



Unravelling environmental conditions during the Holocene in the Dead Sea region using multiple archives

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For the most arid parts of the Southern Levant (roughly corresponding to modern Jordan, Israel and Palestine), environmental reconstructions are impeded by the limited number of archives, and the frequent contradictions between individual palaeoenvironmental records. The Southern Levant is characterised by steep climate gradients; local conditions presently range from arid to dry Mediterranean, with limits that may have fluctuated during the Holocene. This further complicates the determination of site-specific past environmental conditions. Understanding past climate and environmental evolution through time, at a local level, is however crucial to compare these with societal evolution during the Holocene, which features major cultural developments such as cereal cultivation, animal domestication, water management, as well as times of preferential settlement growth or site abandonment.

This contribution proposes to examine the different archives available for the Dead Sea region, paying special attention to the most recent pollen data obtained from the area. It will particularly critically compare local to regional-scale information, and try to decipher the main evolutions of environmental conditions during the Holocene in arid and semi-arid Southern Levant.