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Reconstructing past climate from Loess-Palaeosol Sequences: Challenges of calibration functions

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Loess-Palaeosol-Sequences (LPS) are widespread geoarchives connecting climate subsystems across continents. They can record paleo-environmental changes and terrestrial system responses to external forcing. Yet, our knowledge of terrestrial palaeo-climates remains incomplete, challenging the reconstruction of terrestrial environments.

To overcome this, multiple climofunctions have been suggested for qualitative and quantitative reconstruction of precipitation, temperature and aridity from LPS, and all have their theoretical concepts, special applications and come with specific limitations and challenges. Here we provide an overview of frequently applied climofunctions. In a second step, we test several rock magnetic methods for their applicability in paleosols and provide a dataset from Europe. Our results show that especially rock magnetic properties prove useful even considering small climate gradients (10s of mm/a in precipitation, less than 1°C temperature), but their general applicability seems not possible.

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