

Part I Background to the Kenya Rift Lakes

1	Introduction: About This Book	3
1.1	The Kenya Rift Lakes	3
	References.	8
2	Brief History of Geological Research on the Kenya Rift Lakes	11
2.1	Introduction	11
2.2	The Early European Explorers.	12
2.3	The 1920s until the 1940s: Movement on Multiple Fronts	15
2.3.1	Expeditions and Limnological Data Collection.	15
2.3.2	Development and Rejection of Pluvial Theory	16
2.4	Development of an Absolute Chronology	18
2.5	The 1950s–1970s	18
2.5.1	An Era of Geological Mapping	18
2.5.2	Palaeoanthropological Research and Lakes.	21
2.5.3	Other Contributions	22
2.6	Applied Research: Geothermal and Petroleum Exploration	23
2.7	Palaeoclimate Studies	24
2.8	From 2010 Until the 2020s: The Era of Drilling and High-Resolution Studies	26
	References.	28
3	Geology of the Kenya Rift: An Introduction	33
3.1	Tectonic Setting of the East African Rift	33
3.2	Major Controls on the East African Rift System	36
3.3	Accommodation Zones	40
3.4	Kenya Rift Tectonics	42
3.5	Kenya Rift Basins	45
3.6	Volcanism in the Kenya Rift	54
3.7	Geological Evolution of the Kenya Rift Valley	57
	References.	63

4	Environmental Background to the Kenya Rift Lakes: An	
	Introduction	77
4.1	Introduction	77
4.2	East African Climate	77
4.3	Hydrology and Hydrogeology	83
4.3.1	Drainage Patterns and Groundwater Flow	83
4.3.2	Types of River System	88
4.4	Weathering and Sediment Production	93
4.4.1	Physical Weathering	94
4.4.2	Chemical Weathering	96
4.4.3	Biological Weathering	98
4.5	Kenya Rift Soils	98
4.6	Aeolian Processes	101
4.7	Kenya Rift Vegetation	103
4.8	Kenya Rift Wildlife	106
4.9	Geothermal Processes and their Impact on Lacustrine Sedimentation	108
4.9.1	Types of Hot Spring in the Kenya Rift.	108
4.9.2	Structural Setting of the Hot Springs.	112
4.9.3	Hot Spring Water Chemistry	114
4.9.4	Spring Deposits and Hydrothermal Alteration: Records of Hydrothermal Activity in Lake Basins	114
	References.	122
5	Lake Processes and Sedimentation	129
5.1	The Kenya Rift Lakes and Their Basins	129
5.2	Lacustrine Processes	132
5.3	Aquatic Chemical and Biochemical Processes	136
5.4	Sedimentary Facies	140
5.4.1	Rift Geomorphology and Sedimentation	140
5.4.2	Siliciclastic Coastal Sedimentation	140
5.4.3	Lake Marginal Carbonate Deposition	142
5.4.4	Deltas and Fan-Deltas	144
5.4.5	Offshore Pelagic Settings in Fresh to Brackish Lakes.	146
5.4.6	Sedimentation in Highly Saline Deep Lakes	152
5.4.7	Chemical Sedimentation and Evaporites in Shallow Saline Lakes and Ephemeral Playas	152
	References.	156
 Part II The Modern Kenya Rift Lakes		
6	Lake Turkana	163
6.1	Introduction	163
6.2	Geological and Geomorphological Setting	169

6.2.1	Lithologies and Stratigraphy of the Turkana Drainage Basin	169
6.2.2	Regional Tectonic Framework	170
6.3	Climate and Basin Hydrology	174
6.4	Peoples, Vegetation and Wildlife	177
6.5	Limnology	180
6.5.1	Physical Limnology	180
6.5.2	Chemical Limnology	184
6.6	Biology and Ecology of the Lake	186
6.6.1	Phytoplankton	186
6.6.2	Zooplankton	187
6.6.3	Invertebrates	188
6.6.4	Fish	189
6.7	Modern Sedimentation	190
6.8	Late Quaternary Lacustrine Sediments in the Lake Turkana Basin	194
6.8.1	Onshore Spatial Variability and Stratigraphy of the Galana Boi Formation	194
6.8.2	Onshore to Offshore Diatom and Chronological Correlations of Holocene Sediments	200
6.8.3	Geochemical and Microfossil Stratigraphy of Offshore Cores	201
6.8.4	African Humid Period Catchment Expansion, Hydrological Budgets and Sedimentation	203
	References	206
7	Lake Logipi and the Suguta Valley	221
7.1	Introduction and History of Research	221
7.2	Geological Setting	226
7.3	Climate	229
7.4	Hydrology of Suguta Valley and Lake Logipi	229
7.4.1	Regional Setting and Lake Recharge	229
7.4.2	Groundwater Recharge	233
7.4.3	Hot Springs in the Suguta Valley	234
7.4.4	Physical Limnology of Lake Logipi	236
7.4.5	Chemical Limnology	238
7.5	Biology and Ecology of the Lakes	238
7.6	Sedimentation	242
7.7	Late Quaternary Lacustrine Sediments in the Suguta Valley	244
	References	252
8	Lake Baringo	257
8.1	Introduction	257
8.2	Geological and Geomorphological Setting	260
8.2.1	Regional Tectonic Framework	260

8.2.2	Lithologies and Stratigraphy within the Baringo Drainage Basin	263
8.3	Climate and Basin Hydrology	264
8.4	Peoples, Vegetation and Wildlife	267
8.5	Limnology	270
8.5.1	Physical Limnology	270
8.5.2	Chemical Limnology	272
8.5.3	Hot Springs	277
8.6	Biology and Ecology of the Lake	278
8.6.1	Phytoplankton and Macrophytes	278
8.6.2	Zooplankton and Benthic Invertebrates	279
8.6.3	Fish	281
8.7	Sedimentation	282
8.8	Late Quaternary Lacustrine Sediments in the Lake Baringo Basin	286
	References	291
9	Lake Bogoria	303
9.1	Introduction	303
9.2	Geological and Geomorphological Setting	306
9.3	Climate	310
9.4	Hydrology	310
9.5	Hot Springs and Geothermal Activity	314
9.5.1	Loburu	317
9.5.2	Chemurkeu	317
9.5.3	Ng'wasis – Koibobei – Losaramat (Southern Group)	320
9.5.4	Warm Springs	322
9.5.5	Sublacustrine Hot Springs	322
9.5.6	Life in the Hot Springs and Thermal Wetlands	323
9.5.7	Origin of the Hot Springs	323
9.6	Vegetation and Wildlife	324
9.7	Limnology	325
9.7.1	Physical Limnology	325
9.7.2	Chemical Limnology	327
9.7.3	Evolution of Bogoria Basin Waters	329
9.8	Biology and Ecology of the Lake	331
9.9	Recent Sedimentation in Lake Bogoria	333
9.9.1	Sedimentation Along the Eastern Boundary-Fault Margin (Bogoria-Emsos Escarpment)	334
9.9.2	Sedimentation on Littoral Platforms	334
9.9.3	Sedimentation on Axial Platforms	336
9.9.4	Sedimentation in the Axial Basin	339
9.10	Late Quaternary Sedimentation	341
9.10.1	Stromatolitic Limestones	341
9.10.2	Late Quaternary Sediments of the Sandai Plain	345

9.10.3 Terraces and Incised Valleys	348
9.10.4 Evidence of Lower Lake Levels	348
9.10.5 Sediments Preserved in Lake Cores.	350
9.10.6 Former Connections with Lake Baringo	352
References.	354
10 Lake Nakuru and Lake Elmenteita.	363
10.1 Introduction	363
10.2 Geological Setting	367
10.3 Climate.	370
10.4 Hydrology	372
10.4.1 Lake Nakuru.	372
10.4.2 Lake Elmenteita	374
10.5 Vegetation and Wildlife	375
10.5.1 Lake Nakuru Basin.	375
10.5.2 Lake Elmenteita Basin	376
10.6 Limnology	377
10.6.1 Physical Limnology	377
10.6.2 Chemical Limnology	381
10.7 Biology and Ecology of the Lakes.	387
10.7.1 Lake Nakuru.	387
10.7.2 Lake Elmenteita	390
10.8 Recent Sedimentation	391
10.8.1 Lake Nakuru.	391
10.8.2 Lake Elmenteita	394
10.9 Late Quaternary Lacustrine Sediments in the Nakuru-Elmenteita Basin	395
10.9.1 Early Research – The ‘Pluvial Era’	395
10.9.2 Research from the 1950s Until the 1970s	398
10.9.3 Recent Studies (1970s to Present)	399
10.9.4 Archaeological Research	403
References.	405
11 Lake Naivasha	417
11.1 Introduction	417
11.2 Geological and Geomorphological Setting	421
11.3 Climate and Basin Hydrology	423
11.4 Peoples, Vegetation and Wildlife	426
11.5 Limnology	428
11.5.1 Physical Limnology	428
11.5.2 Chemical Limnology	430
11.6 Biology and Ecology of the Lake	433
11.6.1 Plant Nutrients and Primary Production	433
11.6.2 Phytoplankton	435
11.6.3 Macrophytes.	436
11.6.4 Zooplankton	437

11.6.5	Invertebrates	438
11.6.6	Fish	439
11.7	Sedimentation	440
11.7.1	Sediment Facies and Environments	440
11.7.2	Recent Sediment Stratigraphy	443
11.8	African Humid Period and Holocene Lacustrine Sediments in the Lake Naivasha Basin	445
	References	447
12	Lake Magadi and Nasikie Engida	463
12.1	Introduction	463
12.2	Geological and Geomorphological Setting	465
12.3	Climate, Vegetation and Wildlife	468
12.4	Drainage and Hydrology	469
12.4.1	Inflowing Rivers and Lake Water	469
12.4.2	Hot Springs of the Magadi Basin	471
12.5	Hydrochemistry	476
12.5.1	Composition of the Basin Waters and Their Chemical Evolution	476
12.5.2	Origin of the Hot Spring Waters and Circulation	480
12.6	Life in the Lakes	482
12.7	Modern Sedimentation	485
12.7.1	Siliciclastic Sedimentation	485
12.7.2	Alkaline Earth Carbonates	489
12.7.3	Evaporite Precipitation	489
12.7.4	Spring Deposits	494
12.7.5	Siliceous Sediment	494
12.8	Late Pleistocene-Holocene Sedimentation	496
12.8.1	The Evaporite Series	496
12.8.2	The High Magadi Beds (Terminal Pleistocene – Early Holocene)	496
12.8.3	Former Shorelines of the High Magadi Palaeolake	500
12.8.4	Nasikie Engida Beachrock	506
12.8.5	Magadiite and Sodium Silicate Minerals of the High Magadi Beds	506
12.9	Comparisons with Lake Natron, Northern Tanzania	507
12.9.1	Introduction	507
12.9.2	Hydrology and Hydrochemistry	510
12.9.3	Sedimentation and Mineralogy	513
12.9.4	Biology and Ecology	515
12.9.5	Late Quaternary Sedimentation	515
	References	516
13	Lake Victoria	527
13.1	Introduction	527
13.2	Geological and Geomorphological Setting	530

13.3	Climate and Basin Hydrology	532
13.4	Peoples, Vegetation and Wildlife	535
13.5	Limnology	536
13.5.1	Physical Limnology	536
13.5.2	Chemical Limnology	540
13.6	Biology and Ecology of the Lake	544
13.6.1	Phytoplankton	544
13.6.2	Macrophytes	549
13.6.3	Zooplankton	550
13.6.4	Invertebrates	552
13.6.5	Fish	552
13.7	Modern Sedimentation	554
13.8	Late Quaternary Lacustrine Sediments in the Lake Victoria Basin	556
	References	560
14	The Lesser-Known Lakes and Wetlands of the Kenya Rift	577
14.1	Introduction	577
14.2	Central Island Lakes, Lake Turkana	578
14.3	North Barrier Lakes	581
14.4	South Suguta (Kangirinyang) Maar Lakes	583
14.5	Spring-Fed Lakes and Wetlands, Emurungogolak to Silali	585
14.6	Spring-Fed Lakes and Wetlands of the Silali-Karosi Region . . .	589
14.7	Lake Kichiritit ('Lake 94')	591
14.8	South Baringo Wetlands	593
14.9	Lake Kamnarok	598
14.10	Lake Solai	600
14.11	Lake Ol' Bolossat	603
14.12	Lake Sonachi, Naivasha	607
14.13	Small and Ephemeral Lakes of the Southern Kenya Rift	611
14.14	Lake Simbi and Other Nyanza (Kavirondo) Wetlands	615
14.14.1	The Yala Swamp Lakes	616
14.14.2	Lake Simbi	616
14.14.3	Nyando (Kusa) Swamp	617
14.15	Other Seasonal and Ephemeral Lakes	618
14.16	Constructed Reservoirs and Ponds	619
	References	621
 Part III The Ancient Kenya Rift Lakes		
15	The Turkana Basin	631
15.1	Introduction	631
15.2	Oligo-Miocene Lacustrine Deposits	633
15.2.1	The Ekitale Basin	633
15.2.2	The Lokichar and North Lokichar Basins	633
15.2.3	Other Oligo-Miocene Sediments in the Turkana Region	638

15.3	Plio-Pleistocene Lacustrine Deposits	642
15.3.1	Historical Background	642
15.3.2	Sedimentary Facies	644
15.3.3	Lacustrine Sediments, Faunas and Floras	650
15.3.4	Lake Levels and Sedimentation	658
15.3.5	Plio-Pleistocene Stratigraphy, Palaeolakes and Palaeogeography	660
	References	673
16	The Suguta Basin	693
16.1	Introduction	693
16.2	Mio-Pliocene Sedimentary Formations	699
16.3	Pleistocene Sediments and Lakes	705
16.4	Mio-Pleistocene Palaeogeography	710
	References	712
17	The Baringo-Bogoria Basin and Adjacent Parts of the Kenya Rift . .	717
17.1	Introduction and Geological Exploration	717
17.2	Miocene Lacustrine Sedimentary Formations	720
17.2.1	The Kirimun Formation	720
17.2.2	The Kimwarer and Kamego Formations	720
17.2.3	The Tambach Formation	721
17.2.4	The Muruyur Formation	725
17.2.5	The Ngorora Formation	727
17.2.6	The Ngerngerwa (Ngeringerowa) Formation	730
17.2.7	The Mpesida Beds	730
17.2.8	The Lukeino Formation	733
17.3	Miocene Lacustrine Palaeogeography and Palaeoenvironments	734
17.4	Plio-Pleistocene Sediments and Palaeolakes	737
17.4.1	Plio-Pleistocene Sediments and the Toluk Beds	737
17.4.2	The Chemeron and Mabaget Formations	739
17.4.3	The Kapthurin Formation	744
17.4.4	Pleistocene Lake Sediments East of Lake Baringo	749
17.4.5	Late Pleistocene Lake Sediments	750
17.5	Plio-Pleistocene Palaeogeography	754
	References	756
18	The Central Kenya Rift Basins (Nakuru-Elmenteita-Naivasha) . . .	767
18.1	Volcanic Rocks and Geological Background	767
18.2	Quaternary Shorelines and Pluvial Hypotheses	770
18.3	Mio-Pleistocene Sediments and Palaeogeography	778
18.3.1	Mio-Pliocene Sediments and Palaeogeography	778
18.3.2	Lower to Middle Pleistocene Sediments and Palaeogeography	779
18.3.3	Late Pleistocene Sediments and Palaeogeography	782
	References	787

19	The South Kenya Rift Basins	793
19.1	Introduction	793
19.2	Miocene Lake Sediments of the Lemudong'o Basin	793
19.2.1	General Setting of the Miocene Sediments	793
19.2.2	Sediments, Stratigraphy and Palaeogeography of the Lemudong'o Formation	795
19.3	Pleistocene Sediments of the Munya wa Gicheru Basin	796
19.3.1	Location and History of Research	796
19.3.2	Geochemistry	798
19.3.3	Facies, Lithostratigraphy and Microfossils	801
19.3.4	Palaeoenvironments	803
19.4	Pleistocene Lake Sediments at Olorgesailie	805
19.4.1	Location and History of Research	805
19.4.2	The Olorgesailie Formation (1.2–0.49 Ma)	808
19.4.3	Erosion and the Oltulelei Formation (0.49–0 Ma)	815
19.5	The Koora Basin	821
19.5.1	Geomorphology of the Koora Basin	821
19.5.2	Sedimentation in the Koora Basin	824
19.6	Quaternary Tectonism, Climate and Palaeogeography in the South Kenya Rift	826
	References	830
20	The Magadi-Natron Basin	839
20.1	Introduction	839
20.2	Miocene to Early Pleistocene Volcanics and Sediments of the Magadi-Natron Basin	842
20.3	The Oloronga Beds	848
20.3.1	Oloronga Outcrops	848
20.3.2	Lake Magadi Cores and Oloronga Deposition	855
20.4	The Lengorale and Ngare Nyiro (Orkaramation) Lake Beds	861
20.5	The Green Beds	862
20.5.1	General Characteristics and Age	862
20.5.2	The Green Beds Sediments in Core	865
20.5.3	The Green Beds Sediments in Outcrop	866
20.5.4	Geochemistry of the Green Beds Sediments	872
20.5.5	Depositional Environment of the Green Beds	872
20.5.6	Origin of the Green Beds Cherts	874
	References	876
21	Lake Victoria Basin	883
21.1	Introduction	883
21.2	Miocene Deposits	884
21.2.1	Miocene Deposits in the Nyanza Rift	884
21.2.2	Miocene Lacustrine Sediments on Rusinga Island	887
21.3	Plio-Pleistocene Lakes of the Nyanza Rift	890
21.3.1	Pliocene to Middle Pleistocene Lacustrine Sediments	890

21.3.2	Middle to Late Pleistocene Origins and Evolution of Lake Victoria.	893
21.3.3	Late Quaternary Palaeohydrology and Lake Levels	897
	References.	898

Part IV Rift Lake Controls, Resources and Environmental Considerations

22	Controls on Lacustrine Sedimentation in Rift Settings.	909
22.1	Introduction	909
22.2	Rifting and Volcano-Tectonic Controls on Kenya Rift Sedimentation	910
22.3	Climate Controls on Kenya Rift Sedimentation	914
22.4	Bedrock, Weathering and Diagenesis	920
22.5	Geothermal Influences and Controls	922
22.5.1	Lake Recharge	923
22.5.2	Impact on Lake Water Chemistry.	924
22.5.3	Hydrothermal Contributions to the Sedimentary Record of the Lake Basins	925
22.6	Rift Sedimentation Models	926
	References.	929
23	Economic Aspects of the Kenya Rift Lakes and Their Deposits. . . .	935
23.1	Introduction	935
23.2	Mineral Resources	935
23.2.1	Soda Deposits of Lake Magadi	936
23.2.2	Diatomite and Diatomaceous Earth	937
23.2.3	Petroleum Potential of the Kenya Rift Lakes.	939
23.2.4	Zeolites.	944
23.2.5	Other Lacustrine Mineral Resources	945
23.3	Human-Related Resources.	947
	References.	948
24	Afterthoughts and Perspectives.	951
24.1	Drivers of Change in the Contemporary Rift Valley Lakes	951
24.1.1	Pristine Lakes and Catchments?	952
24.1.2	Global Warming and the Rift Lakes: Past, Present and Future.	953
24.1.3	Human Impacts on Future Lake Levels	954
24.1.4	Faunal and Floral Stability-Instability of the Lakes and their Catchments	955
24.1.5	Protection Measures and Drivers of Environmental Change	956
24.1.6	Development Issues and their Impacts.	956
24.2	Non-Anthropogenic Drivers and the Importance of Time.	958
24.2.1	Tectonic, Volcanic and Sedimentological Events and Future Lakes	958

24.2.2	The Climate Versus Tectonic Debate and Change over Geological Time	959
24.2.3	The Development of New Rift Models	959
24.2.4	The Rift Valley Lakes and Hominin-Environment Interactions.	960
24.3	A Personal Perspective.	961
	References.	964
Index.		969