



Lake Van Drilling Project, Turkey – a new ICDP initiative

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Lake Van in Turkey is an excellent paleoclimate archive comprising long high resolution annually laminated sediment records. The lake is situated on the high plateau of eastern Anatolia and has a surface area of 3,522 km². Its maximum depth is 451 m and its length is 130 km. It is the fourth largest of all terminal lakes in the world and contains highly alkaline waters.

Following the successful completion of a pre-site survey in 2004 that included a seismic reflection and coring campaign, we present results of the multidisciplinary scientific work on short cores (5m – 10m sediment depth) including magnetic susceptibility, physical properties, stable isotopes, pollen and spores, and absolute datings. Both the seismic and coring data show that Lake Van is a most interesting object for large lake drilling within ICDP. Therefore, the research initiative PALEOVAN announces an international workshop to be held in Van, Turkey, on June 6 - 9, 2006 under the auspices of the ICDP.

Specific goals of the PALEOVAN project are to reconstruct: (1) Palaeoclimate development in a sensitive semiarid region based on proxy data and modeling; (2) dynamics of lake level fluctuations and hydrogeological development; (3) formation and age of Lake Van; (4) history of volcanism and volcanic activity based on tephrostratigraphy; (5) variations of the earthmagnetic field; (6) tectonic, palaeoseismic and earthquake activity; (7) interaction between man and environment since prehistoric time.