

## Observations dans les zones peu accessibles de l'environnement bathyal (biologie et géologie) grâce à l'usage des soucoupes plongeantes



On the bathyal slope for continental margins, steep and rocky substrates punctuated with cliffs and collapsing zones are frequently found. As survey and sampling with the classical technics from the sea surface is practically impossible in such an environment, in situ exploration with a submersible allows significant advances in ecology, with implications in paleoenvironment reconstruction. Mixing of material from shallow-water and deep-sea origins into bathyal sedimentation suggests that the so-called "fossil assemblages of outer platform" were frequently misinterpreted. Dense populations of animals closely related to fossil groups which were only considered as relict of the Past ("living fossils") and previously interpreted as shallow-water inhabitants during geological times can be discovered living in such bathyal communities. The role of bathyal ecological niches during global bioevents brings a new vision of the history of life in the Ocean through geological time and has to be further investigated. Examples from cruises monitoring the diving saucer Cyana (SP 3000) in the Bay of Biscay and off New Caledonia are given.

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