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SEMINAR SERIES ENVIRONMENT & BIODIVERSITY

# Guest Lecture

**Prof. Simon Haberle**

The Australian National University, Canberra  
Professor of Natural History & Palaeoecology  
Director, Canberra Pollen Monitoring Program

Host: Univ.-Prof. Andreas Lang



## Palaeoecological Insights into the Causes and Consequences of Mid-Late Quaternary Megafauna Extinction in Asia and Australia

Mid-Late Quaternary megafauna extinctions have long intrigued researchers seeking to understand the causes and consequences of these significant ecological events. What role did fluctuations in climate, shifts in vegetation composition, alterations in habitat distribution, and the impact of human settlement play in megafauna extinction? One way to help us better understand the role of environmental change in the extinction process is to use palaeoecological techniques (pollen, spore and charcoal analysis) combined with well resolved geochronological estimates to reconstruct palaeoenvironmental conditions that occur before, during, and after past megafauna extinctions. Here I present two palaeoecological case studies that provide insights into megafauna extinction in Asia and Australia: (i) the largest ever primate and one of the largest of the southeast Asian megafauna, *Gigantopithecus blacki*, that persisted in China from about 2.0 million years until the late middle Pleistocene when it became extinct, well before the appearance of *Homo sapiens* on the landscape, and (ii) the multiple extinctions of megafauna that occurred across Australia around 50,000-40,000 years ago that coincide with a time when people were present across the Australian landscape. This presentation underscores the importance of interdisciplinary approaches integrating palaeoecological, geochronological, archaeological, and climatological perspectives to unravel the complexities of past megafauna extinctions and inform strategies for mitigating future biodiversity crises.



**Friday, March 15, 14 PM**

**NLW-Faculty, Room 434, 3rd floor**

for more information **SCAN ME** 