

AB.J3M Baltic aphotic sand characterized by infaunal polychaetes

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Textual description

Balticaphotic bottoms with at least 90 % coverage of sand. Sand has less than 20 % of mud/silt/clay fraction (<63 µm), and the proportion of sand (grain size 0.063–2 mm) exceeds 70% of the combined gravel and sand fraction. Sessile/semi-sessile epibenthic macrofauna is not present. Biomass of infaunal polychaetes dominates and is the highest in the group infaunal bivalves/polychaetes/crustaceans/insect larvae.

Physical environment

Substrate is sand. Depth below approximately 30 m. Appears in high energy exposure areas.

Characteristic species

Pygospio elegans, *Marenzelleria spp.*, *Hediste diversicolor*, *Ophelia spp.* and *Travisia forbesii*

Quality descriptors

Diversity, abundance and biomass of fauna.

Geographic range

Whole Baltic Sea

Correspondence with other classification systems

HELCOM 1998:

2.5 Sandy bottoms

2.5.1 Aphotic zone

EUNIS 2012:

A5 Sublittoral sediment

A5.2 Sublittoral sand

A5.27 Deep circalittoral sand

A5.273 Baltic sandy bottoms of the aphotic zone

<http://eunis.eea.europa.eu/habitats/2620>