

# FIRST CIRCULAR AND CALL FOR PAPERS 4<sup>TH</sup> EASTERN AFRICAN QUATERNARY RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (EAQUA) CONFERENCE



## **Equatorial eastern Africa Quaternary, climate change and variability**

The idea of an Eastern African Association for Quaternary Researchers was mooted at a meeting of Quaternary researchers in Nairobi in 2006. The inauguration of the Eastern African Quaternary Research Association (EAQUA) followed in Kampala, Uganda in June 2007. The Association was formed to enhance the growth of the Quaternary Science community in the eastern African region through training and promotion of collaborative research. In addition, the Association was intended to facilitate active communication on Quaternary research issues and information exchange on palaeoclimate, palaeoenvironment, archaeology, palaeontology and palaeoanthropology through eastern African nations' rotational biannual meetings.

The first three meetings held between 2007 and 2011 in Kampala (Uganda), Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) and Zanzibar (Tanzania) brought together Quaternary scholars from eastern Africa and international researchers working in the region to deliberate on themes related to various aspects of the Quaternary period. The earlier conferences established that there were local and regional variations in climate over the last 2000 years and suggested multidisciplinary approaches for better understanding, in addition to assessing the impacts of global and climate change, vulnerability and adaptations. The status of on and off shore Quaternary research over the last 100,000 years has also been discussed, elaborating on the available marine and lacustrine records, techniques and methods for Quaternary research, palaeoclimate and vegetation reconstruction as well as recent trends in climate change. In addition, a joint EAQUA/INQUA workshop shared with participants the focus, roles and opportunities available to EAQUA members in the various INQUA Commissions. The Association formally ratified its constitution, elected an executive committee and the registration of its secretariat in Kampala, Uganda where the secretariat will be permanently located.

It is noted that studies conducted in the eastern African region for earlier periods of the Quaternary before 100,000 years ago remain inexhaustively explored. The 4<sup>th</sup> EAQUA conference to be hosted by the **National Museums of Kenya in Nanyuki, Kenya between 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> February 2013** will therefore highlight the research conducted for the earlier periods of the Quaternary in the highland in comparison to other areas of eastern Africa. The theme of the conference is: **Equatorial eastern Africa Quaternary climate change and variability.**

The earth system has experienced considerable climatic and environmental change over the last 2.6 million years, influencing its landscapes, ecosystems and socio-cultural systems. Eastern Africa was at the center of hominid and cultural evolution during this period, and has produced large amounts of evidence for faunal physiological (animal and hominids included), and cultural adaptations to changing climates and environments. In addition, geological (volcanic, tectonic and sedimentological) activities in the earth's crust and surface have continued to shape the landscapes and influence climates and environments and vice versa. Global climatic and environmental changes have physiological and socio-cultural adaptations in animal species and humans

respectively. The Quaternary period therefore provides a timeframe for research towards understanding the earth surface, ecosystem and socio-cultural processes and adaptations to these climatic and environmental changes over time. Ongoing work on palaeoclimate, palaeoenvironment, archaeology, palaeontology and palaeoanthropology in the region needs to be enhanced and complimented by more multidisciplinary research and sharing to correlate the data generated from various proxies. There is also need to facilitate and extend our collaboration networks to enhance clearer understanding of the attendant climatic and environmental changes and adaptations. The conference is expected to provide a forum for exchange of research results and ideas among the eastern African Quaternary community.

### **Conference themes**

The conference structure will include invited keynote presentations, contributed papers and posters in thematic sessions, as well as plenary discussions. The specific conference themes will include:

- Late Pleistocene-Holocene climate variability
- Quaternary Rainfall variability and human-environment interactions/adaptations in East Africa
- Habitat and palaeoenvironmental reconstruction of pre-historic sites (palaeobotany, isotopes, fauna, sedimentology)
- The Quaternary fossil and archaeological record of eastern Africa
- Climate and Global change – impacts, adaptation and vulnerability assessment for eastern Africa
- Eastern African Quaternary geology.
- Highland biodiversity and ecosystems.

**Additional suggestions for themes are welcome. Both paper and poster presentations will be considered on the above themes and more. Please contact us as soon as possible with expression of interest in attending the conference, queries and any theme suggestions for ex/inclusion during our conference program planning.**

### **Organizing committee:**

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