



Habitat: Intertidal *Mytilus edulis* beds on mixed and sandy sediments

OSPAR Recommendation 2015/01:

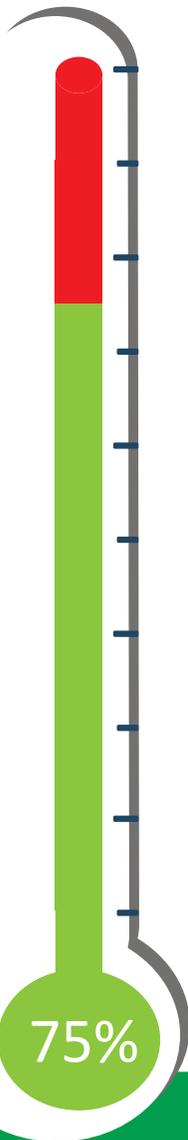
Contracting Parties are required to report progress with implementation of recommendations every six years, with initial more frequent reporting until 2019.

Measures taken by Contracting Parties to protect Intertidal *Mytilus edulis* beds on mixed and sandy sediments include the designation of MPAs, and introduction of national legislation and management measures



Description

Intertidal *Mytilus edulis* beds occur principally on mid and lower shore mixed substrata (mainly cobbles and pebbles on muddy sediments) but also on sands and muds. In high densities (at least 30% cover) the mussels bind the substratum and provide a habitat for many infaunal and epibiotic species. This habitat is also found in lower shore tide-swept areas, such as in the tidal narrows of sealochs. A fauna of dense juvenile mussels may be found in sheltered firths, attached to algae on shores of pebbles, gravel, sand, mud and shell debris.



Action Highlights

Each Recommendation requires Contracting Parties to report on the methods used to implement the measures. The methods are Legislation, Administrative action and Negotiated agreement, or any combination of these. Recent examples include:

1. Germany, Sweden, and the UK have national legislation in place;
2. Denmark, France, Germany, Sweden, and the UK undertake monitoring programmes;
3. Management measures are in place in Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and the UK;
4. MPAs have been designated in Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK;
5. Germany and the UK undertake awareness raising activities.

Engagement

The engagement index (left) measures how well Contracting Parties have engaged with the national measures in the Recommendation. The higher the score the greater the number of actions that Contracting Parties, which have reported, have taken to implement the measures in the Recommendation. Click here for more information on the index.

References:

- Background document on Intertidal *Mytilus edulis* beds on mixed and sandy sediments (OSPAR Publication 648)
- OSPAR Recommendation 2015/01
- OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats (Agreement 2008-06)

Condition

Intertidal *Mytilus edulis* beds on mixed and sandy sediments are specific to the OSPAR Maritime Area. The majority are found in the Wadden Sea area (the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark) and in UK waters, although they are also present along the coast of Iceland and Ireland. Intertidal *Mytilus edulis* beds on mixed and sandy sediments are profoundly impacted by human activities, most significantly by fishing and harvesting activities. These human disturbances of mature mussel beds on mixed and sandy sediments result in widespread losses and may even lead to long-term disappearances.



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