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# MIS 13-11 in northern Europe: a purely maritime zone expansion?

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## Résumé

MIS 13-11 (*c.* 533-374kya) sees a significant change in the scale and extent of the Lower Palaeolithic occupation of Europe, and is a hinge point in the various short chronology models (Roebroeks & van Kolfschoten 1994, 1996). The MIS 13-11 ‘northern expansion’ is often characterised as essentially a north-west European expansion – and it is clearly reflected in the site-specific and river terrace archive records of Britain and northern France (e.g. the British Hoxnian sites and the artefact rich-terraces of the Thames and Somme rivers). But what are the behavioural requirements and implications of this essentially maritime-climate distribution? This paper explores those implications with reference to the palaeoenvironmental demands upon, and survival needs of, Lower Palaeolithic hominins in north-western as opposed to north-central and north-eastern Europe (e.g. reduced seasonality in the maritime zone; enhanced coastal habitats and resources). This palaeoenvironmental context is then considered against those behaviours for which we do (e.g. lithic tool-kits encompassing bifaces and retouched flake tools; occasional pyrotechnology and organic tools) and do not have evidence (e.g. artificial shelters). On the basis of these considerations, the paper explores whether the apparent paucity of MIS 13-11 occupation in north-central and north-eastern Europe is a genuine Lower Palaeolithic pattern, or might be a consequence of other factors (e.g. taphonomic visibility of sites/artefacts; research histories).

**Mots-Clés:** MIS 13, 11, Lower Palaeolithic, northern Europe, short chronology, behaviour, palaeoenvironment

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