

Neolithic tools provide clues for managing climate change

August 8 2012

Coping with climate change presents a number of challenges, but we may be able to get some hints from our ancestors.

A study of tools from an archaeological site outside Jerusalem provides new information about land use patterns at the times of extreme climate change that may have helped the population adapt to their changing environment. The full results are published Aug. 8 in the open access journal [PLOS ONE](#).

The authors of the study, led by Richard Yerkes of Ohio State University and Ran Barkai of Tel Aviv University, write that around 8,000 B.C., villagers added heavy-duty [axes](#) and began to clear forests for fields and grazing lands until these activities seem to have led to land degradation and a related transition to a colder, drier climate around 6,600 to 6,000 BC.

The samples from this site provide valuable information about how [early humans](#) interacted with their changing environment and were able to establish sustainable resource management systems.

More information: Yerkes RW, Khalaily H, Barkai R (2012) Form and Function of Early Neolithic Bifacial Stone Tools Reflects Changes in Land Use Practices during the Neolithization Process in the Levant. *PLOS ONE* 7(8): e42442. [doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0042442](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0042442)

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