

Interactive comment on “Uptake of phytodetritus by benthic foraminifera under oxygen depletion at the Indian Margin (Arabian Sea)” by A. J. Enge et al.

A. Gooday (Editor)

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Thank you for your detailed responses to the three Reviewers. I think you have done a good job of responding to the reviews. Of course, Reviewer 3, the most critical of the three, is right to point out the limitations of this study, which reflect the fact that you only analysed the top 1 cm of a single core. However, I'm encouraged by the fact that you analysed hundreds (in 2 cases 1,500) of specimens per species, and for some species the analyses were replicated, so the work on this one sample was very thorough. I agree with you that it is best to conduct these analyses at the species level.

Reviewer 2 questioned the very high abundances in your sample. Even higher den-

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sities (>16,000 per 10 cm²) were reported from the OMZ core on the Oman margin (Gooday et al., 2000). These were based on the 63 µm fraction, but the >125 µm fraction yielded well over 2,000 stained specimens per 10 cm².

One minor point - in your response to Reviewer #1 you say that 'metazoan organisms (polychaetes, nematodes) are important consumers of phytodetritus, reacting very quickly to its deposition...'. However, of the papers that you cite in support of this statement, only Hunter et al. (2012) analysed nematodes (and only large nematodes >250 µm) and they made a minor contribution to macrofaunal biomass and tracer uptake compared to polychaetes. I suggest that you delete 'nematodes' from your revised version.

I look forward to seeing the revised manuscript.

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