
Estuaries

by Marco Lunetta, Iván Salgado & Anthony Sandoval

What is an estuary?

An Estuary is a partially enclosed body of water formed where freshwater from rivers and streams flows into the ocean, mixing with the salty sea water

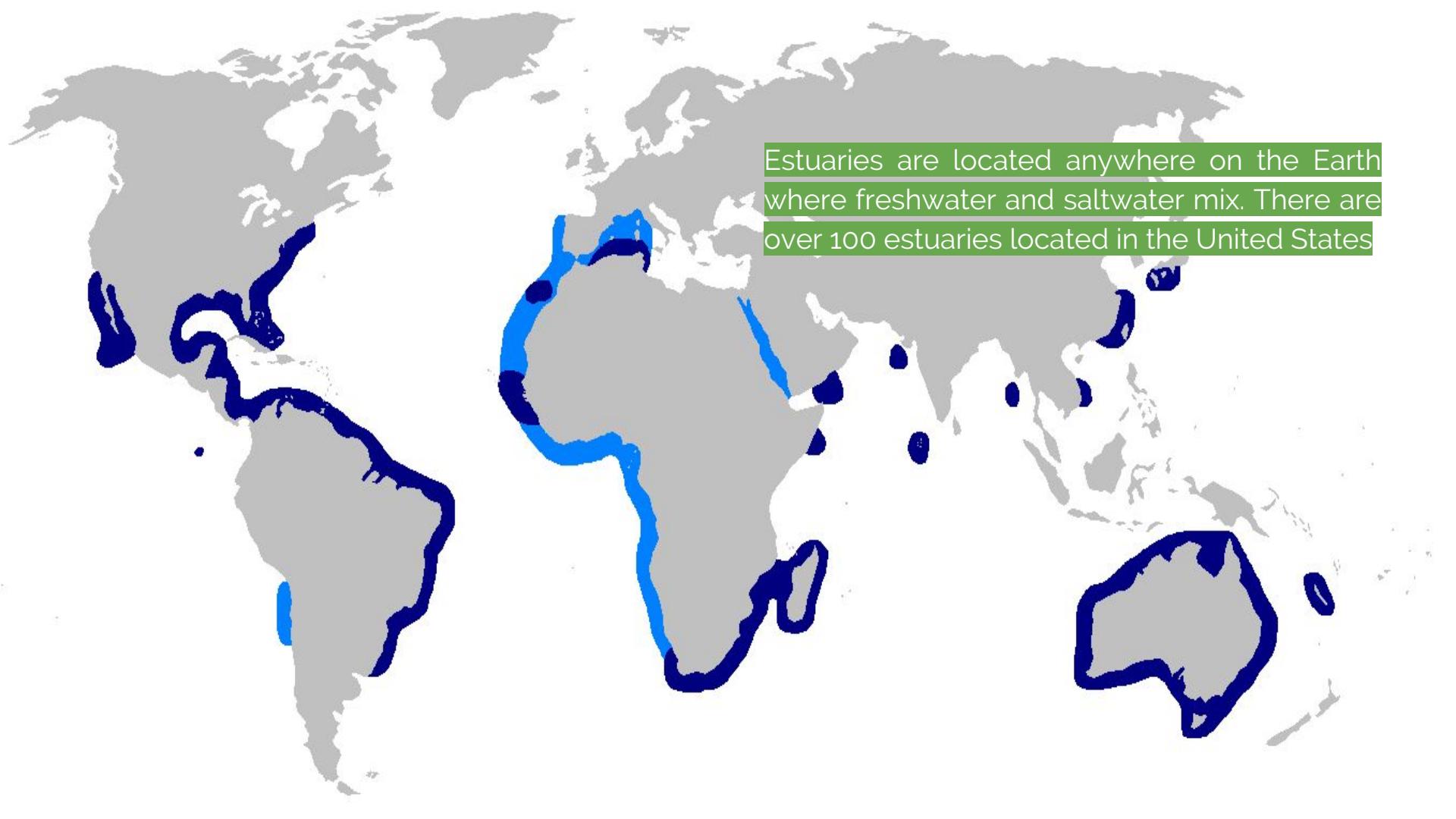




Some info about estuaries

- The average climate in Estuaries is around 15-35 degrees celcius
- It rains about 1750mm-2000mm of rain every year
- Estuaries are often partially enclosed by reefs, barrier islands, or fingers of land.

Where are Estuaries Located?

A world map where estuarine areas are highlighted in blue. These blue regions are located along coastlines where rivers meet the sea, such as the Mississippi River delta in North America, the Nile delta in Africa, and various coastal areas in Europe, Asia, and Australia.

Estuaries are located anywhere on the Earth where freshwater and saltwater mix. There are over 100 estuaries located in the United States

Types of Estuaries

There are four different types of estuaries: (1) the salt wedge estuary (2) the partially mixed (or slightly stratified) estuary (3) the vertically homogeneous (or vertically mixed) estuary, and (4) the fjord (or highly stratified estuary).



Abiotic Features

Rainfall:

In an estuary, the summer average rainfall is 4 inches, or 10 centimeters. The winter average rainfall is 56 inches, or 142 centimeters. Average temperatures vary upon location of the estuary.

Temperature:

during the wet and humid season, the average temperature is about 32 degrees Celsius.
during the drier, cooler season, it is about 23 degrees Celsius. The temperature is vital for the survival of plants and animals if it is too hot or cold some species will not survive.

Soil Type:

Mangrove soils are regularly water-logged and contain lots of salt. The top soil layer found in an estuary or salt marsh is composed mostly of peat or salt crust. clay, yellow earth and alluvial soils are also found at estuaries.

Animals found in Estuaries

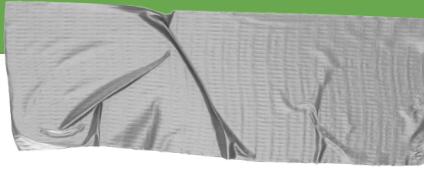
- Alligator
- American Crocodile
- Anaconda
- Crane
- Frog
- Flamingo
- Toad





(these flamingos deserve their own slide)

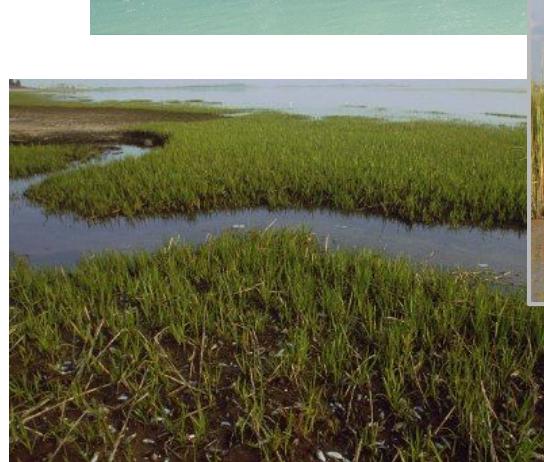
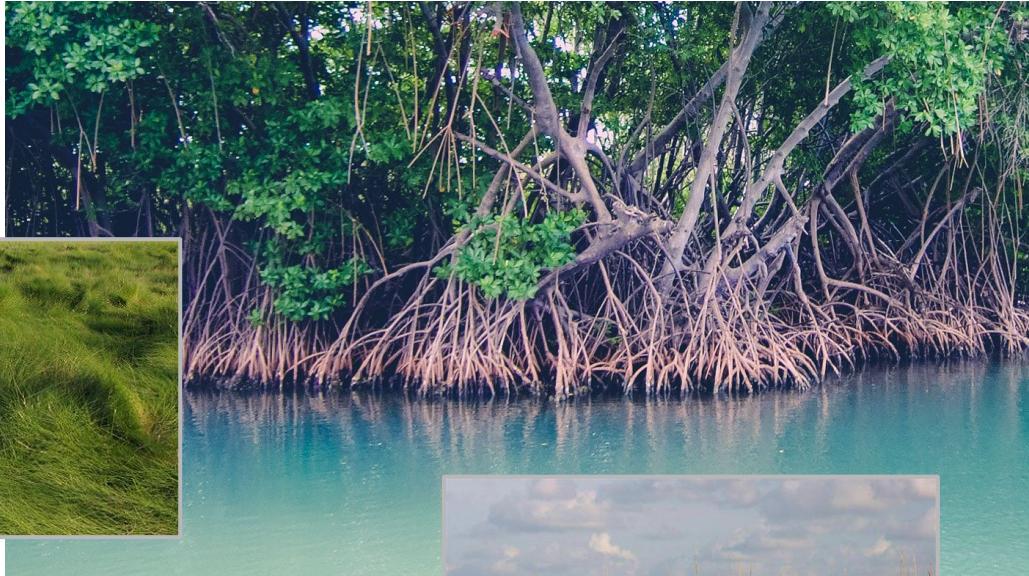
Plants Found in Estuaries



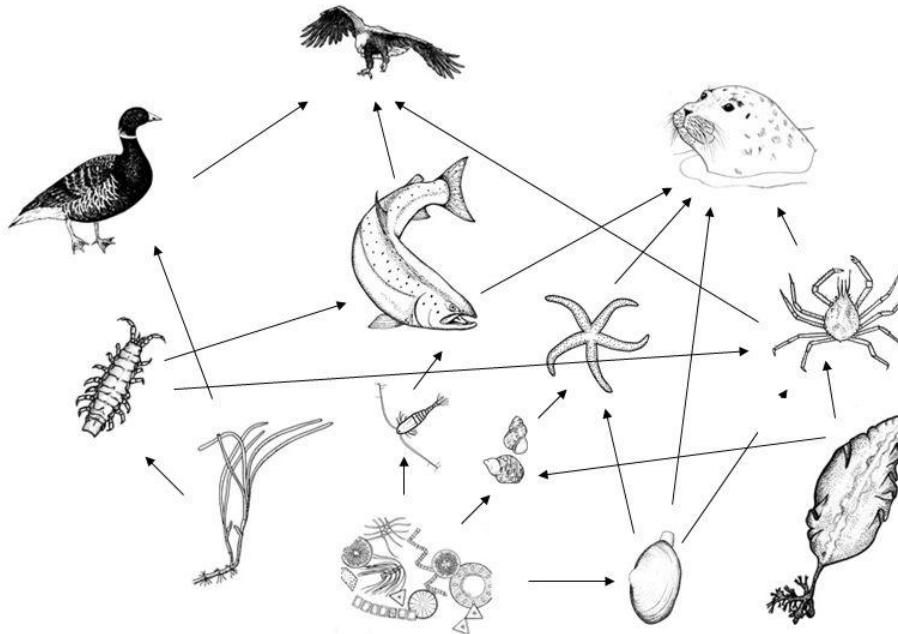
Plants

- Seagrass
- Mangroves
- Salt Marsh Plants
- Salt Meadows
- Cordgrass

Plants



Estuary food chains often overlap, making food webs.



How Humans Are Harming Estuaries



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Conversion

The greatest threat to estuaries are their large scale conversion by draining, filling, damming, or dredging. These activities result in the immediate destruction and loss of estuarine habitats.

Pollution

Many estuaries are being seriously degraded by pollution. Pollution affects the water quality of estuaries and the organisms that live in them.



Another, less widely discussed
human-caused disturbance is the
introduction of non-native or invasive
species into estuarine environments



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Thank You!