



NECLIME annual conference

September 18- 26, 2022

Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi, Georgia

1st circular

Dear friends and colleagues of NECLIME,

It is our pleasure to invite you to the 2022 Annual NECLIME Conference that is planned to be held at the Georgian National Museum in Tbilisi, Georgia, **September 18- 26, 2022** organized by Eliso Kvavadze and Maia Bukhsianidze in cooperation with Angela Bruch.

We hope to organize this conference and excursions as the first in-person event since 2019 and look very much forward to meeting all of you again. Especially going to the field together and visiting the forests of Greater Caucasus may be a very attractive prospect after two years of mainly working from home.

However, we are aware of unforeseen developments and possible travel restrictions. We will keep maximum flexibility in organizing this event. Please consider registration even if you are not yet sure now about your travel options.

The main scientific topics suggested for discussion in Tbilisi focus on

History of biodiversity

Studying the evolutionary history of biodiversity is important to understand the complexity of life and its future under current global climate change. Palaeobotanical studies profoundly contribute to the understanding of trends in plant species richness in the geological past. Moreover, palaeoenvironmental reconstructions provide crucial evidence for correlations between the diversification of biota and changes in climate and palaeogeography.

As one of the few extratropical global biodiversity hotspots on Earth, the Caucasus represents an important key area exemplifying the evolution of biodiversity and changes in biogeographic patterns and was an important refuge area for “Tertiary” relics throughout the late Neogene and Pleistocene cooling. Comparisons with other Eurasian biodiversity hotspots such as the Yunnan hotspot will shed light on the underlying drivers of the evolution of biodiversity.

Potential issues to be discussed in this frame are



- Quantification of biodiversity
- Evolution – speciation, extinctions, extirpations
- Dispersal – routes and barriers
- Biodiversity and early human environments

Patterns of climate and vegetation in time and space

Understanding past climate dynamics and ecosystem evolution is still key to gather detailed knowledge and data as a sound basis for assessing the impact of and potentially mitigating future climate change. In this context, multi-proxy analyses are crucial for sound reconstructions. In addition to data from pollen and macrofloras, the potential of NPPs, phytoliths, small mammals, amphibian and reptiles, or geochemical data as paleoenvironmental proxies may also be further explored in this session.

As at each Annual NECLIME meeting, contributions on other topics related to NECLIME are warmly welcome.

Registration

Please register by email **before April 30th** to Angela Bruch angela.bruch@senckenberg.de

with your full name, affiliation, and email address.

Please indicate

1. if you wish to give a presentation (oral or poster), and if yes please provide a preliminary title.
2. if you are interested in attending one or both excursions.

Abstracts will be due July 15st the latest, but feel free to submit earlier :-)

Conference fees

Conference fee will be **100 Euro** including icebreaker, coffee breaks and conference dinner, but without excursions.

The costs for the excursions will be calculated depending on the number of participants. Registered participants will be informed in May about the calculated costs and may then decide accordingly.



Preliminary schedule

Sept 18, Sunday – arrival (most flights arrive early morning)

Afternoon: registration and icebreaker at the Georgian National Museum

Sept 19, Monday – scientific sessions at the Georgian National Museum

Focus: History of biodiversity

Sept 20, Tuesday – scientific sessions at the Georgian National Museum

Focus: Patterns of climate and vegetation in time and space

Evening: conference dinner

Sept 21, Wednesday – General discussion: the future of NECLIME (half day)

Afternoon: free sightseeing or city tour Tbilisi

Proposed (optional) excursions

1-day excursion – Sept 22, Thursday –to **Algeti National Reserve** (Transcaucasian oak forest) and to the early **human fossil site Dmanisi** (the oldest (1.8 Ma) human fossils found outside Africa)

4-day excursion – Sept 23, Friday to 26, Monday – to eastern Georgia, Tbilisi – Telavi – Lagodekhi – Tbilisi

Day 1 – Tbilisi - Gombori Pass - Babaneuri (stay overnight in the region), **Babaneuri Nature Reserve** with *East Caucasian submontane to montane hornbeam-maple-Oriental beech forests* (with *Zelkova carpinifolia*).

Day 2 – Babaneuri -Lagodekhi (stay overnight in Lagodekhi), with historical sites on the way and visit of a winery

Day 3 –visit of **Lagodekhi National Park** with hiking option (stay overnight in Lagodekhi), altitudinal vegetation succession with *Caucasian Oriental beech forests* (with *Pterocarya fraxinifolia*)

Day 4 – return to Tbilisi (arrival in Tbilisi in the evening)

(departure Tuesday, Sept. 27 - most flights leave from Tbilisi early morning)