

SHALLOW SUBSURFACE SEDIMENTS FROM NORTH BAHIA CONTINENTAL SLOPE, BRAZIL

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The Northeastern Brazilian Continental Margin is characterized by its very narrow shelf (average width 50 km) covered with sediments that represent a siliciclastic / carbonate transition seaward. Terrigenous sediments supply has been low throughout the Quaternary and reefs developed at the shelf break and the inner shelf. This is the first approach of a study that aims to assess oceanographic / climatic changes during the end of Pleistocene throughout Holocene in the region. Four piston cores, 1.8 to 1.9 m long, were selected from the GEOMAR XXV cruise (1985). They are located between 12°14'S / 37°32'W and 12°59'S / 38°13'W, along an area that extends for about 90 km long and is at approximately 25 km north of Salvador City (State of Bahia). Sampling depths vary from 480 m to 790 m. From each core samples for study were collected at 10 cm intervals. Sediment color varies from a dominant brownish black in the core located at the northmost part of the area, light olive gray in the cores from the middle part, to olive black in the core from the southmost part. Mud sediment dominates the northern and southern extremes of the area and sandy layers occur at about 0.7 m from the top of all cores. Benthic foraminifers are more frequent in the sediment from the northern cores, while a higher occurrence of planktonics characterizes the southern ones. But at the last southern core, below the 0.7 m top layer, where quartz grains dominate over carbonate sediments, foraminifers are absent.