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The foralgal crust facies of the deeper fore reefs in the Red Sea: A deep diving survey by submersible
Les faciès encroûtantes foralgales d'avant-récifs profonds en Mer Rouge: Exploration par submersible

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Abstract

Autochthonous organic frameworks from the deeper fore reef (50 m to 110 m) of the Red Sea are composed predominantly of incrusting calcareous red algae and foraminifera. This foralgal crust facies is represented by three types. The first is a pure foralgal crust community which forms small buildups with bumpy surfaces. Calcareous red algae and incrusting foraminifera comprise more than 60 % of the biogenous fabric. The second type is a framework in which foralgal crusts are secondary binders around the hermatypic deep water scleractinian *Leptoseris fragilis*. The third type occurs on drowned reefs, exhibiting a mixture of Pleistocene shallow water and present day deep

water binding species. Therefore, the morphology of this subspecies is more governed by an inherited relief, characterized by pinnacles and barrel shaped towers. This present day deep water foralgal community started to develop within the Cretaceous in shallow water environments, composed predominantly of corallinaceans, peyssonneliaceans, and subordinately of acervulinid foraminifera. With the beginning of the Neogene, the shallow water community of reef binding foraminifera and calcareous algae changed and become dominated by the foraminifera *Acervulina*. The living foralgal crusts of the deeper fore reef in the Red Sea represent a binding community of Upper Cretaceous and Palaeogene shallow water environments which has shifted in greater water depth with time.

Résumé

En Mer Rouge, les bioconstructions rencontrées le long des pentes profondes d'avant-récif (à 50 m jusqu'à 110 m) sont caractérisées par la prédominance d'algues rouges encroûtantes et de foraminifères sessiles (œforalgal crust facies). Selon l'abondance relative des organismes constructeurs on distingue trois groupes de constructions: le premier groupe est une communauté foralgale exclusive donnant des petits édifices. Les algues rouges encroûtantes comprennent 60 % de la bioconstruction. Le second groupe est représenté par des bioconstructions à polypier hermatypique (*Leptoseris fragilis*) secondairement encroûtées par l'association œforalgale. Le troisième groupe est une construction à disposition séquentielle, comprenant des espèces peu profondes du Pléistocène jusqu'à des espèces récentes plus profondes. Elles sont restreintes aux récifs submergés du Pléistocène, caractérisées par une morphologie héritée en forme de tour et de tonneau. Ce type de communautés œforalgales ont commencé à se différencier au Crétacé dans un milieu peu profond, comprenant des corallinacées, des peyssonneliacées et des foraminifères acervulinides. Au début du Néogène la communauté a changé et le foraminifère *Acervulina* commençait à prévaloir. Cette communauté œforalgale vivante des pentes profondes d'avant-récif est une analogie moderne des communautés encroûtantes peu profondes de la période Crétacé supérieur à Paléogène.



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Coralline algae; Fore reef; Red sea; Incrusting foraminifera

Mots-Clés

Algues rouges encroûtantes; Foraminifères sessiles; Mer rouge; Avant-Récif

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The foralgal crust facies of the deeper fore reefs in the Red Sea: a deep diving survey by submersible, the struggle of democratic and

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