Coral reefs community structure in Pemba, Northern Mozambique: 2012 vs 2016

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Abstract
The composition of the coral community in Pemba, Northern Mozambique, was assessed in 2012 and 2016. The composition and coral coverage was evaluated in two sites, Kaori and Wimbe, through the analysis of 20 meter transects of 40 underwater photographs each, arranged along the reef crest. The coral community changed during the study period, with decreasing coverage of the reef building coral and increase of macroalgae and soft coral. These findings suggest a potential long-term change to soft coral- or macroalgae-dominated reefs, in what seems to be the combination of climate change with anthropogenic forcing, mainly due to fishing and urban pressure. The continuous monitoring of these highly diverse coral reef habitats should allow developing scientifically based conservation and management plans.