

# New insights in the structuring role of *Lanice conchilega* reefs in intertidal food-webs - a focus on epi- and hyperbenthos -

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*Lanice conchilega* reefs (Polychaeta, Terrebellidae) are important from a conservation point of view because they dramatically increase the macrobenthic biodiversity in otherwise species poor environments. However, up to now, little or no attention has been paid to the intertidal epi- and hyperbenthic communities associated with the reefs.

This study investigates if:

- ☑ *L. conchilega* reefs affects the different components of the benthos (i.e. macro-, epi-, and hyperbenthos)?
- ☑ The reef effect, if any, is affected by the geographical location of the reef area?

Macro-, epi- and hyperbenthic communities were sampled within a *L. conchilega* reef and a control area at 2 locations: the bay of the Mont Saint-Michel and Boulogne-sur-Mer (France).

Independent of the location, the reefs structure all 3 associated benthic communities. However, the extent of the effect varies with the differential dependency of the associated benthic communities to the sea floor:

Macrobenthos > Epibenthos > Hyperbenthos

