

Abstract

Kenya is in a unique environmental setting by virtue of its geographical location, range of altitudes and perhaps most importantly, the Great Rift System that traverses it. The country displays virtually every facet of environmental geological phenomena — seismicity, volcanism, mass-movements, the impact of mining, mineral processing and geothermal energy resources development, soil and beach erosion, desertification, air, water and soil pollution, etc. A significant mass of data on these topics already exists, but it lies scattered in various journals and agency reports, some of which are not readily available to environmental researchers and country-planners. The aim of this paper, therefore, is to highlight some features of geology and the environment in Kenya and to set the scene for the subsequent papers in this issue, which examine more deeply various aspects of the subject. The uniqueness of the country's environmental setting is emphasised throughout, since it gives it a special appeal to geomorphologists, geophysicists, hydrologists and land-use planners. A comprehensive list of references is given at the end of this paper in order to aid the search process of those who seek additional information on areas covered in this review.