13.1 Components

The biological effects of pollutants can be studied on assemblages of a wide variety of marine organisms:

Pelagos

- plankton (both phytoplankton and zooplankton)
- fish (pelagic and demersal)

Benthos (soft-bottom)

- macrobenthos
- meiobenthos
- microbenthos, not much used in community studies

Benthos (hard-bottom)

- epifauna (encrusting forms, e.g. corals)
- motile fauna (both macrofauna and meiofauna in e.g. algae, holdfasts and epifauna)

These various components of the biota each have certain practical and conceptual advantages and disadvantages for use in biological effects studies. These are discussed in this chapter, and an example is given for each of the components (although not all of these examples are directly concerned with pollution effects).

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