



Reefs 1170
short discussion

Definition

1170

Reefs

PAL.CLASS.: 11.24, 11.25

- 1) Reefs can be either biogenic concretions or of geogenic origin. They are hard compact substrata on solid and soft bottoms, which arise from the sea floor in the sublittoral and littoral zone. Reefs may support a zonation of benthic communities of algae and animal species as well as concretions and corallogenic concretions.

Clarifications:

- "*Hard compact substrata*" are: rocks (including soft rock, e.g. chalk), boulders and cobbles (generally >64 mm in diameter).
- "*Biogenic concretions*" are defined as: concretions, encrustations, corallogenic concretions and bivalve mussel beds originating from dead or living animals, i.e. biogenic hard bottoms which supply habitats for epibiotic species.
- "*Geogenic origin*" means: reefs formed by non biogenic substrata.
- "*Arise from the sea floor*" means: the reef is topographically distinct from the surrounding seafloor.
- "*Sublittoral and littoral zone*" means: the reefs may extend from the sublittoral uninterrupted into the intertidal (littoral) zone or may only occur in the sublittoral zone, including deep water areas such as the bathyal.
- Such hard substrata that are covered by a thin and mobile veneer of sediment are classed as reefs if the associated biota are dependent on the hard substratum rather than the overlying sediment.
- Where an uninterrupted zonation of sublittoral and littoral communities exist, the integrity of the ecological unit should be respected in the selection of sites.
- A variety of subtidal topographic features are included in this habitat complex such as: Hydrothermal vent habitats, sea mounts, vertical rock walls, horizontal ledges, overhangs, pinnacles, gullies, ridges, sloping or flat bed rock, broken rock and boulder and cobble fields.

Updates in national data

- Previous limits have been removed in the national definitions.
 - For e.g. Land connection allowed
 - Fin data was already existing/ Swe is almost done
- Currently the habitat data is based on modeling – Field checking should be conducted

What do you think?

- Plants and animals
 - Inclusion of habitats in too far north not allowing typical species to occur (salinity)?
 - Inclusion of deep water formations with no plants and animals
- Problems in reporting and using the data?
 - Reporting habitats with no/little protection values might give a flawed image of reef abundance for the decision makers. → No need for protection?
 - Evaluating the protection status of reefs (inside MPAs)?

Upcomming work: Inner variation of reefs (and other habitats)

- Will be evaluated in SeaGIS 2 soon
- We will use modeled and inventoried data to classify habitat data
- Expected to have classes such as:
 - Photic reefs with fucus and mytilus dominating
 - Aphotic reefs with mytilus dominating
 - Photic low salinity reefs with low plant and animal coverage
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- As a result we can show how assessment of general category of reefs might differ from the reefs that naturally has a lot of protection values (according to red list assessments).