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# Puntone (Tuscany). A Late Bronze - Iron Age specialized production along the northern Etruria coast

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## Abstract

This paper presents the preliminary results of multidisciplinary research at the Late Bronze and Iron Age site of Puntone (Scarlino, GR) in southern Tuscany (Italy). The site was first identified in the 1990s, and is now investigated in the framework of a PhD research program at the Groningen Institute of Archaeology (GIA), in collaboration with Archaeological Department of the University of Naples and the support of the Superintendence of Tuscany (SABAP-Si).

Our study contributes to the understanding of protohistoric sites on the Italian Tyrrhenian coast that were specialised in the exploitation of marine resources. At Puntone, we think we have found the remains of salt-related production not unlike 'briquetage', where salt was extracted from seawater by evaporation and heating in large vessels. The lack of domestic evidence and the presence of productive features such as holes and basins, combustion structures and a huge accumulation of coarse reddish handmade potsherds, indicate that the Puntone site was a specialized production workshop.

An interdisciplinary approach of stratigraphic excavation, geophysical studies and chemical and ecological analysis is applied to unravel the spatial structure, chaîne opératoire, and formation processes of the site, as well as its impact on the environment. A detailed, diachronic study of the potsherds as standardized mass products provides new insights in the scale and development of this industry. These aspects shed new light on a most likely seasonal human activity along the northern Etruria coast and its role in the economic base of emerging proto-urban centers.

**Keywords:** Coastal site, marine resources, briquetage, Etruria

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