

Biodiversity, the reason for the presence of hunter-gatherers in the Rhine-Meuse delta around 7000 BC

Laura I. Kooistra

With contributions by Jørn Zeiler, F. Verbruggen, L. Kubiak-Martens & D. Brinkhuizen

Abstract

Botanical and zoological remains have been studied from a river dune located 20 m underneath the present water surface of Yangtzehaven, Rotterdam, where traces of Mesolithic hunter-gatherers have been found. The resulting bioarchaeological data on macrobotanical remains, pollen, (micro)charcoal and bones have been put in an absolute time frame using ^{14}C -dates. Consequently the data have been interpreted within the palaeogeographical frame work as reconstructed by other researchers dealt with in this interdisciplinary study. As a result of the integrated research we have gained a good insight into the environment the Mesolithic people – who frequented this dune between 8200 and 6500 BC – lived in. It also shows an optimum in biodiversity and hunter-gatherer activities around 7000 BC.