

Darwin Harbour Beaches

Summary

Several of Darwin Harbour beaches were closed in the dry season due to levels of microbiological water quality indicators being greater than guidelines.

Nature of system

- Estuarine system likely to be well mixed via tidal inflows and outflows
- Many stormwater drains enter tidal creeks directly onto beachfront areas
- Mangrove habitat and inter-tidal mudflats in some parts
- A large proportion of the catchment has been urbanised
- Cyanobacteria blooms (e.g., maiden's tresses and sea sawdust) typically occur as a natural event in most years in the dry season and can wash ashore

Sources of pollution

- Sediment, nutrient, bacteria, commercial and other human-related pollutants in stormwater runoff from rural, urban (e.g., residential, recreational facilities and areas, commercial areas) from diffuse sources in the catchment
- Sediment, nutrient, bacteria, and other pollutants from point sources (e.g., wastewater discharges, stormwater drains, recreational facilities and areas, commercial areas) to waterways
- Sewage treatment plant wastewater discharges at East Point and Larrakeyah between Darwin wharf and Lee Point



Mindil Beach is a popular recreation area in Darwin. Mindil Beach *E. coli* levels were above the NT water quality guidelines on 8 out of 25 sampling occasions from June to September 2010 (data supplied by Department of Health and Families).

