

Interactive comment on “Medium-term dynamics of a Middle Adriatic barred beach” by Matteo Postacchini et al.

Anonymous Referee #3

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I have read with interest the paper “Medium-term dynamics of a middle Adriatic barred beach” by Postacchini et al. The MS paper deals with the morphodynamic analysis of a natural sandy littoral stretch located along a highly urbanized coastal sector on the west Adriatic Sea. The morphologic variability of submerged sandbars is analysed and compared with in situ wave data, in order to evaluate medium-term dynamics.

Generally speaking, I find the paper interesting, tackling an important aspect in a convincing way (although of course dealing with the usual problems of having “not enough” data) and well organized. The English is also rather fluent. However, the MS may benefit from some minor improvements that could be easily implemented by the authors.

-I feel the need of more specific links to some of the several existing wave-climate stud-

C1

ies on the Adriatic basin. - The paper tackles a subject relatively unexplored, i.e. the medium-term behavior, that is a timescale that between short term (days) and long term (years/decades), on the order of seasons or years, using annual bathymetric surveys and offshore wave buoy data. There is no doubt that improving the knowledge on the relations between wave climate and changes in nearshore morphology is a necessary step, in order to improve numerical models capable of predicting storm effects, beach erosion, and more generally the efficiency of shoreline protection measures. This is even more valid in a context of climate change, that should be also mentioned in the paper more clearly. Benetazzo et al. 2012, DOI:10.5194/nhess-12-1-2012, and references therein included may give some useful hints on this.

-at the same time, some lines addressing the relationship between the local scale dynamics with a more regional scenario of sediment dynamics and transport should possibly be introduced by the authors. Sherwood et al., 2004, Oceanography; or Harris et al., DOI: 10.1029/2006JC003868. Even though not strictly pertinent to the study, it should be indeed mentioned that the longshore and cross-shore budget of the local beach is however to be framed within a more regional dynamics.

-other existing approaches could be mentioned in order to provide a more complete series of wave data nearshore, including the transfer of offshore wave data to the coast by means of wave models, e.g. SWAN, in order to reconstruct a more detailed and spatially meaningful wave climate (Carniel et al., 2011, DOI: 10.2478/s13545-011-0036-1)

-Some more caveats should be discussed, since the bathymetric data was collected once per year and are therefore somehow limited. Possible workarounds could be put more in evidence, as the use of video images to reconstruct the coastline (see Archetti et al., 2016, . doi:10.5194/nhess-16-1107-2016, and references therein included)

-Since it is somehow difficult to be sure about the separation of short-term changes due to winter storms with respect to medium-term changes due to medium-term wave climate, in this field even a relatively quick reference/analysis of wind and wave data

C2

resulting from climate models or satellite-verified database may be of direct help. Although the wave data presented here seems to be sufficient for the proposed medium-term analysis, and a more careful analysis of available wave-data also from global reanalysis or modeling efforts would improve the soundness of analysis but being too heavy, the authors may refer to existing efforts that are represented by available regional climate models, originated possibly from efforts such as the MEDATLAS project http://users.ntua.gr/mathan/pdf/Pages_from%20_WIND_WAVE_ATLAS_MEDITERRANEAN

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