008), 9 Tehranifard and Dastan (2011), 10 Al-Khayat (2008), 11 Roper et al. (1984), 12 Sheppard and Borowitzka (2012), 13 Al-Yamani et al. (2011), 14 Carpenter et al. (1997), 15 KFUPM/RI (2003), 16 Apel and Türkay (1999), 17 Hogart and Tigar (2002), 18 Al-Sayed and Zainal (2005), 19 Al-Khayat and Al-Maslamani (2001), 20 KFUPM/RI (1990), 21 Grabe et al. (2004), 22 Murano (1998), 23 Razzaq (1991), 24 Abdulqader (1999), 25 Price and Jones (1975), 26 Enomoto (1971), 27 Hosny (2007), 28 Badawi (1975), 29 Chen et al. (2013), 30 Monniot and Monniot (1997), 31 KFUPM/RI (2006a), 32 KFUPM/RI (2013), 33 KFUPM/RI (2006b), 34 Njinkoué et al. (2006).

PHYLUM PORIFERA**Class Demospongiae**

Adocia sp. 2
Aplysina sp. 2
Axinella sp. 2
Biemna sp. 2
Cacospongia sp. 2
Gelliodes cf. *incrustans* 34
Callyspongia cf. *siphonella* 24
Callyspongia sp. 2, 34
Choristida sp. 2
Cinachyra sp. 2
Ciocalypta sp. 2
Cliona schmidti 2
Cliona sp. 2
Cliona vastifica 2
Coelosphaera sp. 2
Dysidea sp. 2
Europon sp. 2
Fasciospongia sp. 2
Gelliodes cf. *incrustans* 34
Gelliodes sp. 2
Halichondria sp. 2
Haliclona sp. 2
Haliclona sp. 2
Myscale sp. 2
Niphates sp. 34
Spongia sp. 2
Tédania sp. 2
Téthya aurantium 2
Téthya sp. 2
Tétilla sp. 2

PHYLUM CNIDARIA**Class Anthozoa**

Acanthastrea echinata 12

Acropora clathrata 12
Acropora downing 12
Acropora horrida 12
Acropora pharaonis 12
Acropora valenciennesi 12
Actiniaria sp. 2
Anemonactis sp. 2
Anomastrea irregularis 12
Blastomussa merleti 12
Coscinanaea monile 12
Culicia rubeola 12
Cyphastrea microphthalma 12
Cyphastrea serialia 12
Echinophyllia aspera 12
Favia fava 12
Favia pallida 12
Favia speciosa 12
Favites chinensis 12
Favites pentagona 12
Heterocyathus aequicostatus 12
Hydnophora exesa 12
Leptostrea inaequalis 12
Leptostrea purpurea 12
Leptostrea transversa 12
Madracis kirbyi 12
Montipora circumvallata 12
Montipora spumosa 12
Paracyathus sp. 12
Pavona cactus 12
Pavona diffluens 12
Pavona explanulata 12
Pavona varians 12
Platygyra daedalea 12
Platygyra sinensis 12
Plesiastrea versipora 12
Pocillopora damicornis 12

Porites compressa 12
Porites harrisoni 12
Porites lutea 12
Porites murrayensis 12
Porites nodifera 12
Psammocora contigua 12
Psammocora haimeana 12
Psammoseris sp. 12
Pseudosiderastrea tayamai 12
Siderastrea saigniana 12
Stylophora pistillata 12
Tubastraea aurea 12
Turbinaria mesenterina 12
Turbinaria peltata 12
Class Hydrozoa
Aequorea pensilis 13
Aglaura hemistoma 13
Amphinema rugosum 13
Campanularia crenata 2
Clytia cf. *gravieri* 2
Clytia discoida 13
Clytia gravieri 2
Clytia latithea 2
Corynactis sp. 2
Cunina octonaria 13
Cytaeis nassa 2
Diphyes chamissonis 13
Dynamena cornicina 2
Dynamena crisioides 2
Dynamena quadridentata 2
Eirene viridula 13
Eudendrium capillare 2
Eudendrium sp. 2
Eutima gegenbauri 13
Gonionemus murabachi 2
Halocordyle disticha 2

Hydractinia cf. *diogenes* 2
Liriope tetraphylla 13
Obelia bispinosa 2
Obelia cf. *dichotoma* 2
Obelia sp. 13
Octophialucium funerarium 13
Plumularia cf. *setacea* 2
Plumularia sp. 2
Podocoryne sp. 13
Rhizorhagium robustum 2
Sanderia malayensis 13
Sertularia distans 2
Sertularia longa 2
Solmundella bitentaculata 13
Staurocladia vallentini 2
Thyrosocyphus fruticosus 2

PHYLUM ANNELIDA**Class Polychaeta**

Aglaophamus sp. 2
Amaeana sp. 2
Ampharete acutifrons 31
Ampharete sp. 15
Amphicteis gunneri 15
Amphicteis sp. 2
Amphiglena mediterranea 15
Amphiglena sp. 2
Amphinome sp. 15
Amphisamytha sp. 2
Amphitrite pauciseta 31
Amphitrite sp. 15
Anaitides sp. 2
Ancistargis sp. 2
Ancistrostylis constricta 15
Ancistrostylis parva 15
Ancistrostylis sp. 15

Aonides oxycephala 15
Aonides sp. 2
Aphrodita sp. 2
Arabella iricolor iricolor 15
Arabella sp. 2
Aricidea curviseta 31
Aricidea fauweli 15
Aricidea jeffreysi 31
Aricidea longobranchiata 15
Aricidea sp. 15
Aricidea suecica simplex 31
Armandia intermedia 15
Armandia sp. 2
Asclerocheilus capensis 31
Asclerocheilus sp. 2
Autolytus prolifer 2
Autolytus sp. 15
Axiothella sp. 2
Bhavania goodie 31
Brada sp. 2
Brada villosa capensis 32
Branchiomma sp. 2
Brania sp. 2
Cabira sp. 2
Capitella sp. 2
Capitomastus sp. 2
Caulleriella sp. 2
Ceratocephale sp. 2
Ceratonereis erythraeensis 2
Ceratonereis mirabilis 2
Ceratonereis sp. 2
Chaetoparia sp. 2
Chaetopterus sp. 15
Chaetopterus varipedatus 31
Chaetozone sp. 2
Chane sp. 2

- Chloeia* sp. 15
Chone collaris 31
Chone filicaudata 31
Chone sp. 2
Chrysopetalum sp. 2
Cirratulus chrysoderma 15
Cirratulus cirratus 15
Cirratulus filiformis 15
Cirratulus sp. 15
Cirriiformia filigera 31
Cirriiformia sp. 2
Cirrophorus branchiatus 31
Cirrophorus sp. 2
Clymenella sp. 2
Cossura coasta 15
Dasybranchus caducus 15
Dasybranchus sp. 2
Decamastus sp. 2
Diopatra sp. 2
Dioplosyllis sp. 2
Dispia sp. 31
Dorvillea angolana 15
Dorvillea rubrovittata 31
Dorvillea rudolphi 15
Drilonereis monroi 31
Drilonereis sp. 2
Drilonereis filum 2
Ehlersia cornuta 2
Ehlersia sp. 2
Epidiopatra sp. 31
Eteone foliosa 31
Eteone sp. 2
Euchone rosea 15
Euchone sp. 2
Euclymene lombricoides 31
Euclymene luderitziana 15
Euclymene oerstedii 31
Euclymene sp. 2
Eulalia sp. 2
Euleanina sp. 15
Eumida sp. 2
Eunice antennata 15
Eunice australis 15
Eunice indica 2
Eunice sp. 15
Eunice vittata 31
Eunoe sp. 2
Euphrosine capensis 15
Euphrosine foliosa 15
Euphrosine myrtosa 15
Eurythoe parvencarunculata 15
Eurythoe sp. 15
Exogone clavator 15
Exogone cornuta 2
Exogone gemmifera 15
Exogone normalis 15
Exogone sp. 15
Exogone verugera 2
Filograna implexa 31
Flabelligera affinis 31
Genetyllis sp. 2
Glycera longipinnis 31
Glycera rouxi 2
Glycera sp. 2
Glycera spongicola 32
Glycera tessellata 31
Glycinde sp. 2
Glyphanostomum abyssale 31
Goniada congoensis 32
Goniada emerita 31
Goniada maculata 15
Goniada sp. 2
Goniadella gracilis 31
Grubeulepis sp. 2
Gyptis capensis 15
Haplosyllis spongicola 2
Harmothoe sp. 2
Hesionides sp. 2
Heteroclymene cf. *Quadrilobata* 2
Heteromastus filiformis 15
Heteromastus sp. 2
Hipponoa gaudichaudi agulhana 31
Hipponoa sp. 31
Horstleanira sp. 2
Hyalinoecia tubicola 31
Hyboscolex longiseta 15
Hydroides heteroceros 31
Hydroides homaceros 2
Hydroides monoceros 15
Hydroides norvegica 2
Hydroides sp. 2
Hydroides uncinata 2
Hypsicomus phaetonia 15
Isolda pulchella 31
Isolda sp. 2
Jasmineira elegans 31
Jasminiera sp. 2
Laconereis ankyloseta 31
Lanice conchilega 15
Laonice cirrata 31
Laonome sp. 2
Leiochirus sp. 2
Leocrates claparedeii 15
Leodora sp. 2
Leonmatus jonaseaumei 2
Leonmatus persica 2
Lepidonotus sp. 2
Linopherus sp. 15
Loimia medusa 2
Lumbrineriopsis sp. 2, 15
Lumbrineris aberrans 15
Lumbrineris albidentata 31
Lumbrineris brevicirra 31
Lumbrineris heteropoda 2
Lumbrineris inflata 15
Lumbrineris latrilli 15
Lumbrineris megalhaensis 15
Lumbrineris meteorana 31
Lumbrineris simplex 15
Lygdamis murata gilchrisi 15
Lygdamis sp. 15
Lysidice collaris 15
Lysidice longiceps 15
Lysidice sp. 2
Lysilla sp. 2
Magelona cincta 15
Magelona papillicornis 31
Malacoceros indicus 15
Manayunkia sp. 2
Marphysa bifurcata 15
Marphysa sp. 2
Marphysa mossambica 31
Mastobranthus sp. 2
Mediomastus capensis 31
Mediomastus sp. 2
Megalomma quadriculatum 15
Megalomma sp. 2
Melinna cristata 32
Melinna monoceroides 15
Melinna sp. 2
Melinopsides capensis 31
Mesochaetopterus minutus 15
Mesochaetopterus sp. 15
Mesospio sp. 2
Micromaldane sp. 2
Micronephthys spaerocirrata 2
Mysta sp. 2
Mystides angolensis 31
Myxicola sp. 2
Nainereis laevigata 2
Neanthes sp. 2
Neanthes unifasciata 2
Nematonereis unicornis 15
Nephtyis lyrochaeta 15
Nephtyis sphaerocirrata 15
Nephtyis dibranchis 15
Nephtys hombergi 15
Nephtys polybranchia 15
Nephtys tulearensis 2
Nereimyra sp. 2
Nereis coutierei 2
Nereis persica 2
Nereis sp. 15
Nereis trifasciata 2
Nicolea macrobranchia 15
Ninoe sp. 2
Nothria sp. 2
Notomastus aberrans 31
Notomastus fauveli 31
Notomastus latericeus 31
Notomastus sp. 2
Odontosyllis polycera 2
Onuphis eremita 15
Onuphis geophiliformis 15
Onuphis holobranchiata 15
Onuphis sp. 15
Ophelia sp. 2
Ophelina acuminata 15
Ophelina sp. 2
Ophiiodromus angustifrons 15
Ophiiodromus berristordei 15
Ophiiodromus sp. 15
Orbinia angraepequensis 31
Orbinia sp. 2
Oriopsis neglecta 31
Oriopsis sp. 15
Owenia fusiformis 31
Owenia sp. 2
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Marcia opima 3
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Modiolus ligneus 8
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Musculus sp. 8
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Paphia gallus 4
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Pinctada margaritifera 4
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Pinna sp. 8
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Protapes sinuosa 3
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Semele sinensis 4
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Amphioplus (Lymanella) hastatus 1
Amphipholis squamata 1
Amphiura (Amphiura) crista 1
Amphiura (Amphiura) fasciata 1
Amphiura (Amphiura) sp 1
Amphiura (Amphiura) sp. nov. 1
Asterina burtoni 1
Asteropsis canifera 1
Astropecten indicus 1
Astropecten monacanthus 1
Astropecten polyacanthus phragmorus 1
Astropecten polyacanthus polyacanthus 1
Astropecten pugnax 1
Decametra mollis 1
Euretaster cribrosus 1
Leiaster leachi 1
Linckia multiflora 1
Luidia hardwicki 1
Luidia maculata 1
Macrophiothrix elongata 1
Macrophiothrix sp. aff. Hirsuta cheneyi 1
Macrophiothrix sp. 1
Ophiactis savignyi 1
Ophionereis dubia 1
Ophiothela danae 1
Ophiothela venusta 1
Ophiothrix savignyi 1
Ophiura kinbergi 1
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Pentaceraster mammillatus 1
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Brissopsis persica 1
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Clypeaster reticulatus 1, 2
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Clypeaster sp. 2
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Dougaloplus personatus 2
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Holothuria (Halodeima) edulis 1
Holothuria (Mertensiothuria) leucospilota 1
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Amphiodia obtecta 2
Amphiodia sp. 2
Amphioplus hastatus 2
Amphioplus personatus 2
Amphioplus seminudus 2
Amphipholis squamata 2
Amphiura crista 2
Amphiura fasciata 2
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Amphiura tennis 2
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Ophiocentrus asper 2
Ophiomyxa sp. 2
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Parasmittina parsevali 2
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Polyclinum constellatum 30
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