**Ocean Science
Discussions**

Interactive comment on "Temporal and spatial distribution of the meiobenthic community in Daya Bay, South China Sea" *by* L. Tang et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

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This paper presents the results of a survey of the meiobenthos of a shallow marine area in South China. The study is solid but very traditional and does not offer new insights into meiofauna ecology or taxonomy other than that the areas has not been studied before. The results are a basic description of the taxonomic composition (based on higher taxonomic groups), abundance and biomass of the meiobenthos, which is analysed using traditional methods such as correlation analysis analysis and multivariate statistics. The results are a valuable first description of the meiobenthos in that area but are of only local importance as nothing unexpected has come out of the data.

On the whole the methodology used is state of the art and the language of the manuscript only requires a bit of editing. Some remarks are: - there is no information on species of any of the groups in the paper. The overall composition is very similar

to what has been found in many other areas of the world. - p. 1855. Because of their biological characteristics meiofaunal communities can be used ... to verify hypotheses about different ecosystems. What kind of hypotheses? - p. 1856. Gray O'Hara box corer. - p. 1858. What is the R in the formula of Margalef's index? - p. 1859. Estimates are given +- what? Standard deviation or standard error? Anyway, the standard error or deviation is rather large so it is not appropriate to represent the mean as if an accuracy of 0.01 has been obtain. Rather this should be written as 5.5 +- 0.2 m for water depth and 990 +- 450 (as an example) for density. - p. 1865. It would have improved the paper if some thought could have been given to the reasons why meiofaunal densities differ from those in Daya Bay. The final conclusion on p. 1868 that meiobenthos was influenced by trawling and red tides is nowhere supported by the data in the paper.

The figures are adequate but the results of these analyses are not sufficiently discussed in the paper, and only used for correlation analysis. As we all know, correlation is not causation.

The authors cited are L. Tang, H.X. Li and Y. Yan but in the text box to the right of each page the authors are referred to as T. Ling et al.

Interactive comment on Ocean Sci. Discuss., 9, 1853, 2012.