

# <sup>1</sup> eo-tides: Tide modelling tools for large-scale satellite Earth observation analysis

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## Software

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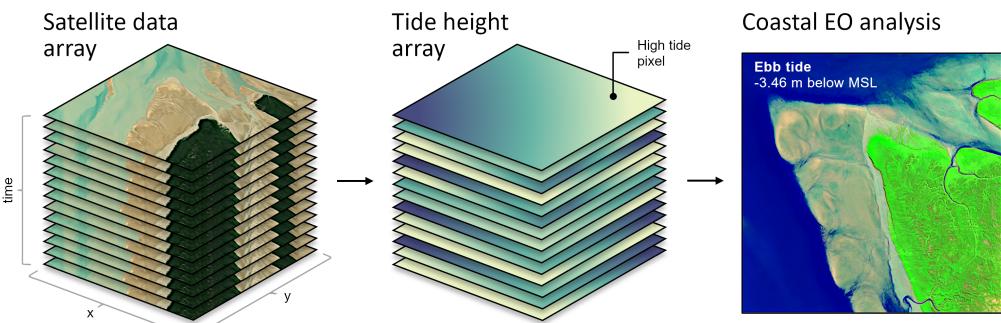
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## Summary

The eo-tides package provides powerful parallelised tools for integrating satellite Earth observation (EO) data with ocean tide modelling. The package provides a flexible Python toolkit for attributing modelled tide heights to a time-series of satellite images based on the spatial extent and acquisition time of each satellite observation (Figure 1).

eo-tides leverages advanced tide modelling functionality from the pyTMD tide prediction software (Sutterley et al., 2017), combining this capability with EO spatial analysis tools from the [Open Data Cube](#) (ODC)'s odc-geo ([odc-geo contributors](#), 2024). This allows tides to be modelled in parallel using over 50 supported models, and returned in standardised pandas (McKinney, 2010; pandas development team, 2020) and xarray (Hoyer & Joseph, 2017) data formats for EO analysis.

eo-tides tools can be applied to petabytes of freely available satellite data loaded from the cloud using ODC's odc-stac or datacube packages (e.g. using [Digital Earth Australia](#) or [Microsoft Planetary Computer's](#) STAC SpatioTemporal Asset Catalogues). Additional functionality allows users to assess potential satellite-tide biases and validate modelled tides with external tide gauge data — critical considerations for ensuring the reliability and accuracy of coastal EO workflows. These open-source tools support the efficient, scalable and robust analysis of coastal EO data for any time period or location globally.



**Figure 1:** A typical eo-tides coastal EO workflow, with tide heights modelled into every pixel in a spatio-temporal stack of satellite data (e.g. Sentinel-2 or Landsat), then combined to derive insights into dynamic coastal environments.

## 25 Statement of need

26 Satellite remote sensing offers an unparalleled resource for examining dynamic coastal environments through time or across large regions (Turner et al., 2021; Vitousek et al., 2023).  
 27 However, the highly variable influence of ocean tides can complicate analyses, making it difficult  
 28 to separate the influence of changing tides from patterns of true coastal change (Vos et al.,  
 29 2019). This is a particularly challenging for large-scale coastal EO analyses, where failing to  
 30 account for tide dynamics can lead to inaccurate or misleading insights into satellite-observed  
 31 coastal processes.

33 Conversely, information about ocean tides can provide unique environmental insights that can  
 34 significantly enhance the value of EO data. Traditionally, satellite data dimensions include  
 35 the geographic “where” and temporal “when” of acquisition. Introducing tide height as an  
 36 additional analysis dimension allows data to be filtered, sorted, and analysed based on tidal  
 37 dynamics, offering a transformative re-imagining of traditional multi-temporal EO analysis  
 38 (Sagar et al., 2017). For instance, satellite data can be analysed to focus on ecologically  
 39 significant tidal stages (e.g., high tide, low tide, spring or neap tides) or specific tidal processes  
 40 (e.g., ebb or flow tides; Sent et al. (2025)).

41 This concept has been used to map coastal change at continental-scale (Bishop-Taylor et al.,  
 42 2021), map intertidal zone extent and elevation (Bishop-Taylor et al., 2019; Murray et al.,  
 43 2012; Sagar et al., 2017), and creating tidally-constrained coastal image composites (Sagar  
 44 et al., 2018). However, these methods have traditionally relied on bespoke, closed-source, or  
 45 difficult-to-install tide modelling tools, limiting their reproducibility and portability. To support  
 46 the next generation of coastal EO workflows, there is a pressing need for efficient open-source  
 47 tools for combining satellite data with tide modelling. eo-tides addresses this need through  
 48 functionality offered in five main analysis modules (utils, model, eo, stats, validation).

## 49 Features

### 50 Setting up tide models

51 The `eo_tides.utils` module simplifies the setup of ocean tide models, addressing a common  
 52 barrier to coastal EO workflows. Tools like `list_models` provide feedback on available and  
 53 supported models (Figure 2), while `clip_models` can significantly improve performance by  
 54 clipping large high-resolution model files (e.g. FES2022) to smaller study area extents.

	Model	Expected path
✓	EOT20	tide_models/EOT20/ocean_tides
✗	FES2014	tide_models/fes2014/ocean_tide
✓	HAMTIDE11	tide_models/hamtide
...	...	...

Summary:  
 Available models: 2/50

Figure 2: A `list_tides` output providing a useful summary of available and supported tide models.

### 55 Modelling tides

56 The `eo_tides.model` module is powered by tide modelling functionality from the pyTMD Python  
 57 package (Sutterley et al., 2017). pyTMD is an open-source tidal prediction software that  
 58 simplifies the calculation of ocean and earth tides. Tides are frequently decomposed into

59 harmonic constants (or constituents) associated with the relative positions of the sun, moon  
 60 and Earth. `pyTMD.io` contains routines for reading and spatially interpolating major constituent  
 61 values from commonly available ocean tide models.

62 The `model_tides` function from `eo_tides.model` wraps `pyTMD` functionality to return tide  
 63 predictions in a standardised `pandas.DataFrame` format, enabling integration with EO data  
 64 and parallelisation for improved performance ([Table 1](#)). The `model_phases` function can  
 65 additionally classify tides into high/low/flow/ebb phases, critical for correctly interpreting  
 66 satellite-observed coastal processes like turbidity ([Sent et al., 2025](#)).

**Table 1:** A [benchmark comparison](#) of tide modelling parallelisation, for a typical large-scale analysis involving a month of hourly tides modelled at 10,000 points using three models (FES2022, TPXO10, GOT5.6).

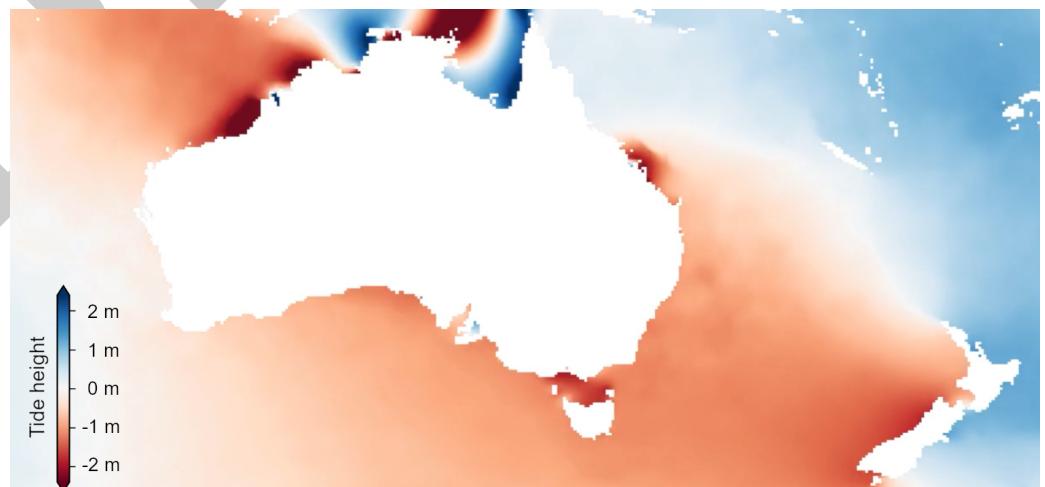
Cores	Parallelisation	No parallelisation	Speedup
8	2min 46s ± 663 ms	9min 28s ± 536 ms	3.4x
32	55.9 s ± 560 ms	9min 24s ± 749 ms	10.1x

### 67 Combining tides with satellite data

68 The `eo_tides.eo` module integrates modelled tides with xarray-format satellite data ([Hoyer &](#)  
 69 [Joseph, 2017](#)). The `tag_tides` and `pixel_tides` functions ([Table 2](#), [Figure 3](#)) can be applied  
 70 to attribute tides to satellite data for any coastal location on the planet, for example using  
 71 open data loaded from the cloud using [ODC](#) and [STAC](#) ([STAC contributors, 2024](#)).

**Table 2:** Comparison of the `tag_tides` and `pixel_tides` functions.

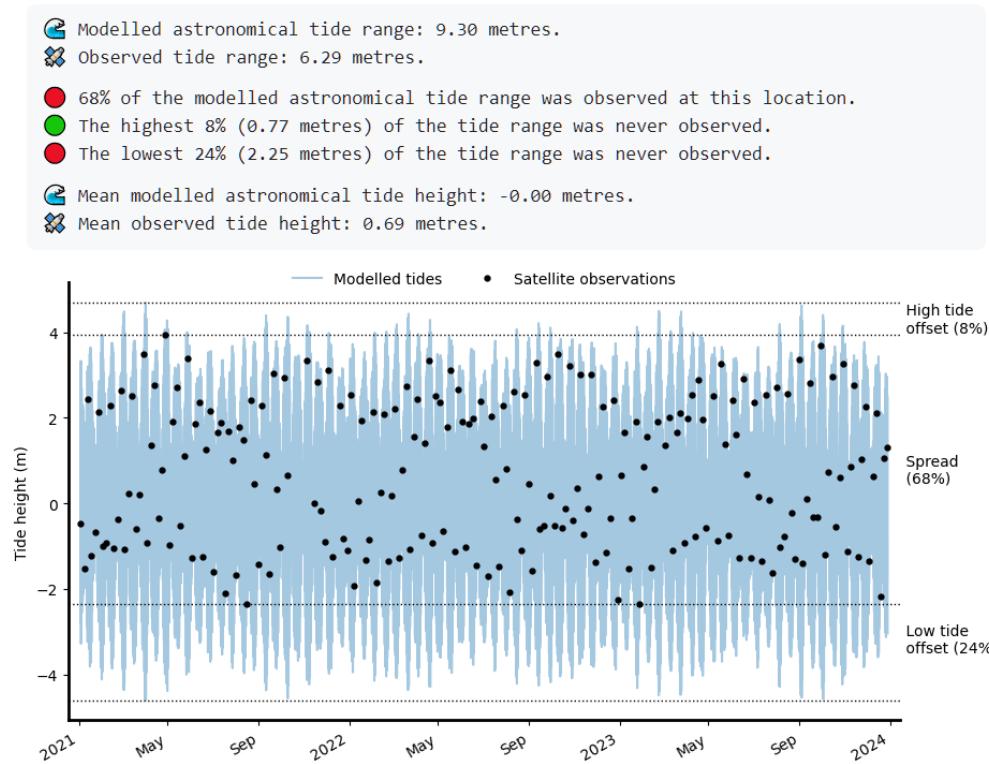
tag_tides	pixel_tides
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assigns a single tide height to each satellite image time-step</li> <li>- Single tide height per image can produce artefacts and discontinuities</li> <li>- Fast, low memory use</li> <li>- Ideal for local, site-scale analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assigns a tide height to every individual pixel through time</li> <li>- Produce spatially seamless results across large regions</li> <li>- Slower, higher memory use</li> <li>- Ideal for large-scale analysis</li> </ul>



**Figure 3:** An example spatial tide height output produced by the `pixel_tides` function.

## 72 Calculating tide statistics and satellite biases

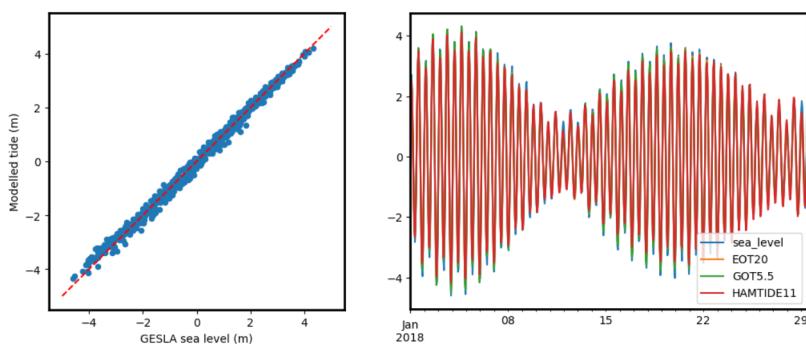
73 The `eo_tides.stats` module identifies biases caused by complex tide aliasing interactions that  
 74 can prevent satellites from observing the entire tide cycle (Bishop-Taylor et al., 2019; Eleveld  
 75 et al., 2014; Sent et al., 2025). The `tide_stats` and `pixel_stats` functions produce useful  
 76 statistics that summarise how well satellite data captures real-world tides (Figure 4).



77 **Figure 4:** An example of tidally-biased satellite coverage, where only ~68% of the astronomical tide  
 78 range is observed.

## 77 Validating modelled tides

78 The `eo_tides.validation` module validates modelled tides against observed sea-level measurements,  
 79 assisting users to evaluate and select optimal models for their application (Figure 5).



78 **Figure 5:** A comparison of multiple tide models (EOT20, GOT5.5, HAMTIDE11) against observed sea  
 79 level data from the Broome 62650 GESLA tide gauge (Haigh et al., 2023).

## 80 Research projects

81 Early versions of eo-tides functions have been used for continental-scale intertidal mapping  
82 ([Bishop-Taylor et al., 2024](#)), multi-decadal shoreline mapping across Australia ([Bishop-Taylor](#)  
83 [et al., 2021](#)) and [Africa](#), and for correcting satellite-derived shoreline in the CoastSeg Python  
84 package ([Fitzpatrick et al., 2024](#)).

## 85 Acknowledgements

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87 repository ([Krause et al., 2021](#)). This paper is published with the permission of the Chief  
88 Executive Officer, Geoscience Australia.

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