

Portugal has 560 km of sandy coast.

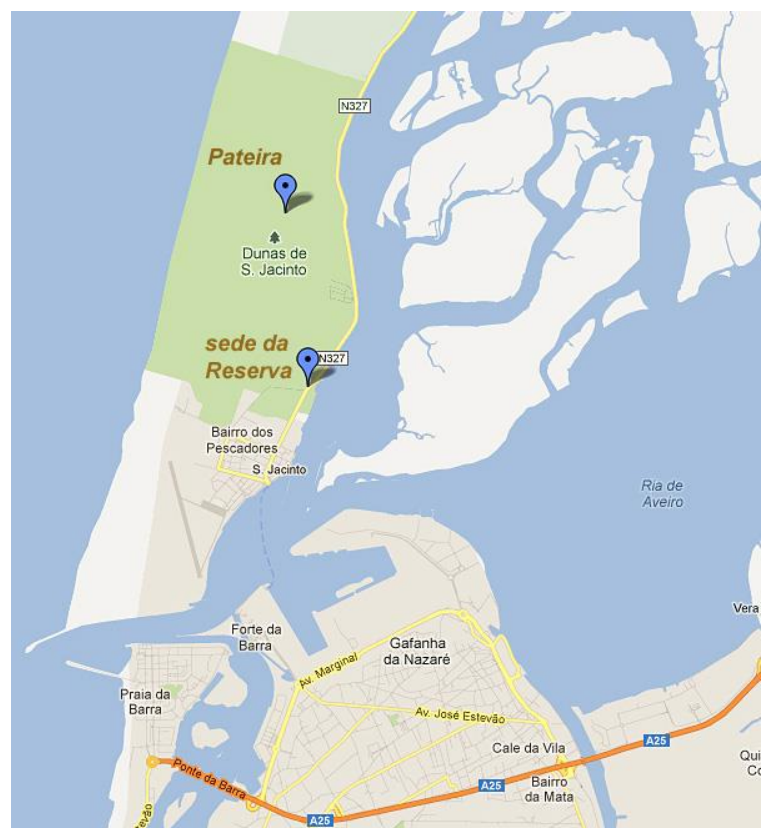
67% of our coast has a significant risk of erosion.

The main factors responsible for coastal erosion in Espinho and consequent land retreat are:



- rising sea level;
- decrease in the amount of sediment supplied to the coast due mainly to the construction of dams on the river Douro;
- heavy engineering works, in particular those to defend the coast.

In 1979 the **Natural Reserve of the Dunes of San Jacinto** was created with the main objective of protecting the dune system and its flora and fauna.





The dunes are quite fragile structures; as such, it makes sense to safeguard them to prevent the sea from advancing and protect the biodiversity therein.



Until 17 years ago, the access to the beaches was done in an uncontrolled way and the damage of the dunes was visible in everyone's eyes. It was known that intervention was necessary to preserve this dune ecosystem. The placement of fences, palisades and the cleaning of the place were actions that allowed stabilizing the dunes and regenerating the vegetation.

The **Dunes of Aguda Park** were created in 1997 and allowed the conservation of 2ha of dune area.



Palisades were made from branches of trees from the pruning of trees in the municipality. Today the access to the beach is made by the footbridges and the dune stabilized, slowing advance of the sea. There are palisades also in Espinho.







The plants of the dunes are attractive for several animals, one of which is the *Timon lepidus*, the greatest lizard of the Iberian Peninsula.

