

AA.D BALTIC PHOTIC MAËRL BEDS

AUTHOR

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TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

Baltic bottoms in the photic zone with at least 90 % coverage of maerl (unattached particles of coralline red algae).

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Salinity range: High; Exposure range: All; Depth range: Photic zone

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Lithothamnion spp. and *Phymatolithon* spp.

MAPPING ADVISE (HABITAT DELINEATION, IDENTIFICATION, SIMILAR TYPES)

Photic zone beds of unattached particles of coralline red algae particles (maximum diameter ≈5cm) in gravel and sand. Areas where maerl occur are generally well ventilated with low levels of turbidity at depths of 17-22 m. Maerlbeds have a patchy distribution.

GEOGRAPHIC RANGE

Kattegatt; Lilla Middelgrund and Fladen

ANTHROPOGENIC THREATS

Extraction mining, ocean acidification, offshore wind-farms, destructive fishing methods and eutrophication causing increased turbidity

CORRESPONDENCE WITH OTHER CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

HELCOM 2007:

Maerl beds

- habitat under threat and/or in decline in all areas of occurrence

- Kattegat

EUNIS (2012):

A5 Sublittoral sediment

A5.5 Sublittoral macrophyte-dominated sediment

A5.51 Maerl beds

<http://eunis.eea.europa.eu/habitats/5437>

OSPAR list of threatened biotopes:

Maerl beds

- habitat occurs in the OSPAR region II (including Kattegat) but is not listed threatened and/or in decline in this region