Title: Archaeology of the lithic procurement areas in the African Stone Age.

Keywords: raw materials, surveying, excavation methods, landscape occupation

Evidences of past human activity are often aggregated in specific *loci* and field archaeology looks for their present-day recognition. Caves and shelters have been centers of attraction for prehistoric hunter-gatherers' settlement. In their absence, open-air archaeology looks for high-density resource patches such ancient lakes or riverbanks, becoming appealing areas and landscape milestones for archaeologists.

Lithic outcrops represent one of these open-air high-density resources' points attracting prehistoric communities and generating large areas of influence where the abundance and recurrence of human presence uses to be higher than in similar habitats without them. However, surveying, excavating and interpreting human behavior at these environments represent a serious challenge for archaeologists. Issues such as the absence of vertical distributions, the accumulation of materials from large and culturally diverse periods, the fragmentation of reduction sequences, difficulties in the application of any dating method, the quite often absence of remains other than lithics or the wide range of activities represented are common defies to face up.

Karstic environments are scarce or absent in vast regions of the African continent, and there, human activity appears horizontally dispersed through large regions. In this scenario, lithic outcrops, and their influence areas, offer a unique opportunity to study provisioning-related, tool-manufacturing or domestic occupations, providing the insights to understand long-term human adaption to specific environments.

In this session, we want to explore from different perspectives the archaeology of lithic raw material-rich areas during the Early, Middle and Latter Stone Age in Africa. Topics of interest are:

- Surveying and protocols of excavation of lithic outcrops and related human occupations.
- Novel methodological approaches to disentangle long-time averaged accumulations associated to lithic provisioning areas.
- Petrology, chemical characterization and mobilization of lithic resources in landscape
- Dynamics of human settlement within the lithic outcrops influence areas.
- Diachronic approaches to the long-term human adaptive behaviors in raw material-rich areas.