

**Creating in tropical forests:
toolkits and technical behaviours of prehistoric hunter-gatherers
between 23° North and 23° South.**

Only a few decades ago, it was vividly debated whether or not humans could have lived in the rainforest during Prehistory. Since then, there has been increasing evidence that our species and very possibly previous ones have not only settled down in tropical forests millennia ago, but also modified the environment by their actions. Moreover, not only humans modified the forest, the tropics also seem to have had an impact on human cultures.

In this session, we would like to address the following questions:

How did humans adapt to the tropics during Prehistory and what was the influence of these lush environments on human material culture and specifically on their toolkits? Are there similarities between Prehistories of the different tropical regions of the globe? Or did human groups respond in different ways to similar external conditions? What was the impact on lithic industries? How did these evolve locally? What was the importance of non-lithic technologies and the role of tools made of other available materials such as shells, bones, plants and others? What are the research practices in the different tropical regions and what are the current scientific approaches of tropical forest toolkits?

Although the tropics are largely associated in people's minds with the rainforest, this region between 23° N and 23° S encompasses a wide range of forests and vegetation formations. To complexify the picture further, climate variations modified the environment, rainforests contracting during glacial periods and expanding during interglacial periods. That is where local paleoenvironmental analyses play a crucial role in assessing correctly the situation.

In this session, we would like to encourage inter-regional dialogue and to bring together scholars working in different tropical regions of the world to deliver papers about case studies, regional syntheses or cross-regional comparisons.