

PALEOCLIMATS DE L'ILE DE FUERTEVENTURA (ARCHIPEL CANARIEN)

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Abstract

Fuerteventura, the most arid island in the Canary archipelago, due to its location about 100km off the Saharan coast of Morocco, holds important Quaternary deposits indicating recent climatic change. Three levels with Hymenoptera nests and terrestrial mollusk shells were observed in the fixation of the dunes by vegetation: they are radiocarbon dated at 23.600 ± 550 BP, 15.000 ± 200 BP and 9.800 ± 140 BP. These ages correspond to the climatic chronology known for the Sahara (humid maxima at 24.000-22.000 BP, during the early Holocene and (which is logical considering the oceanic position of Fuerteventura) to the first phase of deglaciation, which occurred after the glacial maximum at c. 18.000 BP. This phase induced a decrease in aridity in the Saharan mountainous areas, even if not in its basins.

It would be interesting to observe the chronological differences in climatic sensitivity between the eastern and western Canary Islands.