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Effects of environmental and water quality parameters on the functioning of copepod assemblages in tropical estuaries

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14 **Abstract**

15 We examined changes in the functioning of copepod assemblages with increasing
16 pollution in estuaries, using sampling standardization of the salinity range to enable
17 comparisons. Copepod assemblages were analyzed in four southeast Brazilian estuaries
18 with different water quality levels and hydrodynamic characteristics over two years. We
19 obtained mesozooplankton samples together with environmental and water quality
20 parameters in the estuaries, every two months under predetermined salinities ranging
21 from 15 to 25. The values of parameters, except species size, associated with the
22 functioning of the copepod assemblages (biomass, productivity, and turnover rate) did
23 not differ among estuaries. However, in the more polluted estuaries, the biomass and
24 productivity of copepod assemblages of mesozooplankton were negatively correlated
25 with concentration of pollution indicator parameters. Conversely, in the less polluted

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