

## A5.36 Pontic upper circalittoral fine mud

### Summary

The habitat is present in the Black Sea and Sea of Marmara in areas of infralittoral mud, sandy mud and muddy sand substrates. The main pressures impacting this habitat include trawling, eutrophication, chemical pollution and disturbance from bottom trawling. Conservation and management measures relevant to this habitat include: measures to maintain physical and biological integrity, improvement of water quality, pollution event response strategies, survey and monitoring programs and raised public awareness.

### Synthesis

Detailed information on the abundance and extent of this habitat is lacking. Information on the quantity and quality of this habitat including historical or recent trends is unknown. For the purposes of Red List assessment this habitat is considered to be Data Deficient.

Overall Category & Criteria			
EU 28		EU 28+	
Red List Category	Red List Criteria	Red List Category	Red List Criteria
Data Deficient	-	Data Deficient	-

### Sub-habitat types that may require further examination

None

### Habitat Type

#### Code and name

A5.36 Pontic upper circalittoral fine mud

There are currently no photographs available of this habitat.

#### Habitat description

This habitat consists of fine muds in the upper circalittoral zone. It is found below the photic zone at depths between 20 and 50 meters. The habitat is characterised by faunal communities dominated by bivalves and polychaete worms.

Indicators of quality:

Both biotic and abiotic indicators have been used to describe marine habitat quality. These include the presence of characteristic species and species sensitive to the pressures the habitat may face, water quality parameters, levels of exposure to particular pressure as well as and more integrated indices which describe habitat structure and function, such as trophic index, or successional stages of development in habitats that have a natural cycle of change over time. There are no commonly agreed indicators of quality for this habitat, although particular parameters may have been set in certain situations e.g. protected features within Natura 2000 sites, where reference values have been determined and applied on a location-specific basis.

Characteristic species:

*Mya arenaria*, *Spisula subtruncata*, *Melinna palmata*, *Heteromastus filiformis* and *Aricidea claudiae*.

## Classification

This habitat may be equivalent to, or broader than, or narrower than the habitats or ecosystems in the following typologies.

EUNIS (v1405):

Level 4. A sub-habitat of 'Circalittoral mud' (A5.3)

Annex 1:

1110 Sandbanks slightly covered all the time

MAES:

Marine - Marine inlets and transitional waters

Marine - Coastal

MSFD:

Shallow sublittoral sediment (coarse, sand, mud, mixed)

EUSEaMap:

Shallow muds

IUCN:

9.6 Subtidal muddy

### Does the habitat type present an outstanding example of typical characteristics of one or more biogeographic regions?

Unknown

#### Justification

There is insufficient knowledge and information on this habitat to state whether it is an outstanding example of this biogeographic region.

### Geographic occurrence and trends

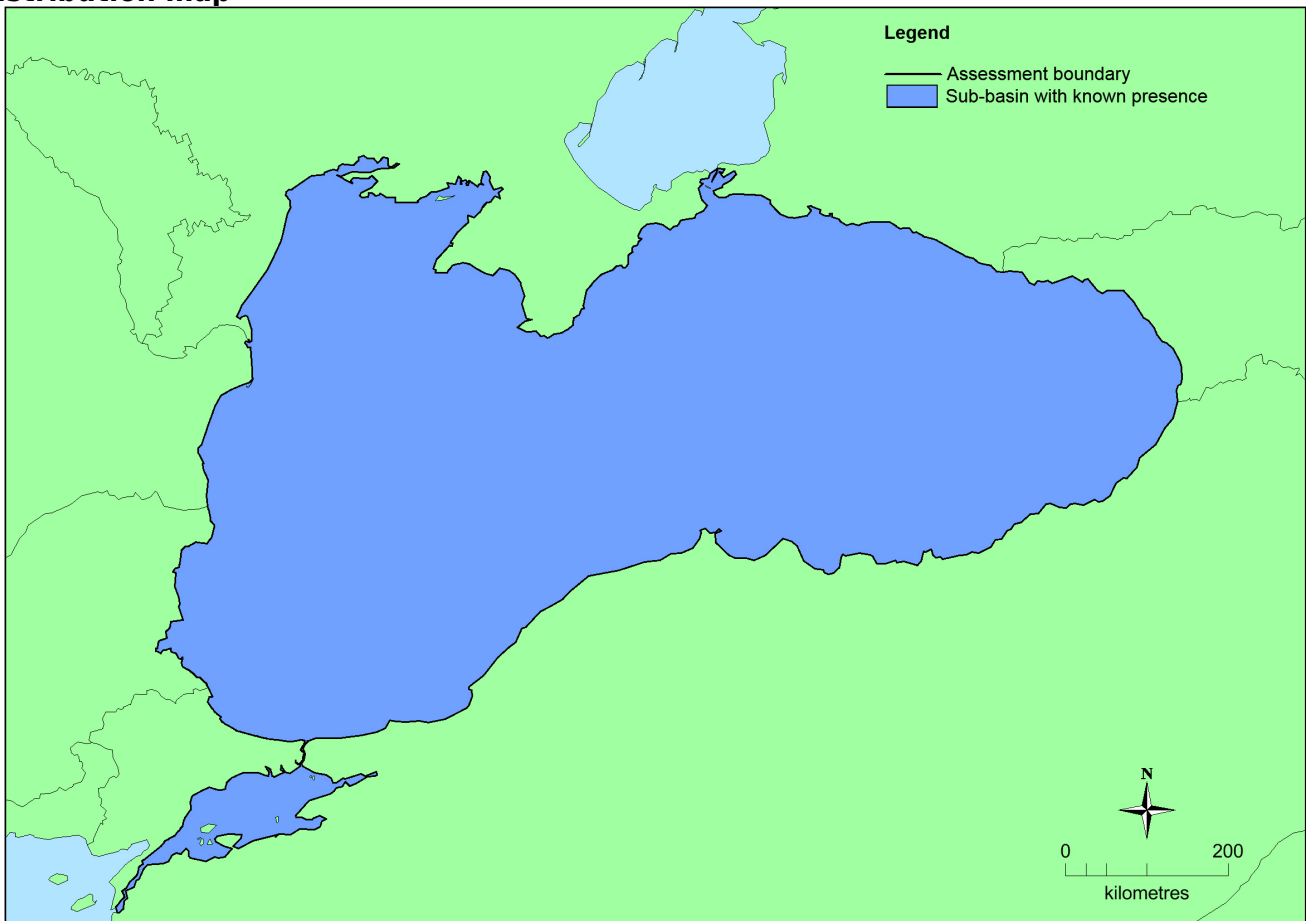
Region	Present or Presence Uncertain	Current area of habitat	Recent trend in quantity (last 50 yrs)	Recent trend in quality (last 50 yrs)
<i>Black Sea</i>	Black Sea: Present Sea of Marmara: Present	Unknown Km <sup>2</sup>	Unknown	Unknown

### Extent of Occurrence, Area of Occupancy and habitat area

	Extent of Occurrence (EOO)	Area of Occupancy (AOO)	Current estimated Total Area	Comment
--	----------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------------	---------

	Extent of Occurrence (EOO)	Area of Occupancy (AOO)	Current estimated Total Area	Comment
EU 28	Unknown Km <sup>2</sup>	Unknown	Unknown Km <sup>2</sup>	The habitat is known to occur in the Black Sea but there is insufficient data to accurately calculate EOO and AOO.
EU 28+	Unknown Km <sup>2</sup>	Unknown	Unknown Km <sup>2</sup>	The habitat is known to occur in the Black Sea but there is insufficient data to accurately calculate EOO and AOO.

### Distribution map



There is insufficient data to produce a map of the distribution of this habitat.

### How much of the current distribution of the habitat type lies within the EU 28?

It is unknown how much of this habitat is hosted by the EU28 in the Black Sea.

### Trends in quantity

There is insufficient data to accurately assess changes in quantity of the habitat

- Average current trend in quantity (extent)

EU 28: Unknown

EU 28+: Unknown

- Does the habitat type have a small natural range following regression?

Unknown

*Justification*

The habitat is known to occur in the Black Sea but there is insufficient data to accurately calculate EOO

and AOO. There is insufficient data to accurately assess whether the habitat has undergone a significant decline (>25% of extent) in the last 50 years.

- Does the habitat have a small natural range by reason of its intrinsically restricted area?

Unknown

#### *Justification*

There is insufficient data and knowledge on this habitat to state whether it has a small natural range by reason of an intrinsically restricted area.

### **Trends in quality**

There is insufficient data to accurately assess changes in quality of the habitat

- Average current trend in quality

EU 28: Unknown

EU 28+: Unknown

### **Pressures and threats**

---

Eutrophication as a result of nutrient enrichment (N, P and organic matter) is the most significant historic pressure on the habitat. Anoxic and hypoxic conditions due to eutrophication caused mass mortalities in benthic communities. Since the 1990s this pressure has reduced due to tighter controls on pollution in the catchment of the Danube and other rivers which enter the north-west Black Sea. Whilst this pressure is now reduced it is still a continuing threat in the current and future periods. This is especially true for non EU countries surrounding the Black Sea which are not bound by the agreements such as the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Demersal trawling and dredging by commercial fisheries is a current and future threat to the habitat. Trawling and dredging can damage the habitat and associated benthic communities both directly and indirectly. Trawl and dredge gear can directly impact the habitat by damaging and/or removing species. Trawling can also act directly to reduce the complexity of the habitat, smoothing out microhabitats, and thereby reducing biodiversity. Indirect impacts of trawling include smothering and alteration of sediment characteristics. Demersal trawling and dredging is prohibited in some states, however, illegal demersal fishing is still an issue in these areas.

Chemical pollution is a threat of current and future importance which at its most severe can result in high levels of species mortality. High mortality rates can lead to a reduction in habitat/community extent. Lower mortality rates will result in a reduction in habitat quality. Chemical pollution may also affect growth rate and size of some fauna.

### **List of pressures and threats**

#### **Biological resource use other than agriculture & forestry**

Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources

Professional active fishing

#### **Pollution**

Nutrient enrichment (N, P, organic matter)

Input of contaminants (synthetic substances, non-synthetic substances, radionuclides) - diffuse sources, point sources, acute events

### **Conservation and management**

---

Conservation and management measures which would benefit this habitat include: implementing

measures to maintain physical and biological integrity, including pollution control and regulation, improvement of water quality management outside EU member states, contingency plans to be followed in the event of a major pollution incident, survey and monitoring programmes, raised public awareness of ecological value and vulnerability.

## List of conservation and management needs

### Measures related to marine habitats

Other marine-related measures

### Measures related to urban areas, industry, energy and transport

Other measures

## Conservation status

Annex 1:

No relationship

## When severely damaged, does the habitat retain the capacity to recover its typical character and functionality?

There is insufficient data and knowledge of this habitat to assess its capacity to recover

## Effort required

10 years
Unknown

## Red List Assessment

### Criterion A: Reduction in quantity

Criterion A	A1	A2a	A2b	A3
EU 28	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %
EU 28+	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %

There is insufficient data on changes in quantity of this habitat to undertake an assessment using criterion A.

### Criterion B: Restricted geographic distribution

Criterion B	B1				B2				B3
	EOO	a	b	c	AOO	a	b	c	
EU 28	unknown Km <sup>2</sup>	Unknown	Unknown	unknown	unknown	Unknown	Unknown	unknown	unknown
EU 28+	unknown Km <sup>2</sup>	Unknown	Unknown	unknown	unknown	Unknown	Unknown	unknown	unknown

The precise extent of the habitat is unknown. Therefore there is insufficient data to produce EOO and AOO figures.

### Criterion C and D: Reduction in abiotic and/or biotic quality

Criteria C/D	C/D1		C/D2		C/D3	
	Extent affected	Relative severity	Extent affected	Relative severity	Extent affected	Relative severity
EU 28	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %
EU 28+	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %

Criterion C	C1		C2		C3	
	Extent affected	Relative severity	Extent affected	Relative severity	Extent affected	Relative severity
EU 28	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %
EU 28+	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %	unknown %

Criterion D	D1		D2		D3	
	Extent affected	Relative severity	Extent affected	Relative severity	Extent affected	Relative severity
EU 28	unknown %	unknown%	unknown %	unknown%	unknown %	unknownn%
EU 28+	unknown %	unknown%	unknown %	unknown%	unknown %	unknown%

Experts consider there to be insufficient data to conduct an assessment using criteria C/D.

### Criterion E: Quantitative analysis to evaluate risk of habitat collapse

Criterion E	Probability of collapse
EU 28	unknown
EU 28+	unknown

There is no quantitative analysis available to estimate the probability of collapse of this habitat type.

### Overall assessment "Balance sheet" for EU 28 and EU 28+

	A1	A2a	A2b	A3	B1	B2	B3	C/D1	C/D2	C/D3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3	E
EU28	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD
EU28+	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD	DD

Overall Category & Criteria			
EU 28		EU 28+	
Red List Category	Red List Criteria	Red List Category	Red List Criteria
Data Deficient	-	Data Deficient	-

### Confidence in the assessment

Low (mainly based on uncertain or indirect information, inferred and suspected data values, and/or limited expert knowledge)

### Assessors

S. Beal, G. Komakhidze, D. Micu, V. Mihneva, N. Milchakova, B. Yokes

### Contributors

S. Beal, G. Komakhidze, D. Micu, V. Mihneva, N. Milchakova, B. Yokes

### Reviewers

L. Bat

## Date of assessment

19/03/2015

## Date of review

20/01/2016

## References

---

- Anon. 2006. *The northwestern part of the Black Sea: biology and ecology*. Kiev: Naukova Dumka. 701pp.
- Bacescu, M. C., Muller G. I., Gomoiu, M T. 1971. Cercetari de ecologie bentica in Marea Neagra (analiza cantitativa, calitativa si comparata a faunei bentice pontice). *Ecologie Marina* vol. IV. Editura Academiei R.S.R., Bucuresti, 357 pp..
- Bacescu M., 1977. Les biocenoses benthiques de la Mer Noire. *Biologie des eaux saumâtres de la Mer Noire, Première partie*: 128-134.
- Kiseleva, M. I. 1981. *Benthos of Black Sea mobile substrates*. Naukova dumka, Kiev, pp 165.
- Konsulov, A. 1998. *Black Sea Biological Diversity: Bulgaria. Volume 5 of Black Sea environmental series*. United Nations Publications, New York, USA.
- Marinov, T. 1990. *The zoobenthos from the Bulgarian Sector of the Black Sea*. Publishing house of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, pp 195 (in Bulgarian).
- Micu, D., Zaharia, T., Todorova, V., Niță, V. 2007. *Romanian Marine Habitats of European Interest*. Punct Ochit Publishers, Constanța, Romania.
- Micu, D. 2008. Open Sea and Tidal Areas. In: Gafta D. and Mountford J.O. (eds.) *Natura 2000 Habitat Interpretation Manual for Romania*. EU publication no. EuropeAid/121260/D/SV/RO, 101pp. ISBN 978-973-751-697-8.
- Micu, D., Zaharia, T., Todorova, V. 2008. Natura 2000 habitat types from the Romanian Black Sea. In: Zaharia T, Micu D, Todorova V, Maximov V, Niță V. *The development of an indicative ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas in Romania*. Romart Design Publishing, Constanta, Romania.
- Moncheva. S., Todorova, V., (eds). 2013. *Initial assessment of the marine environment*. Article 8, MSFD 2008/56/EC and NOOSMV (2010). 500p
- Petranu, A. 1997. *Black Sea Biological Diversity: Romania. Volume 4 of the Black Sea Environmental Series*. United Nations Publications, New York, USA.
- Vershinin, A. 2007. *Life in the Black Sea*. Maccentr, Moscow, Russia.
- Zaika V.E., Boltachev A.R., Zuev G.V., Kovalev A.V., Milchakova N.A., Sergeeva N.G. 2004. Floristic and faunistic changes in the Crimean Black Sea shelf after 1995 - 1998, *Marine Ecological Journal*, 3(2), p. 37-44.
- Zaitsev, Y. P., Alexandrov, B. G. 1998. *Black Sea Biological Diversity: Ukraine. Volume 7 of the Black Sea Environmental Series*. United Nations Publications, New York, USA.