



BULLETIN FOR EASTERN AFRICA



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www.geologicalsocietyofafrica.org

Issue 02-May-June 2009

This is the Second Info Bulletin for the Eastern Africa Region highlighting some of the major activities in the region during the months of May and June 2009.

I. GSAf ISSUES

The President of GSAf, Prof. Aberra Mogessie and the VP for Eastern Africa, Dr. Asfawossen Asrat held fruitful consultative meetings with the Director of the Geological Survey of Ethiopia (GSE), Ato Tolossa Shagi and the Chairman of the Department of Earth Sciences of Addis Ababa University, Dr. Balemwal Atnafu, on issues pertinent to the GSAf, on June 16, 2009. During the discussion, both officials emphasized the following:

1. Both Institutions are very supportive of the objectives of the GSAf and will be actively involved in the promotion of the missions of the Society;
2. Both Institutions will work together with the VP for Eastern Africa in order to mobilize their employees so that they can be active members of the GSAf;
3. The Department of Earth Sciences of the Addis Ababa University will be honoured, if given the chance, to host the GSAf and to register it officially in Ethiopia. The Geological Survey of Ethiopia strongly supports the registration of the GSAf in Ethiopia and will work actively towards this effect, if the Council of the GSAf approves this bid;
4. Both Institutions will strongly support and actively work to jointly host the Colloquium of African Geology in Ethiopia in 2012. To this effect, they will support the VP of Eastern Africa towards preparation of the bid. They both emphasized the fact that Ethiopia, though a country at

the forefront of the establishment of the GSAf, has yet to host its colloquium.

II. NEWS, EVENTS

1. EASTERN AFRICA REGION

SECOND EAQUA WORKSHOP, 21-24 MAY, 2009



The second workshop of the Eastern African Quaternary Research Association (EAQUA) was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 21-22 May 2009 followed by a post-workshop field trip to the Main Ethiopian Rift on 23-24 May. The Workshop was organized by the Department of Earth Sciences (by Dr. Asfawossen Asrat and Dr. Mohammed Umer), Addis Ababa University in collaboration with EAQUA; and was sponsored by Past Global Changes (PAGES), global change SysTEM for Analysis, Research and Training (START), International Union for Quaternary Research (INQUA), Palaeontological Scientific Trust (PAST), British Institute in East Africa (BIEA), Revealing Hominid Origins Initiative (RHOI), and local institutions (Addis Ababa University, the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages, and the Ministry of Science and Technology). The primary objectives of the workshop, whose theme was “**The East African Quaternary: Lessons from the Past for the Future**”, were to strengthen and enhance active communication on Quaternary research issues in the Eastern African Region; and to serve as a forum for initiating new as well as strengthening existing collaborations and networking among the East African Quaternary community. The workshop also aimed at

assessing the opportunities and challenges in research, training and capacity building.

The workshop attracted more than 50 participants from the Eastern African region (Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda) and other parts of Africa (South Africa and Nigeria), as well as participants from Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Switzerland, UK, and USA. Thirty oral papers and 8 posters were presented organized in five major themes spread over two days. The next workshop will be held in 2011 in Zanzibar/Tanzania.

2. ETHIOPIA

GEOTOURISM AND GEO-PARKS IN ETHIOPIA

Geotourism in Ethiopia, by Asfawossen Asrat, Metasebia Demissie and Aberra Mogessie, SHAMA BOOKS PLC, the first book of its kind in Ethiopia, has been recently published and is in circulation (see attached brochure below). The book presents results of a research project entitled “The contribution of geology to the growth of the tourism industry in Ethiopia” conducted since 2004, funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology of Ethiopia. ***Geotourism in Ethiopia*** is the first of a series of four books in the same subject. The second book is under preparation by the same authors.

As part of the same undertaking, the researchers involved in the Geotourism project are currently working towards the establishment of the first official Geopark in Ethiopia. To this effect, the researchers conducted a consultative meeting with the Director of the Geological Survey of Ethiopia (GSE) on this issue. The Director indicated that his Institution is ardently working towards this goal and he appreciated the initiative of the researchers and indicated that the GSE will be happy to collaborate with them to establish a Geopark. The researchers are currently working on the mechanisms and will present their concrete ideas to the GSE soon. It is hoped that this initiative will serve as a model for other countries in the region and Africa as a whole, who plan to establish Geoparks.

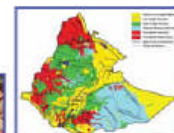
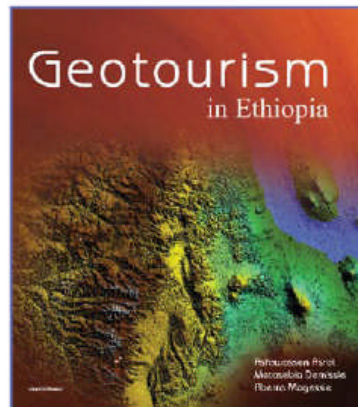
GeoTourism in Ethiopia

Authors	Asfawossen Asrat, Ph.D. Metasebia Demissie, B.Sc. Aberra Mogessie, Ph.D.
Publication Date	Jan. 24, 2009
Price	245 Birr
ISBN	9789994400300
BIC Subject	Geology
Extent	186 pages

Description

Almost a thousand years ago, dozens of churches were carved out of solid rock in the Ethiopian cities of Lalibela and Wukro. Thousands of years ago, enormous ancient stelea were carved and erected in the city of Axum. Long before those stelea were created, an ancient temple was constructed in the city of Yeha. How were these storied monuments made?

Geotourism in Ethiopia delves into the earth to find the answer and uncovers geological evidence that helps explain these fantastic treasures. The original creators of these masive monuments forged their artwork from stone. What kind of stone and where it came from shed light on how the churches, temple, and stelae were constructed. The soft sandstone of the Wukro and Lalibela rock-hewn churches give a glimpse at how these great edifices were built so quickly out of cliffsides and mountains. Exploring a nearby rock quarry, the authors identify a likely source for the famous Axum stelae and wonder about how they were transported and erected in the city.



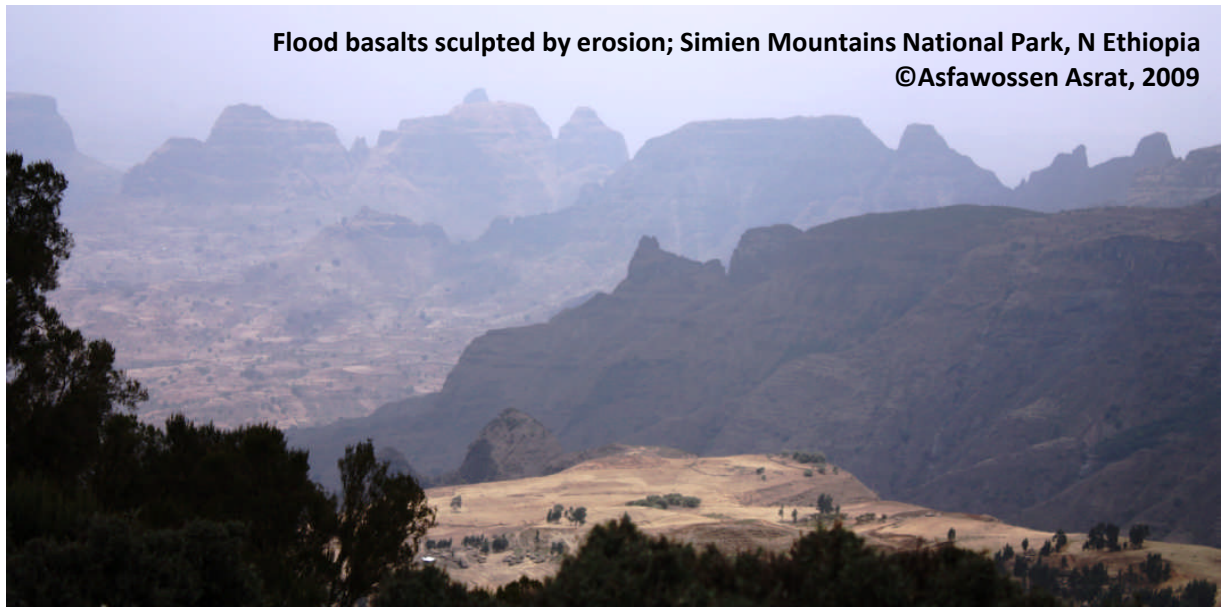
Ethiopia's most famous and greatest tourist attractions have been constructed and carved from stone. Geotourism in Ethiopia will delight geologists and rock enthusiasts with technical detail, and general readers will marvel at the history of these ancient sites and treasures.

III. MISCELLANIA

Best Geological Webpage of the Month:

Earthworks Jobs: <http://www.earthworks-jobs.com>

Best Geological Scenery of the Month:



HAVE A GOOD READ!!

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