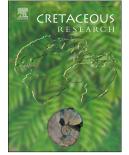
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Fish assemblage and palaeoenvironment of Early Cretaceous (Barremian) neapspring tidal rhythmites from Sidi Aïch Formation of the Chotts basin (Southern Tunisia)

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Fish assemblage and palaeoenvironment of Early Cretaceous (Barremian) neap-1 spring tidal rhythmites from Sidi Aïch Formation of the Chotts basin (Southern 2 Tunisia) 3 4 5 Walid Ben Ali^a, Lionel Cavin^{b,*}, Kamel Boukhalfa^{c,a}, Mohamed Ouaja^{d,a} and Mohamed 6 Soussia 7 8 9 ^a University of Tunis El Manar, Faculty of Sciences of Tunis, UR11ES15, 2092, Tunis, Tunisia 10 ^b Département de Géologie et Paléontologie, Muséum de Genève, CP 6434, 1211 Genève 6, Switzerland ^c University of Carthage, Faculty of Sciences of Bizerte, 7021, Jarzouna, Tunisia 11 12 ^d University of Gabes, Faculty of Sciences of Gabes, 6072, Gabes, Tunisia 13 14 *Corresponding author: 15 lionel.cavin@ville-ge.ch (L. Cavin) 16 17 18 **ABSTRACT** The Khanguet Aicha Barremian Biota site (KABBS) has yielded five actinopterygians taxa, 19 20 four of are shortly described in this paper. The fish assemblage comprises the ichthyodectiform Cladocyclus sp., indeterminate osteoglossiform, chanoidei and stem 21 22 otophysan, plus an ellimmichthyiform previously described. The fish assemblage recorded in the KABBS corresponds to a mixture of mostly freshwater taxa, the osteoglossiform, with 23 taxa that dwell in both marine and freshwater environments (*Cladocyclus* and the chanoidei) 24 and a marine fish (the stem otophysan). The association of the fish specimens with both 25 freshwater conchostracan and marine shrimp indicates that the paleoenvironment was 26 27 characterized by the influence of freshwater input. The fish assemblage contains a mixture of taxa that are found along the southern margin of the Tethys and along both margins of the 28 incipient South Atlantic Ocean. 29 Sedimentary facies of the Sidi Aïch Formation, which encompasses the KABBS include 30 channel intraformational clasts, cross-bedded sandstones with mud drapes, herringbone cross-31 bedding; and sigmoidal cross-bedding suggesting strong tidal influences. Tidal facies together 32 with paucity of bioturbation and mixed freshwater to marine fossils indicate that 33 sedimentation took place mainly in restricted tidal flats ponds. The clayey varved facies, 34 35 which dominates the KABBS corresponds to dark organic-rich and white organic-poor

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