

Wintersemester 2010/2011

Gebäude GEO I
Hörsaal H6

BayCEER Kolloquium

Vortragsreihe Ökologie und Umweltforschung

Freitag 11.02.2011, 10:15 Uhr, H16, NW II

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A reconstruction of Palaeo- Macaronesia, with particular reference to the long term biogeography of the Atlantic island laurel forests

Macaronesia is a region comprising the Atlantic Oceanic islands of the Azores, Madeira, Salvages, Canaries and Cape Verde, and with affinities to the tip of the Iberian Peninsula and the north-western fringes of Africa. This contribution re-evaluates the biogeographical history and relationships of Macaronesia, in the light of geological evidence suggesting that large and high islands may have been continuously available in the region - possibly for as long as 60 million years. A sequential reconstruction of Palaeo-Macaronesia from 60 Ma to the present-day will be presented, commenting on the implications of these geological dynamics for our understanding of the history of colonization of the present islands of Macaronesia, and of the role of these archipelagos as stepping stones, and as both repositories of palaeoendemic forms and crucibles of neo-endemic radiations of plant and animal groups. The principal focus is on the laurel forest communities, long considered impoverished relicts of the palaeotropical Tethyan flora. This history is therefore contextualised by reference to the long-term climatic and biogeographic history of Southern Europe and North Africa and of the implications of changes in land-sea configuration, climate and ocean circulation for Macaronesian biogeography.

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