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Integrated approaches to locating Pleistocene archaeological and proxy sites in drylands

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Surveying at the landscape scale to find archaeological sites is a particular challenge in the dryland environments of Arabia, the Sahara and other similar hyper-arid regions. Here we present how novel high-resolution palaeohydrological mapping of the entirety of the Saharo-Arabian desert belt has not only revealed large numbers of palaeolakes, shorelines and past drainage courses, but also proved particularly fruitful for finding new palaeolithic sites, and lacustrine pleistocene proxy records in Arabia. We describe the integrated survey methodologies which have helped us to locate large numbers of new sites in Arabia, including the earliest fossil and footprints of our species in Arabia, thus helping to enhance our understanding of pleistocene climatic change in these deserts, and of Hominin dispersals into and through them.