The use of airborne remote sensing for benthic cartography: advantages and reliability

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Abstract. Airborne remote sensing is a useful tool for the production of biocenosis maps. The use of an image processing system, integrating bathymetric data, makes it possible to considerably refine the charting, through a layer of water of variable thickness and quality. Other limiting factors may have an impact on the quality of results. The identification of these factors makes it possible to propose a scale of reliability. Four examples of aerial teledetection surveys provide the basis for (i) assessing the reliability of the maps, (ii) determining the reasons for this variation in reliability, and (iii) using the scale as a means for assessing the reliability of a given map. The factors used are such that the reliability scale could subsequently be applied to the cartography of other marine assemblages.