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**THE ENVIRONMENTAL
BACKGROUND TO HOMINID
EVOLUTION IN AFRICA**

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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MODERN EVOLUTION OF MEDITERRANEAN FLOOD PLAINS (FRANCE)

A series of corings has been begun in the flood plain of some tributaries of the Rhône (Rhône?) river, in the Mediterranean part of France. The aim of these works is to give proof of the present day activity of the flood plains that are generally cultivated and have been very frequently urbanised during the second part of the XXth century. Up to now, three cores have been made: one in the flood plain of the Gardon d'Anduze and two in the Ouvèze river. Sedimentological analyses performed on the Gardon d'Anduze samples allow to reconstitute the recent accumulation phases that are more characteristic of a middle bed than of a major bed. The upper sequence is made of coarse sands. Using several natural and artificial isotopes, in particular ^7Be , ^{134}Cs and ^{137}Cs (some due to Chernobyl event, 1986), it has been dated. The deposits of the 1958 flood have thus been recognised: accumulated by the XXth century more important flood, they are about 30 cm thick. Unfortunately ^{210}Pb does not give reliable results because of the discontinuity of sedimentation. So, it was impossible to date older flood deposits. In the Ouvèze flood plain, research should allow us to recognise the deposits of the big 1992 flood. Another series of corings is planned in the flood plain of non mediterranean rivers such as the Meuse river to test our preliminary results and to refine the method.
