Potential Geo-parks sites in Kenya

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Outline

- Introduction
- Definitions
- About UNESCO Geopark Networks
- Principles for recognizing Geopark
- Why is research important for a Geopark?
- Example of Potential Geopark areas in Kenya

Introduction

- Geology and landscape have profoundly influenced society, civilization, and cultural diversity of our planet since our species began their journey from the Ice Age.
- We have been defined by our relationship and use of geology from Stone Age artifacts to todays 'granite' kitchen tops (Turner 2008). .

Introduction….

- The Geopark concept has brought economic and cultural revitalization to many regions inspiring local communities, especially women, are encouraged to pursue new lines of work and are getting involved in running Geoparks (Turner 2006, 2008).

What is a geosite?

- A geosite is a site or an “area”, a few square metres to several square kilometres in size, with geological and scientific significance, whose geological characteristics (mineral, structural, geomorphological, physiographic) meet one or several criteria for classifying it as outstanding (valuable, rare, vulnerable, endangered).

Geosites….

- When a special zone includes more than one particularly rare or beautiful and geologically significant feature, it is referred to as a “geopark”.
- The features must be representative of the region's geological history as well as of the events and processes that shaped it.

Geosites….

- There are many criteria for classifying sites as outstanding.
- Only a single criterion may be required for a geological site to be declared worthy of being considered part of our heritage.
- A combination of criteria is usually considered.

Geosites….

Here is list of selection criteria for geosites:

- scientific value, geotourism appeal, educational value, historic value, cultural, spiritual, and social value, economic value, international significance, link to biodiversity, sanctuary for rare or endangered species, aesthetic value, being representative (universal value), stratigraphic milestone, paleobiodiversity, rare or unique (irreplaceable), valuable, vulnerable, endangered, quality or state of preservation, size, accessibility.

What is a Geopark?

- A Geopark is not just a collection of geological sites, but is a territory with a particular geological heritage of international significance and with a sustainable territorial development strategy (Frey et. al., 2001).
- It must have clearly defined boundaries and a sufficient area to allow for true territorial economic development, primarily through tourism (ibid.).

Geopark ....

- Geological sites must be of international importance in terms of their scientific quality, rarity, aesthetic appeal and education value.
- Sites cannot only be related to geology but also to archaeology, ecology, history and culture.
- All these sites in the geopark must be linked in a network and constitute thematic parks with routes, trails and rock sections that can benefit from protection and management measures.

What is a Global Geopark?

- A Global Geopark is a unified area with geological heritage of international significance and where that heritage is being used to promote the sustainable development of the local communities who live there.
- The Global Geoparks idea is being adopted by increasing numbers of Member States. The Geoparks are becoming very popular due to their combination of conservation, sustainable development and community involvement.

UNESCO Geopark Networks

- Thus, today UNESCO gives its *ad hoc* support to national Geopark initiatives which are coordinated through a Global Network of National Geoparks (Global Geoparks Network [GGN]) where national geological heritage initiatives benefit fully from their membership of a global network of exchange and cooperation.
- By September 2011 the GGN has 89 members in 27 countries.

What is the Global Geoparks Network?

- The Global Network of National Geoparks (GGN) is a voluntary network of Global Geoparks supported by UNESCO.
- The GGN is a dynamic network where members are committed to work together and exchange ideas of best practise and join in common projects to raise the quality standards of all products and practises of a Global Geopark.

UNESCO Global Network …

- The aim of the Global Geoparks Network is to protect and conserve the geological heritage of our planet but to do so in way where local communities can take ownership of these special places and where they can get some sustainable economic benefit from them.

UNESCO Global Network …

- While allowing for the sustainable economic development of geoparks, the network actively promotes geoconservation and explicitly forbids the destruction or sale of the geological value of a geopark.

Principles for recognizing Geoparks

Six principles are specified for recognizing Geoparks, relating to:

- size
- composition
- socio-economic objectives
- conservation objectives
- education and research objectives, and
- legal status and sovereignty issues.

Criteria provided for site nomination

A further criteria are provided for site nomination relating to:

- composition (number of geosites),
- promotion of education
- research role
- management planning
- management authority, and
- co-operation

Example of Potential Geopark areas in Kenya

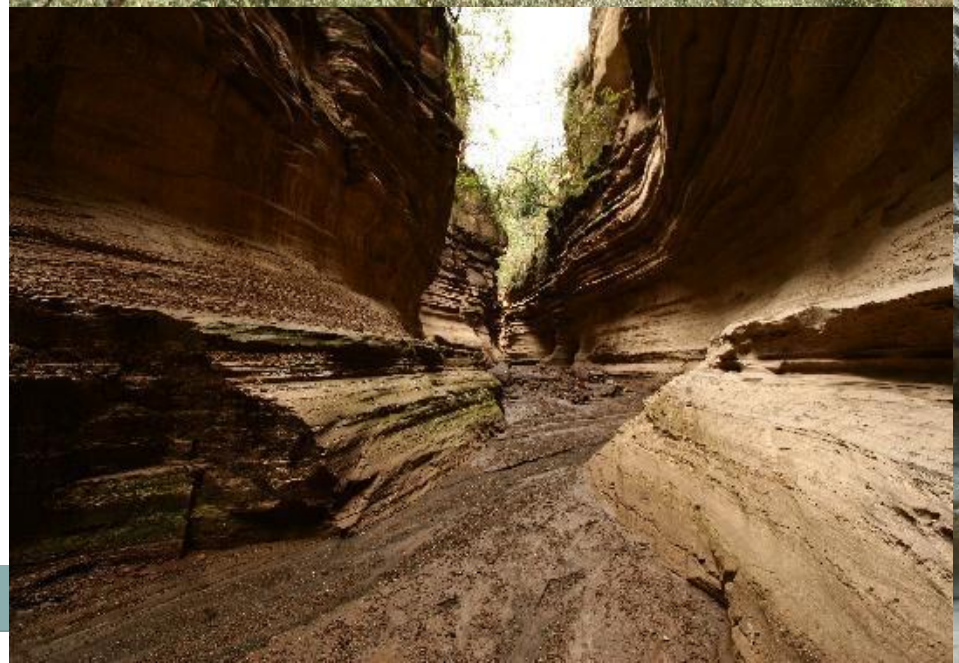
The Njorowa Gorge in Hell's Gate National Park -
has an igneous dike cutting through the wall of the canyon

Lake Bogoria and geyser in Rift Valley

Mt. Suswa and the lava tubes

Mt. Suswa and the lava tubes

Hell's Gate National Park lies to the south of Lake Naivasha



Mt. Longonot

Longonot Fumaroles












Mount Kenya is a stratovolcano that was active in the Plio-Pleistocene.

MT. Elgon has a very extensive crater rim composed of numerous summits the heighest being Wagagai.

Menengai Crater in Nakuru

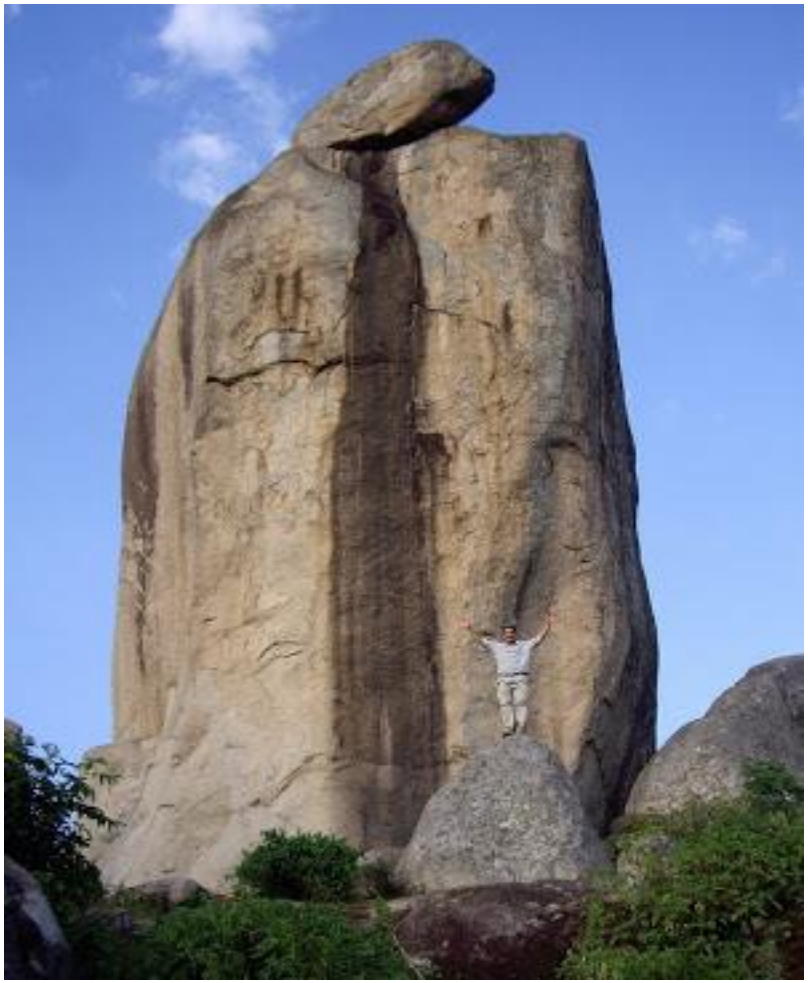
Thimlich Ohinga Heritage Site

- Thimlich Ohinga literally refers to a **"frightening dense forest".** The stone structure enclosure has walls ranging from 1.0 to 4.2 meters in height built of loose stones and blocks without any dressing or mortar.

- Archaeological record of materials found within the site goes beyond 500 years ago.

Kit Mikaye overlooking Lake Victoria

- The towering decks of granite stones are precariously but neatly stacked on top of each other.
- As you move closer, the Kit Mikaye becomes more intriguing and fascinating! Inside the dark caves, lay the story of this famous rock.



Crying Stone of Ilesi (Weeping Stone of Kakamega)

A large boulder resting on top of a massive pillar of rock eight meters high. The formation is supposed to resemble a solemn head falling on weary shoulders and from the top “tears” flow down the length of the column.

Simbi Nyaima is a crater lake a few kilometers from the shores of Lake Victoria. Simbi Nyaima - means the village that sank

Kanam Hot Springs prehistoric site

- Kanam is situated along the shores of Lake Victoria on Homa Peninsular around Homa Mountain.
- In 1932, Louis Leakey's expendition discovered a fossil of human mandible together with Pleistocene fauna and pebble tools in the early Pleistocene Kanam beds.
- Recently, researchers found palaeontological bones dating between 1 and 6 million years ago at the site.

Proposal for Geoheritage workshop

- There was a proposal for a Geoheritage workhop for Eastern Africa – so as to examine the importance and diversity of Geoheritage (geological heritage), its history, geoconservation, geoparks and geotourism.

Thank you for Listening