ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Using Ancient Environmental Genomics to Improve Our Understanding of Early Agro-Ecosystems in southwest Asia (and beyond)

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Abstract

In 2024, the Danish Novo Nordisk Foundation and the United Kingdom's Leverhulme Trust made €78 million available to investigate the evolution of agro-ecosystems using ancient environmental DNA, with a view to creating more sustainable and resilient crops and agriculture for the future. The project, led by Professor Eske Willerslev, includes a work package that will investigate the development of agro-ecosystems in southwest Asia over the course of the past 20.000 years. In this talk we present the goals and ambitions of the Ancient Environmental Genomics Initiative for Sustainability (AEGIS) and outline our research strategy for the work package focusing on southwest Asia. Our goal is to generate interest in AEGIS and to discuss with colleagues the possibilities of using ancient environmental DNA to address key questions in the archaeology of southwest Asia.

Keywords

archaeogenetics, prehistory, neolithic, agriculture, archaeological science

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