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# Harmonization of Geoscience data in Africa to enhance geoscientists' interaction for knowledge transfer and exchange experience

Gebremichael, M.W.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>African Minerals and Geosciences Centre (AMGC), PO Box 9573, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, mesfin@seamic.org.

Geological mapping started in Africa more than a century ago following interest in the geological wealth by different European institutions serving the colonial territories of these European countries. These mapping works continued by the national geological surveys created by the colonial powers after the nations got their independence. These maps are of different scales depending on the geological interest and the geological knowledge was localised and did not consider sharing of the knowledge across the political boundaries was very limited due to several economic and political reasons. Geological maps were there creating geological boundary along political boundaries with significant geological misunderstanding among the geological professional across the borders.

Several Geological Survey Organisations realised the need for the harmonisation of the geological knowledge among African nations. Among the efforts made, the Southern African Development Community, Mining Sector Coordinating Unit (SADC-MCU) work on establishing the regional stratigraphy for the Southern Africa was exemplary. In the mid 1990's a joint Southern and Eastern Africa geological data harmonisation effort was initiated by the SADC-MCU and Southern and Eastern African Minerals Centre (SEAMIC) through donor-funded project called Geoscience Data Compilation in Eastern and Southern Africa (GEODESA). This project initiated a pilot cross border study along two borders, Malawi/Mozambique and Tanzania/Uganda [1].

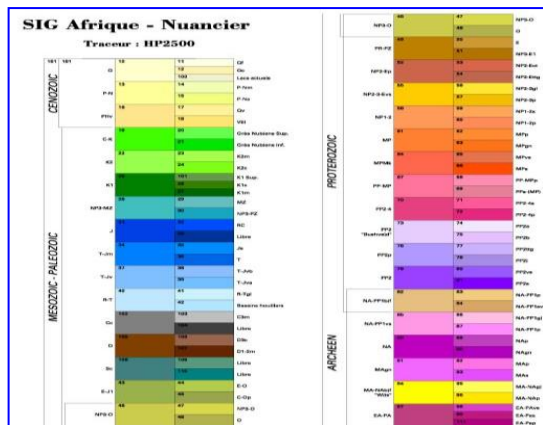


Figure 1: Harmonised Geological Legend for Africa

These efforts continued and resulted in the GIS Africa Project initiated by the French Geological Survey (BRGM). BRGM started these geological data harmonisation project with initial geological studies programs in collaboration with a number of geological survey organisations and Geology Departments of Universities in Africa. The 10 million scale geological map for the whole continent with a new complete geological legend for the whole continent with 38 major formations which are subdivided into 132 geological formations for national geological maps at 2 million scale. The national level of the geological mapping using the new geological legends were started for two regions in Africa. The first one for French-speaking wester African countries coordinated in Burkina Faso by UEMOA (Economic Community of Western African States) and the other for the Eastern African Countries coordinated in Tanzania by SEAMIC [2].

The African Mining Vision is the new idea of all African nations promoting the harmonisation of geological knowledge for better utilisation of the continent's mineral resources to benefit the people of Africa [3]. The Geological and Minerals Information System (GMIS) Strategy is expected to organise the geological

information and knowledge for the whole continent to completely understandable format for all Africans as well as the world at large.

*References:*

[1] GEODESA Project Final Report (Unpublished report)

[2] <http://www.sigafrique.net/>

[3] <http://www.africaminingvision.org/>

