

Sommersemester 2011

BayCEER Kolloquium

Vortragsreihe Ökologie und Umweltforschung

Donnerstag 05.05.2011, 15:15 Uhr, H8

Sondertermin

Dr. George Perry

School of Environment & School of Biological Sciences, University of
Auckland, New Zealand

Stopping the Clock? Dynamics and Legacies of New Zealand's Initial Burning Period

New Zealand (NZ) was the last major landmass settled by humans. Although the exact date of settlement remains contentious, the ecological signal shows a dramatic loss of forest, accompanied by rapid faunal collapse, c. 1300 AD. While these changes are well-documented, how they occurred is less clear. Most of NZ's forest was wet and likely difficult to burn; long-term conversion of wet forest to scrub is thought to have required repeated, frequent burning. However, significant forest loss occurred even in remote areas, such as the southern central South Island, where evidence for sedentary human settlements is limited. The pattern and scope of these changes, coupled with low-density transient populations, begs the question: 'how could early Maori so rapidly transform the landscape over such large areas?' Using a combination of methodological approaches - simulation modelling, data-mining methods and field-based studies - I will explore this question, one that is central to understanding the rapid ecological changes that NZ and other islands in east Polynesia experienced following human contact. I will conclude by looking at the legacies that the introduction and use of fire by Maori and Europeans has left on NZ's (formerly) forest landscapes.

Die Vortragsreihe
ist eine
interdisziplinäre
Plattform zur
Information und
Diskussion für
Studierende,
Forschende und
Lehrende

Gäste
sind herzlich
willkommen