

Perspective of Climate Change for Human Evolution and Later Human Impact on the Environment

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Ethiopia is one of the regions in the horn of Africa where the oldest and most important human fossils have been found. Paleoclimatic and pale environmental data can be obtained from both surface outcrops and core samples from lakes. The fact that climate and environmental changes were restless, cyclic and absence of datable materials make surface outcrops fragmentary and difficult to date. So far the longest and most continuous sedimentary sequence obtained in the country is from Lake Abhé, 70, 000 yrs. Gasse, 1977.

Seismic survey of Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile, reveals the presence of >40 m of sediment with the potential to provide paleoenvironmental information for up to 200,000 years. The information will provide a globally significant record of climate change as well as an environmental framework for the later part of human evolution and dispersal.

On the other hand, paleoclimatic and paleoenvironmental studies have been devoted to find long, continuous and high-resolution data. The work on Lake Ashange provides a 17 ky records of environmental change in the North western Ethiopian plateau. In this particular work human beings were intensifying the environmental change in the region at least in the last 3Kys BP.

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