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Devonian-Carboniferous plants from Australia: research questions and recent fieldwork.

presented by

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ABSTRACT

The Devonian to early Carboniferous (420-340 million years ago) is a key time in plant evolution, with the gradual colonization of continental surfaces and the apparition of numerous biological novelties (1st leaves, 1st deep root systems, 1st trees, etc.). It marks the establishment of modern terrestrial ecosystems and sees the diversification of all the major groups of vascular plants. Our understanding of plant evolution during this crucial time frame is however mostly based on data from Europe and North America. In contrast, the floras of today's southern continents, which were grouped at that time in the supercontinent Gondwana, are still poorly known.

In the context of a project funded by Labex CEMEB*, we recently conducted fieldwork in New South Wales, Australia to collect new fossils from that region. We will first present (1) the general context of the project and the main discoveries from previous work on Australian fossil plants, and (2) this year's fieldwork and the future directions.

* MARCON-Biotic responses of faunas and floras to abiotic changes in deep time, 2018-2019, PI: C. Girard, ISEM.

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