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PRESS RELEASE for: *Anthropological Contributions to Historical Ecology: 50 Questions, Infinite Prospects*. For Publication in *PLOS ONE*, 02/17/2017

Archaeologists define their role in Climate Change Research

A large international network of archaeologists announced how the past will be key to understanding the future of climate change.

The overuse of resources and climate instability are not just modern day problems, “worldwide and through time, humans have adapted to environmental stresses and large climatic shifts”, says first author Chelsey Geralda Armstrong, a PhD candidate at Simon Fraser University.

“When we think of large-scale human land use we have a habit of assuming that the impacts are always negative”, says Armstrong, “But our network of archaeologists and Indigenous collaborators have unearthed how ancient people have adapted to instability by managing their environments to, increase biodiversity, for example.”

“Humans can have very positive impacts with their environment – this means ecologically “healthy” relationships. We have seen this throughout the archaeological record.” Says Anna Shoemaker, second author from Uppsala University in Sweden. This novel research by archaeologists and their natural science colleagues is called historical ecology. The research published Friday in open access journal *PLOS ONE* brings a novel approach to academic research. “Rather than defining what historical ecology is, we crowd-sourced hundreds of questions from scholars around the world, and asked *how can archaeology contribute to an ecologically sustainable future*”.

The answer is in Armstrong’s paper and lists 50 novel questions that archaeologists and colleagues will seek to answer in coming years – “climate change is not just an ecological problem – it’s a social one. Using both natural and social sciences is an obvious and intuitive way forward.”