Your Name

Instructor Name

Course Number

Date

Title: When the Sea Saved Humanity

A population bottleneck is described as an event that drastically reduces the population size. The bottleneck can be caused by different events, such as, habitat destruction that leads to the death of organisms, environmental disaster, and species hunting to the point of extinction. Around 195,000 years ago, climate conditions began to deteriorate. Before that, food was plentiful and the climate was mild. After that, our planet entered into a long glacial stage that is known as Marine Isotope Stage 6 and it lasted for 70,000 years. In interior Africa, this triggered severe drought conditions that resulted in most of the continent becoming uninhabitable. The genetic studies of modern human DNA have revealed that at some point during this period, the population of humans decreased from more than 10,000 breeding individuals to 600. At that time, Homo sapiens became an endangered species and were almost extinct. The population bottleneck means that all human beings that are alive today, are descended from this small group of survivors. When this climate disaster struck ancestors in the interior Africa, a small population of humans resettled to the coasts of Africa. The stability of the climate, along with greater access to marine food may have saved these small groups of human survivors. The new way of life has been triggered by the relative ease of life on the coasts. Along the southern coast of Africa, a small proportion of people utilized a unique combination of resources and this saved humanity from extinction. During glacial stage 6, the geophytes low fiber energy carbs, along with a unique combination of calorically dense and nutrient-rich protein from shellfish, have provided the ideal diet for survival. The readily available geophytes and shellfish provided a high-quality diet which made people less nomadic, reduced child mortality and increased birth rates as well.