Coastlines

This is the visual definition icon responsible for specifying how a map background is displayed. It controls features such as coastlines, land and sea shading and grid lines.

The macro language equivalent is `mcoast()`.

The Coastlines Editor

All of the parameters in this editor come directly from Magics, and are documented on the coastlines reference page. Parameters not listed there are as follows:

Map Layer Mode

Specifies how the background (land-sea shading) and foreground (grid, coastlines, rivers, borders and cities) map layers are rendered into the plot with respect to the data layers. The possible values are as follows:

- **split**: the coastlines icon is split into background and foreground map layers. The background map layer is rendered first, followed by the data layers with the foreground map layers appearing atop
- **foreground**: all the map layers are rendered on top of the data layers
- **background**: all the map layers are rendered below the data layers

The default value is **split**.

> ⚠️ **Script (Macro/Python) usage**
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> If **Map Layer Mode** is set to **split** and the Coastlines icon appears after the data objects in the `plot(...)` command, the coastlines are put on top of the data. This behaviour is required in order to maintain backward compatibility.

Adding a user-supplied shapefile as a layer

If you have a shapefile with geographical polygons, this can be added to a plot via the Coastlines icon. The relevant parameters are **Map User Layer**, **Map User Layer Name**, **Map User Layer Style**, **Map User Layer Colour** and **Map User Layer Thickness.** To use an own shapefile, set **Map User Layer** to **On**, then set **Map User Layer Name** to the path to the shapefile, with the base file name of the file as the last element. For example if the path to the shapefile is `/home/me/files` and there is a shapefile called `MyShape.shp` in that directory, then we would set this parameter to `/home/me/files/MyShape`.

The following screenshot shows the result of loading a shapefile of UK roads into Metview: