

# **AB.H3L Baltic aphotic muddy sediment characterized by infaunal bivalves**

## **Author**

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## **Textual description**

Baltic aphotic bottoms with at least 90 % coverage of muddy sediment. The sediment must contain at least 20 % of mud, silt or clay (grain size less than 63 µm). Sessile/semi-sessile epibenthic macrofauna is not present. Biomass of infaunal bivalves dominates and is highest in the group that includes infaunal bivalves/polychaetes/crustaceans/echinoderms/insect larvae.

## **Physical environment**

Substrate is muddy sediment. Depth below approximately 20 m. Appears in all energy exposure classes.

## **Characteristic species**

*Macoma balthica*, *Arctica islandica*, *Astarte* spp.

## **Quality descriptors**

Diversity, abundance and biomass of fauna.

## **Geographic range**

Whole Baltic Sea

## **Anthropogenic threats**

Eutrophication, contaminants

## **Correspondence with other classification systems**

**HELCOM 1998:**

2.7 Muddy bottoms

2.7.1 Aphotic zone

**EUNIS 2012:**

A5 Sublittoral sediment

A5.3 Sublittoral mud

A5.37 Deep circalittoral mud

A5.378 Baltic muddy bottoms of the aphotic zone

<http://eunis.eea.europa.eu/habitats/2588>