

**The 2011 Regional Conference on Geomorphology
of the International Association of Geomorphologists (RCG-2011),
in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 18 - 22 February 2011**

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The 2011 Regional Conference on Geomorphology of the International Association of Geomorphologists (RCG-2011) organized by the Ethiopian Association of Geomorphologists, was held on 18-22 February 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the Ghion Hotel. The Conference held under the theme **“Geomorphology for human adaptation to changing tropical environments”** has been a forum of fruitful deliberations which led to better understanding of the factors and mechanisms responsible for our changing environments, particularly tropical environments, and their implications to the development of human societies. The Conference was officially opened by his Excellency Ato Tolosa Shagi, State Minister of the Ministry of Mines of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and attended by official delegates including Prof. Mitiku Haile, President of the Mekele University, Prof. Masresha Fetene, Vice President for Research and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies of the Addis Ababa University, Prof. Michael Crozier, President of the International Association of Geomorphologists and most members of the Executive Committee of the IAG/AIG.

The conference has been attended by 151 participants from 30 countries representing 6 continents (see Table 1 for details). Eighty three oral and 51 poster papers were presented under sub-themes ranging from Environmental Change and Human Impact to Planetary Geomorphology (See Table 2 for distribution of papers by sub-theme). Six keynote lectures on issues including the geomorphic evolution of the Nile; the research challenges for soil erosion and conservation in tropical environments; the drivers of landscape change during the present century; past, present and future environmental changes in Africa; the evidences of major changes in Earth’s surface processes; variety in rift valleys and passive margins; and on the locational controls of landslides, by prominent scholars in their respective fields. A lecture on the challenges and opportunities of international cooperation with African countries with the aim of enhancing scientific excellence through mobility and training was also delivered by an IAG/AIG representative.



Opening Ceremony of the IAG/AIG Regional Conference on Geomorphology, Addis Ababa 2011

The Conference was preceded by two Pre-Conference Excursions and one intensive course program for young geomorphologists. The Pre-Conference excursion to the Main Ethiopian Rift (MER) was conducted between 15 and 17 February 2011 and was attended by 40 participants. The main theme of the excursion was understanding the geological, tectonic and climatic evolution of the MER as well as understanding the current geomorphologic processes as well as their implications to human adaptation. Participants were also able to visit the open air archaeological museum of Melka Kunture, the World Heritage site of Tiya as well as most of the rift lakes. The Pre-conference excursion (AFAR) to the Southern Afar Rift was conducted between 13 and 18 February 2011 and was attended by 36 participants. It was conducted with the theme of understanding the volcano-tectonic evolution of the Afar rift and associated geomorphological processes. The “Landmap Intensive Course on Landslide Mapping” was conducted in Dessie town, Northern Ethiopia between 14 and 18 February 2011 and was attended by thirteen young geomorphologists, six of whom were sponsored by the IAG/AIG (see Table 3 for list of participants). The Post-conference excursion to Northern Ethiopia (NEH)

was conducted between February 23 and March 2, 2011 under the general theme “*Geomorphological hazards, land degradation and resilience in the northern Ethiopian highlands*” and was attended by 50 participants. A wide range of themes including structural geomorphology of the plateau–rift margins and the marginal grabens, landslide and seismic hazards, repeat photography studies, hydrogeomorphology, land degradation and resilience, gully processes, catchment hydrology, land degradation and resilience, palaeoclimate archives (tufa dams, speleothems), geology and structural geomorphology of the highlands of Tigray, and some aspects of geoarchaeology and military geomorphology, have been discussed during the excursion. Nine participants extended their excursion (NEH-EX) to the Danakil Depression between 1-4 March 2011 and nineteen other participants extended their excursion (NEH-LAL) to the Simien Mountains, Lake Tana and Lalibela between 3-9 March 2011. One-day Mid-conference excursions to the Blue Nile Gorge, attended by 85 participants, and to Melka Kunture/Tiya attended by 15 participants were greatly appreciated by participants. All the excursions were successfully completed as per schedule.



Participants of the *Landmap Intensive Course on Landslide Mapping, Dessie, 14-18.02. 2011*

The continued support we have received from many quarters helped the Organizers in planning, conducting and completing the conference and the excursions successfully. The financial, logistic and moral support of the following organizations has been crucial: the International Association of Geomorphologists (IAG/AIG) for giving Ethiopia the chance to organize its 2011 regional Conference and for its continued support including financial support, the Addis Ababa University, particularly the Research and Graduate Studies Office, the Department of Earth Sciences, and the Palaeoanthropology and Palaeoenvironment Program, the Mekele University, the University of Roma Tre, Italy, the Gent University, Belgium, the National Museum of Ethiopia, and the Ghion Hotel.



Local organizers of the IAG/AIG Regional Conference on Geomorphology (from left):
Dr. Asfawossen Asrat and Dr. Mohammed Umer

Table 1. Distribution of RCG-2011 participants by country

Country	Number of Participants
Australia	5
Austria	1
Belgium	6
Brazil	8
Cameroun	2
Canada	3
China	5
Democratic Republic of Congo	1
Ethiopia	18
France	11
Germany	3
Greece	4
Hong Kong	1
Hungary	2
India	3
Israel	1
Italy	19
Japan/Sudan	1
Kenya	1
Netherlands	3
New Zealand	4
Poland	17
Romania	2
Russia	8
South Africa	3
Spain	8
Sweden	1
UK	3
USA	7
Total	151

Table 2. Distribution of oral and poster papers presented at the RCG-2011 by sub-theme

Sub-Theme	No. Oral papers	No. Poster papers
Drylands Geomorphology and Desertification (DGD)	5	1
Environmental Change and Human Impact (ECHI)	10	3
Fluvial Geomorphology and Flooding Hazard (FGFH)	5	9
Geodiversity and Geotourism (GGT)	4	3
Geoheritages and Geoarchaeology (GGA)	4	2
Geomorphological Environments and Environmental Geomorphology (GEEG)	7	8
Geomorphological Mapping (GM)	8	6
Land degradation and Resilience (LDR)	10	4
Landslide Hazard Assessment and Zoning (LHAZ)	6	7
Morphotectonics, Active Tectonics and Volcanic Geomorphology (MATVG)	10	6
Planetary Geomorphology (PG)	7	0
Quaternary Stratigraphy and Palaeoclimate (QSP)	7	2
Total	83	51

Table 3. Participants of the *Landmap Intensive Course on Landslide Mapping*

Name of Participant	Country	Remark
Mohamed A.M. ABD ELBASIT	Sudan/Japan	
Gabriel AMATO	Italy	
Tesfay Weldesilassie ARAYA	Ethiopia	IAG/AIG sponsored
Merlin Gountie DEDZO	Cameroun	IAG/AIG sponsored
Rebecca JOUBERT	South Africa	IAG/AIG Sponsored
Lorenzo LOSARDO	Italy	
Rajesh Kumar MAHATO	India	
Marco MULAS	Italy	
Stephane Sadiki NDYANABO	Democratic Republic of Congo	IAG/AIG sponsored
Kit-Ying NG	Hong Kong	
Corrado PALUCCI	Italy	
Ghislain Zangmo TEFGOUM	Cameroun	IAG/AIG sponsored
Benjamin VAN DER WAAL	South Africa	IAG/AIG sponsored