

Phylogenetic position of the crocodylian *Megadontosuchus arduini* and tomistomine palaeobiogeography

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A cladistic analysis of *Megadontosuchus arduini* from the middle Eocene of Monte Duello (NE Italy) confirms its tomistomine relationships, but the low number of scorable characters determines a low resolution within the tomistomine clade.

However, *Megadontosuchus* is clearly distinct from the other Eocene European or North African tomistomines, in having a moderate elongated but robust rostrum, massive maxillary and dentary teeth and large supratemporal fenestrae. The rostrum and teeth characteristics could indicate that *M. arduini* had a degree of feeding specialization intermediate between *Maroccosuchus zennaroi* and the Eocene European tomistomines. A summary of tomistomine palaeobiogeography suggests that despite only one species with a rather restricted range survives at present, such a clade had a glorious past with a world wide distribution documented by a conspicuous fossil record that starts at least in the early Eocene. At present, a detailed knowledge of tomistomine palaeobiogeography is hindered by the lack of modern taxonomic revisions of some fossil remains and therefore by the poor understanding of phylogenetic relationships.

Key words: Crocodylidae, Tomistominae, *Tomistoma schlegelii*, palaeobiogeography, Eocene, Italy.

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