

Evaluating structure and functions of benthic coastal habitats in Churchill, Manitoba

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Coastal habitats provide unique conditions allowing a specific diversity of species to establish. However, in the Canadian Arctic, it may experience a growing number of impacts such as oil spills and aquatic invasive species. Effective, low-cost sampling methods are then required to obtain baseline data on Arctic species. In this context, the *eSPACE project* developed a classification of habitats by videography using substrate and geomorphology. To verify the relationships between this habitat classification and the biological composition, coastal benthic communities and associated habitats were characterized in Churchill, Manitoba. Differences between biological composition and functional traits of each habitat were found which allow for direct information on the relative biological importance of sampled habitats and help validate the classification of habitats.