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The position of the Pontian relative to Mediterranean Stages

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Accurate datings of the lower and upper limits of the Pontian stage are of crucial importance for palaeogeographical and palaeoenvironmental reconstructions pertaining to the latest Miocene to Early Pliocene High Resolution Interval 1 (~ 7 - 4 Ma) of the EEDEN Programme. New magnetostratigraphic as well as calcareous nannoplankton data inferred from the upper Maeotian to Dacian records of the Dacic Basin in Romania allow high-resolution correlations with Tortonian, Messinian and Lower Pliocene successions of the Mediterranean. The results demonstrate that the Maeotian – Pontian boundary should be placed at ~ 6.15 Myr, while the Pontian – Dacian boundary has an age of about 5.30 Myr (SNEL et al. in prep.). The occurrences of interbeds with marine calcareous nannoplankton assemblages in upper Maeotian and Pontian deposits of the Eastern Paratethys reflect ephemeral marine incursions from the Mediterranean, probably through the Northern Aegean Corridor.

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