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Late Pleistocene environmental changes in the Vienna Basin – a place where to different cold-climate aeolian worlds met

Abstract: The Vienna Basin forms the northwesternmost part of the Carpathian Basin, where aeolian sand deposits cover about 1300 km², exceeding 10% of the basin's area. The northern sector functioned as a convergence zone of at least two atmospheric circulation patterns. While the dominant westerly winds in most of the basin have remained stable since at least the Last Glacial Maximum, some dunes were formed by northerly katabatic winds descending from the Scandinavian Ice Sheet. These winds disappeared after the ice sheet retreated northward, likely during the Oldest Dryas. OSL dating from the two largest dune fields indicates episodic aeolian activity between 26 ± 2 ka and 13 ± 2 ka, with a peak during the Oldest Dryas (16.5–14.7 ka), consistent with patterns observed across the Carpathian Basin.

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