
World Geomorphological Landscapes

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The Kuiseb River and Namib Sand Sea at Gobabeb

Andrew Goudie • Heather Viles

Landscapes and Landforms of Namibia

 Springer

Andrew Goudie
School of Geography and the Environment
University of Oxford
Oxford
UK

Heather Viles
School of Geography and the Environment
University of Oxford
Oxford
UK

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Series Editor Preface

Landforms and landscapes vary enormously across the Earth, from high mountains to endless plains. At a smaller scale, nature often surprises us creating shapes which look improbable. Many physical landscapes are so immensely beautiful that they received the highest possible recognition—they hold the status of World Heritage properties. Apart from often being immensely scenic, landscapes tell stories which not uncommonly can be traced back in time for tens of million years and include unique events. In addition, many landscapes owe their appearance and harmony not solely to the natural forces. For centuries, and even millennia, they have been shaped by humans who have modified hillslopes, river courses, and coastlines, and erected structures, which often blend with the natural landforms to form inseparable entities.

These landscapes are studied by geomorphology—‘the Science of Scenery’—a part of Earth Sciences that focuses on landforms, their assemblages, surface and subsurface processes that moulded them in the past and that change them today. To show the importance of geomorphology in understanding the landscape, and to present the beauty and diversity of the geomorphological sceneries across the world, we have launched a book series *World Geomorphological Landscapes*. It aims to be a scientific library of monographs that present and explain physical landscapes, focusing on both representative and uniquely spectacular examples. Each book will contain details on geomorphology of a particular country or a geographically coherent region. This volume presents the geomorphology of Namibia—a country that hosts superb landforms, many being the best examples of their kind in the world. Endless sand seas, tall inselbergs, majestic river canyons, pans teeming with wildlife—they can all be found across Namibia. Since Namibia is relatively easy to navigate, the book is not only suitable for scientists and students of Geography and Earth Science, but can also provide guidance to holidaymaking geoscientists as to where to go to enjoy the very best scenery.

The World Geomorphological Landscapes series is produced under the scientific patronage of the International Association of Geomorphologists (IAG)—a society that brings together geomorphologists from all around the world. The IAG was established in 1989 and is an independent scientific association affiliated with the International Geographical Union (IGU) and the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS). Among its main aims are to promote geomorphology and to foster dissemination of geomorphological knowledge. I believe that this lavishly illustrated series, which sticks to the scientific rigour, is the most appropriate means to fulfill these aims and to serve the geoscientific community. To this end, my great thanks go to Professors Heather Viles and Andrew Goudie for adding this book to their agendas and delivering such an exciting illustrated story to read and admire. The thanks are more than customary. Many years ago, I was invited to join Heather and Andrew on one of their Namibian research trips and benefited most from their expert knowledge of the country, now shared with the global geomorphological community.

Piotr Migoń

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