Neolithic and Bronze Age Human Impact and Landscape Development in the Seebachtal, Thurgau, Switzerland

HILLBRAND, Martina, Institute of Botany, University of Innsbruck, Austria
VAN GEEL, Bas, Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands
HASENFRATZ, Albin, Amt für Archäologie, Thurgau, Switzerland
HADORN, Philippe, Switzerland
HAAS, Jean Nicolas, Institute of Botany, University of Innsbruck, Austria

Introduction
The Seebachtal Valley (Figs. 1 & 2) is located southwest of Lake Constance which is bordered by Switzerland, Germany and Austria, in a region settled by prehistoric people since the Neolithic period. Archaeological research has revealed three major lake-shore and pile-dwelling villages in the Nussbaumersee (Neolithic 3840–3700 BC (Pfyner Period, Fig. 3), early Bronze Age 1580 – 1538 BC, and late Bronze Age 850 – 800 BC).

Methods and Results
A sediment core from the deepest point of Lake Nussbaumersee was taken and analysed for pollen, non-pollen palynomorphs, and macro remains (Fig. 4). The results (Figs. 5 & 6) suggest that human settlement activity is underrepresented by the archaeological findings.

Points for Discussion:
• Why does the presumably small Neolithic village have such a big impact on the environment and bigger settlements do not?
• What caused the abandonment of the Pfyner Age settlement?
• What is the cause of the apparently big environmental changes around 1000 BC?