Apocalypse then? The Laacher See eruption (13ka BP) and its human impact along a proximal-to-distal transect

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Approximately 13,000 years BP, the Laacher See volcano, located in present-day western Germany (East Eifel volcanic field, Rhenish Shield) erupted cataclysmically. Airfall tephra covered Europe from the Alps to the Baltic. As part of an on-going project investigating the potential ecological and human impacts of this eruption, legacy data harvested from a variety of disciplinary sources (palynology, pedology, archaeology, geological grey literature) is now combined with recent geoarchaeological work, to provide new insights into the distribution of the Laacher See fallout and its impact on contemporaneous hunter-gatherer populations. This detailed reconstruction of human impact 13,000 years ago also forms the basis for reflection on modern strategies for coping with the emerging risks posed by extreme and compound events in the present and near future.