

Human Interactions with the Geosphere:  
The Geoarchaeological Perspective

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More information about submitting a proposal and producing a book for the Society can be found on its web site: [www.geolsoc.org.uk](http://www.geolsoc.org.uk).

It is recommended that reference to all or part of this book should be made in one of the following ways:

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# Human Interactions with the Geosphere: The Geoarchaeological Perspective

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## Preface

Human impact on our environment, resulting in climate change, deforestation, desertification, soil erosion and other effects, is not a new phenomenon. For millennia, humans have been coping with, or provoking, environmental change. We have exploited, extracted, over-used but also in many cases nurtured the resources that the geosphere offers. Geoarchaeologists study the traces of human interactions with the geosphere dating back to ancient times, as well as up to and in the present. Geoarchaeological investigations provide the key to recognizing landscape and environmental change, and human impacts as a result of such things as subsistence and resource exploitation activities, settlement location, and local and regional land-use patterns. This approach also allows us to determine the effects of environmental change on human societies.

This volume is a collection of papers from around the world, including both case studies and broader reviews of regions or of geoarchaeology as a whole, covering the time period since before modern human beings came into existence up to the present day. The papers look at how human land use has affected the environment, and how

environmental characteristics have affected human land use, as well as how geoarchaeology itself can help us elucidate these interactions. To understand ourselves, we need to understand that our world is constantly changing, and that change is dynamic and complex. Geoarchaeology provides an inclusive and long-term view of human–geosphere interactions, and serves as a valuable aid to those who try to determine sustainable policies for the future.

This book has greatly benefited from the hard work of many people, including the ever-helpful staff at the Geological Society of London Publishing House. The editor wishes particularly to thank all of the contributors for giving us their ‘good’ stuff, and the multitude of peer reviewers, a very diverse group of people, who uniformly provided thoughtful, careful, and very detailed reviews of the papers.

The early stages of preparation of this book benefited greatly from the hard work and careful eye of Pamela J. Dickinson, who acted as Volume Editor for five papers. Pam had to withdraw from the project owing to time constraints and other commitments, but her contribution is greatly appreciated, and her collaboration always makes projects more enjoyable. Thanks, Pam.