

## **A Review and Classification of Maritime Disasters: The Case of Saudi Arabia's Coastline**

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**Abstract :** Due to varying geographical and tectonic factors, the region of Saudi Arabia has been subjected to numerous natural and man-made maritime disasters during the last two decades. Natural maritime disasters, such as cyclones and tsunamis, have been recorded in coastal areas of the Indian Ocean (including the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden). Therefore, the Indian Ocean is widely recognised as the potential source of future destructive natural disasters that could affect Saudi Arabia's coastline. Meanwhile, man-made maritime disasters, such as those arising from piracy and oil pollution, are located in the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf, which are key locations for oil export and transportation between Asia and Europe. This paper provides a brief overview of maritime disasters surrounding Saudi Arabia's coastline in order to classify them by frequency of occurrence and location, and discuss their future impact the region. Results show that the Arabian Gulf will be more vulnerable to natural maritime disasters because of its location, whereas the Red Sea is more vulnerable to man-made maritime disasters, as it is the key location for transportation between Asia and Europe. The results also show that with the aid of proper classification, effective disaster management can reduce the consequences of maritime disasters.

**Keywords :** disaster classification, maritime disaster, natural disasters, man-made disasters

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