Accepted Manuscript

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PII: S0921-8181(17)30057-7

DOI: doi: 10.1016/j.gloplacha.2017.07.009

Reference: GLOBAL 2611

To appear in: Global and Planetary Change

Received date: 4 February 2017 Revised date: 11 July 2017 Accepted date: 12 July 2017



Please cite this article as: William J. Foster, Krisztina Sebe, Recovery and diversification of marine communities following the late Permian mass extinction event in the western Palaeotethys, *Global and Planetary Change* (2017), doi: 10.1016/j.gloplacha.2017.07.009

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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Recovery and diversification of marine communities following the

late Permian mass extinction event in the western Palaeotethys

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Abstract

The recovery of benthic invertebrates following the late Permian mass extinction event is often

described as occurring in the Middle Triassic associated with the return of Early Triassic Lazarus taxa,

increased body sizes, platform margin metazoan reefs, and increased tiering. Most quantitative

palaeoecological studies, however, are limited to the Early Triassic and the timing of the final phase of

recovery is rarely quantified. Here, quantitative abundance data of benthic invertebrates were collected

from the Middle Triassic (Anisian) succession of the Mecsek Mountains (Hungary), and analysed with

univariate and multivariate statistics to investigate the timing of recovery following the late Permian

mass extinction. These communities lived in a mixed siliciclastic-carbonate ramp setting on the western

margin of the Palaeotethys Ocean. The new data presented here is combined with the previously

studied Lower Triassic succession of the Aggtelek Karst (Hungary), which records deposition of

comparable facies and in the same region of the Palaeotethys Ocean. The Middle Triassic benthic fauna

can be characterised by three distinct ecological states. The first state is recorded in the Viganvár

Limestone Formation representing mollusc-dominated communities restricted to above wave base,

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