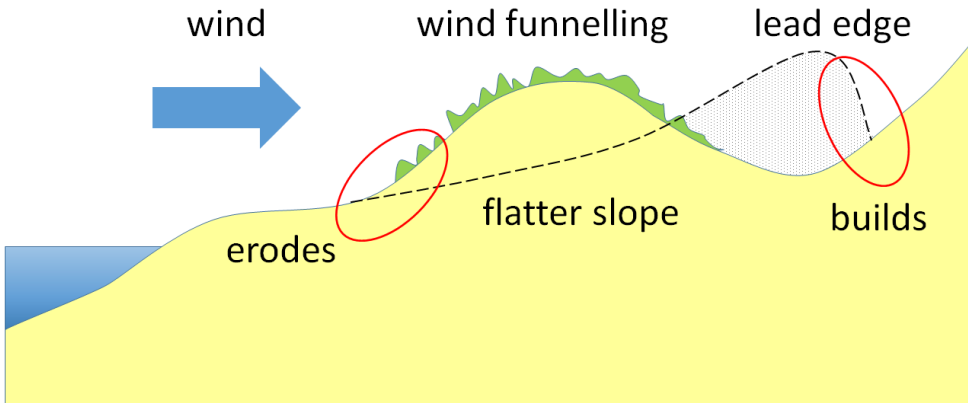


# Blowouts and Sand Sheets

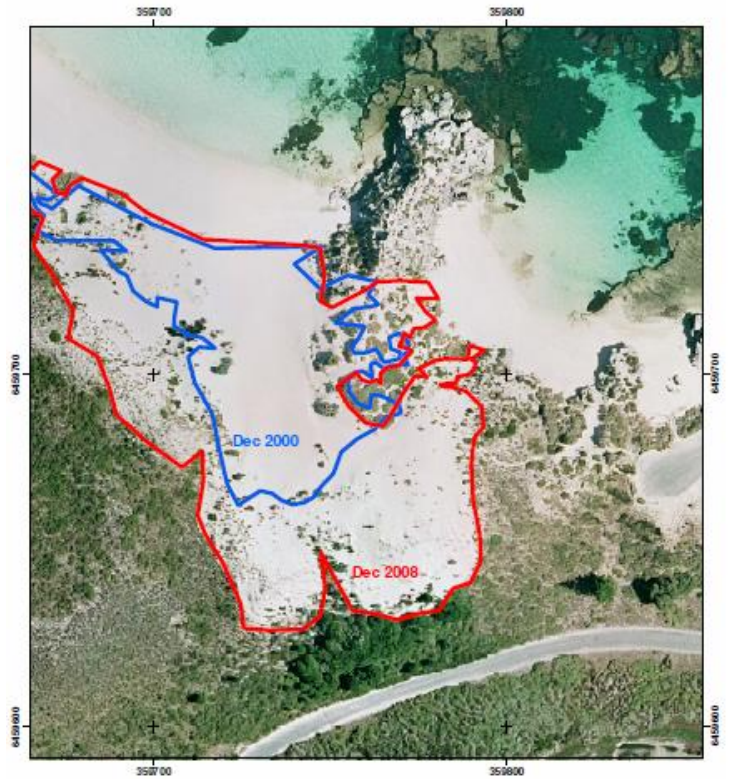
Loss of dune vegetation increases wind blown sand drift, which is a normal part of dune dynamics. However, if adjacent vegetation is undercut, the disturbance may propagate. Typical starting points are from storm cut at the toe of the dune, or trampling of the dune crest.

If vegetation loss occurs across a dune ridge, this may lead to rapid incision, with a blowout cutting through the dune. Blowout development may be gradual, or the result of a single intense storm.



Factors contributing to accelerated landward sand transport can include vegetation disturbance, deflated dune slope, wind funnelling and large storage volume in the lee of the dunes.

Landward sediment movement can be greater than alongshore supply, leading to near-field erosion of adjacent beach and dunes.



If sufficient sand moves landward and remains mobile, depositional features can form, such as lobes, sand sheets or longitudinal dunes. These can grow and advance for decades, over substantial distances to landward.

For the WA coast, many dune systems formed during higher sea levels. Most are now more stable than when they initially formed. Projected sea level rise is expected to increase blowout and sand sheet activity.