

PALEOECOLOGY OF ALBIAN ECHINOIDS FROM SERGIPE, NORTHEASTERN BRAZIL

Manso, C. L. C. Bengtson, P.

A palaeological study was carried out on 23 species of Albian echinoids - 10 regular and 13 irregular - collected from the Riachuelo Formation of the Sergipe Basin in northeastern Brazil. The regular echinoids occur mainly in the lower Albian, whereas the irregular ones dominate the uppermost Albian, with the number of individuals exceeding that of the regular echinoids in the lower Albian. The regular echinoids were referred to two palaeoecological groups on the basis of their morphology: (a) those that appear to have lived in more protected environments, in shallow waters (2-10m) within the wave base, but not subjected to strong currents or wave surge and (b) those that lived in protected environment at water depths exceeding 10 m. The irregular echinoids were referred to five palaeoecological groups on the basis of their feeding strategy. The difference in number of regular and irregular species of echinoids in the lower Albian and the uppermost Albian respectively, suggests that changes in the environmental conditions directly affected the distribution of echinoids in the Albian.