A trans-Atlantic assessment and deep-water ecosystem based spatial management plan for Europe

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Conference Programme and Abstracts

A road map for defining Good Environmental Status in the deep-sea

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The development of tools to assess the Good Environmental Status (GES) in the Deep Sea (DS) is one of the aspects that ATLAS WP3 is addressing. GES assessment in the DS is challenging due to 1) the lack of baseline data, 2) the remoteness of the DS ecosystems, and 3) the limitations of the sampling methods currently available. Throughout the duration of the project, ATLAS will develop a suitable approach to address GES in the DS. During the 2nd General Assembly, we will present a draft for a "road map" to address GES in the DS as well some of the aspects discussed during the 2017 ICES WG on Deep Sea Ecosystems. The temporal and spatial scale at which GES should be assessed in the deep-sea is an important aspect to be considered. Due to the data limited situation and challenges posed to monitoring, it may well be the case that GES will have to be assessed at large spatial and temporal scales when comparing the shallower waters of the European Seas. For similar reasons, the type of indicators to be used may have to be simplified and likely be based on high-level analyses related to traits, pressures/risks, and habitat /ecosystem resilience. Ultimately, the results of the combined analyses of GES descriptors might bring to a potential refining or redefinition of the GES concept for the deep-sea.