**Captions and copyrights for press package:**

**Neandertal and Denisovan DNA from Pleistocene sediments**

1 – View of the valley from the Caune de l'Arago archaeological site, France. (Credit/Quelle: Christian Perrenoud)

2 - Svante Pääbo showing the location of a sediment sample collected at the site of Caune de l’Arago, France, from a layer dated to 450,000 years ago. (Credit/Quelle: Christian Perrenoud)

3 - Svante Pääbo showing the location of a sediment sample collected at the site of Caune de l’Arago, France, from a layer where a 560,000-year-old human tooth was discovered in 2015. (Credit/Quelle: Christian Perrenoud)

4 – View of the valley from the Chagyrskaya Cave archaeological site, Russia. (Credit/Quelle: Richard G. Roberts)

5 – Entrance to the archaeological site of Chagyrskaya Cave, Russia. (Credit/Quelle: Richard G. Roberts)

6 – Stratigraphic profile of Chagyrskaya Cave, Russia, from which sediment samples were collected for genetic analyses. (Credit/Quelle: Richard G. Roberts)

7 - View of the archaeological site of Trou Al’Wesse, Belgium. (Credit/Quelle: Monika V. Knul)

8 - Stratigraphic profile of Trou Al‘Wesse, Belgium, from which sediment samples were collected for genetic analyses. (Credit/Quelle: Monika V. Knul)

9 - Becky Miller sampling sediment for genetic analyses at the archaeological site of Trou Al’Wesse, Belgium. (Credit/Quelle: Monika V. Knul)

10 – The archaeological site of Les Cottés, France. (Credit/Quelle: M. Soressi/S. Schatz)

11 – Marie Soressi sampling sediment for genetic analyses at the archaeological site of Les Cottés, France. (Credit/Quelle: Matthew Wilson)

12 - Paul Kozowyk, a PhD student working under the supervision of Marie Soressi, collecting sediment for genetic analyses at the archaeological site of Les Cottés, France. (Credit/Quelle: Marie Soressi)

13 - View of the valley from above the Denisova Cave archaeological site, Russia. (Credit/Quelle: Bence Viola, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology)

14 - Stratigraphic profile of the East Chamber in Denisova Cave, Russia, from which sediment samples were collected for genetic analyses. (Credit/Quelle: IAET SB RAS / Sergei Zelensky)

15 - Richard (Bert) Roberts, Vladimir Ulianov and Maxim Kozlikin (clockwise from top) planning the sampling of sediments in the East Chamber of Denisova Cave, Russia. (Credit/Quelle: IAET SB RAS / Sergei Zelensky)

16 – The Galería del Osario (“tunnel of bones”) at the archaeological site of El Sidrón, Spain. Neandertal DNA was retrieved from sediment collected from a layer rich in Neandertal skeletal remains. (Credit/Quelle: J. Fortea)

17 – Excavations at the site of El Sidrón, Spain. (Credit/Quelle: El Sidrón research team)

18 - Excavations at the archaeological site of El Sidrón, Spain, are carried out using a „DNA clean” protocol to avoid contaminating the samples. (Credit/Quelle: Group of Paleoanthropology MNCN-CSIC)

19 - Entrance to the archaeological site of Vindija Cave, Croatia. (Credit/Quelle: Johannes Krause, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology)

20 - The clean laboratory dedicated to ancient DNA work at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. (Credit/Quelle: Frank Vinken).

21 – Matthias Meyer at work in the clean laboratory at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. (Credit/Quelle: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology)

22 – Viviane Slon preparing a sediment sample for DNA extraction. (Credit/Quelle: Sylvio Tüpke, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology)

23 - Viviane Slon preparing a sediment sample for DNA extraction. (Credit/Quelle: Sylvio Tüpke, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology)

24 – The automation of laboratory procedures to generate DNA libraries and isolate DNA by hybridization capture enabled the processing of multiple sediment samples in parallel. (Credit/Quelle: Sylvio Tüpke, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology)