



quaternary



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The Human Footprint on Islands - The Ecological Impact of Discovery and Colonization

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Message from the Guest Editors

The discovery and settlement of previously-uninhabited land masses caused dramatic changes to local ecosystems and biotas. These changes were particularly evident on islands, where human settlement usually marked the beginning of a period of habitat destruction and extinctions of flora and fauna. Although extinctions are perhaps the most widely known impact, they represent only part of the transformation that was set in motion after an island's settlement.

In this Special Issue, we will study baseline conditions and drivers of ecosystem change on islands prior to human arrival and examine the timing and mode of human settlement. We are interested in quantitative studies of island ecosystem changes following their initial discovery and settlement. Contributions from a wide range of Quaternary disciplines across different timescales are welcome. Examples include ecological baseline studies (e.g., effects of sea level changes during glacial and interglacial periods), resilience or vulnerability of island biotas to natural and anthropogenic climate change, studies on (pre-)historical human land use, and studies on current threats, such as habitat loss and biological invasion.

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Special Issue



Editor-in-Chief

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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

We live in a Quaternary world, that is, a world shaped by the interplay of the different compartments of the earth system—lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, biosphere, cryosphere—during the last ~2.6 million years. It is not possible to understand the current world—and, hence, to anticipate its possible future developments—without knowing the Quaternary history of drivers, processes, and mechanisms that have generated it. Our own species is an evolutionary outcome of the Quaternary performance. Therefore, the journal *Quaternary* is born with the aim of being an integrative journal to encompass all aspects of Quaternary science focused on understanding the complex world in which we live and to provide a sound scientific basis to anticipate possible future trends and inform environmental policies.

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