

NEW UPPER DEVONIAN RUGOSE AND TABULATE CORALS FROM THE BAROGHIL AND CHILLINJI AREA, NORTHERN KARAKORUM

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The Karakorum area records the evolution of a crustal block, largely under marine conditions, over a time span of approximately 400 million years. Devonian rocks outcropping in the Upper Yarkhun and Karambar valleys occur in different tectonic slices belonging to the North Karakorum Sedimentary Belt and the Tash Kupruk zone which is interpreted to be remnants of the marginal area of the Karakorum Block. Corals (dominated by tabulates) occurring in the Tash Kupruk zone are strongly recrystallised. In the Baroghil and in the Chillinji areas rocks are present containing better preserved fossils. The Devonian succession starts with dolostones (Chilmarabad Fm.) containing poorly preserved stromatoporoids and gastropods. This formation is overlain by the Shogram Fm. with an erosional surface. At the base microconglomerates and sandstones may form a continuous horizon, overlain by alternations of fine-grained sandstones, shales, calcareous sandstones and coral bafflestones. One or two bafflestone horizons are present in the middle upper part of the Shogram Fm. spanning in age from Frasnian to Famennian, in which rugose and tabulate corals (*Amplexus*, *Endophyllum*, *Stringophyllum*?, *Spinophyllum*, *Phillipsastrea*, *Macgeea*, *Thamnophyllum*, *Cyathophyllum*, *Glossophyllum*, *Favosites*, *Thamnopora*, *Alveolites* and *Pachycanalicula*) may be abundant. The bafflestone horizons were mapped and sampled by Maurizio Gaetani, Milano and his team during several expeditions in the 1990ties. Knowledge on Palaeozoic corals from the Karakorum region is rather poor and therefore biogeographic relations remained speculative. The coral fauna recently studied indicate faunal relationships with Afghanistan, Poland and Russia.