PRELIMINAR DATA OF REPTILES AND AMPHIBINAS FROM EL SALT Xb (MIDDLE PALAEOLITHIC, ALCOY, SPAIN): PALAEOCLIMATIC IMPLICATIONS

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The locality of El Salt (Middle Palaeolithic, Alcoy, Spain) is mainly known by having one of the youngest Neanderthal records of the Southeastern Iberian Peninsula. The upper part of stratigraphic unit Xb, dated at 52.3 ± 4.6 ka (MIS 3), is characterized by the presence of several archaeological assemblages, comprising vertebrate faunal remains, lithics elements and anthropogenically modified cobbles. The firled campign of 2013 in unit Xb. Have yielded for the first time in this locality a small sample of amphibian and reptile remains. The faunal list for unit Xb is composed by: three taxa of anurans (*Alytes obstetricans*; *Bufo bufo* sensu lato and *Epidalea calamita*), one taxon of blanid (*Blanus cinereus* sensu lato), two taxa of lizards (*Chalcides bedriagai* and cf. *Acanthodactylus erythrurus*) and one taxon of snakes (cf. *Rhinechis scalaris*). In order to reconstruct the climate at the moment of formation of the unit, we studied the current distribution of the reptiles and amphibians species described by using Mutual Ecogeographic Range (MER) methodology.

Preliminary results obtained suggest a mean annual temperature of 14.5±2.4 ºC and a mean annual precipitation of 665.2 ± 219.6 mm. These results show a slightly warmer and wetter climate than those recorded in Alcoy nowadays. The surrounding area of El Salt would be dominated by bushland and forest, alternating with open areas.