

GN030-Intro Over-arching principles and methods for benthic marine habitat survey and monitoring in the context of ecological impact assessment

Figure 1.

Are relevant Conceptual Ecological Modes (CEMs) available for the habitat?

If **yes**, no further action required.

If **no**, undertake a critical review of existing datasets, pilot studies, scientific and grey literature to identify possible indicators.

- Is the possible indicator effective? Evaluate the indicator using state indicator selection criteria (OSPAR 2012).
- If **yes** (i.e the possible indicator is effective), can the possible indicator be tested adequately? Acquire data or use appropriate existing data to test whether the indicator reliably and consistently responds to causes of natural variation or anthropogenic disturbance. If **yes**, then the indicator is suitable and you can continue to use it.
- If the possible indicator cannot be tested adequately, then the indicator is not suitable.
- If the possible indicator is not effective (remember to evaluate the indicator using state indicator criteria (OSPAR 2012)), then the indicator is not suitable. In this case, is the assessment of unsuitable indicators required to fulfil requirements of policies or directives already in place (e.g. WFD)? If **yes**, then no further action is required. If **no**, then the indicator is not suitable.