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Biogeosciences Discussions

Interactive comment on "Stratigraphy and paleoenvironments of the early to middle Holocene Chipalamawamba Beds (Malawi Basin, Africa)" *by* B. Van Bocxlaer et al.

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First of all, we thank the referee for his time, insightful comment and kind encouragement! Referee #4 had one comment. For clarity, we first state the comment and then reply to it.

> I feel that part 4.4. on the paleobiological relevance could

> be slightly expanded in looking in more detail into comparisons

> of modern faunas and lacustrine/fluviatile settings of the Holocene

> beds and modern analoga. Also the outlined potential of such

> analyses could profit from a couple of more sentences on that topic.

This comment is in full agreement with the comments of anonymous referee #3 and the section will be revised. The reasons why we refrain from a detailed comparison with the modern fauna at this stage is that there are some practical issues that would complicate this effort. First and foremost, there is quite a bit of morphological change in the early-middle Holocene fauna's compared to the modern fauna, and the names of the modern taxa cannot be extended to the fossil material in a straightforward fashion or without discussion. This and the fact that the fauna is quite diverse would necessitate elaborate discussion and illustration of the material. Without such discussion and illustrations the morphological similarities and differences would probably not be relevant to most readers. Some aspects can definitely be explored within the goals of the current paper, certainly related to mollusks that are of direct relevance to the stratigraphy and what the faunas may tell us about the depositional environment (which appears to be what the referee is hinting to). However, we feel that an exhaustive faunal comparison would detract the paper from its current goals (related to stratigraphy and depositional environments) and would therefore be beyond the current scope. Moreover, it would probably almost double the length of the manuscript and hence, we prefer to prepare a separate manuscript that will deal specifically with the fauna of the Chipalamawamba Beds later. We are still discussing about the possible inclusion of a table which lists the fauna per stratigraphic unit. This table would have to be composed on genus level, but may provide some additional insights. We will compile the table and base our decision whether to include it or not on the insights it provides.

We thank the referee for the useful remark!

Bert Van Bocxlaer (on behalf of all co-authors)

Interactive comment on Biogeosciences Discuss., 9, 5793, 2012.