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PREFACE

We in Kenya have perhaps the finest beaches and shoreline scenery in the world, and we are determined that we shall leave our posterity as fine a coastline as we now have and through research we shall have full knowledge of the problems we face, or will face in the future, and what is more important, we will have the people who can identify and solve these problems. That was certainly an optimistic statement from Hon. S. M. Kioko, a former Member of Parliament for Mombasa West (now Changamwe) and Assistant Minister for Natural Resources in a speech delivered more than a quarter of a century ago. Ironically the venue of this utterance was at Malindi during a regional training course in Marine Geology.

It is hoped that apart from providing scientific input into the subject of coastal dune geomorphology, perhaps more importantly, this work will stimulate similar studies of the coastal dunes in Kenya and even desert dunes found in the northern parts of the country. This research has notably engendered those of Ms. W. M. Musila, Mr. T. M. Munyao and Mr. G. A. Olukoye who have respectively carried out research on the floristic aspects of coastal dunes in Malindi, net seasonal direction of bottom sediments in the Malindi Bay littoral zone and the physical and biological dimensions of desert dune stabilization in North Horr, Marsabit District in northern Kenya. Work on environmental impact assessment is presently being undertaken by a Canadian company (TIOMIN) with a view to exploit the heavy mineral deposits along the Malindi Bay coast.

I gratefully acknowledge the help obtained from all my friends and colleagues during fieldwork and preparation of this thesis. In particular, I extend my sincere thanks to Prof. P. D. Jungerius and Prof. M. P. Tole for their guidance and contributions as my promotores. My co-promotor Dr. ir. J. H. van Boxel provided very helpful critical reviews of this work for which I am grateful.

Interest in this study commenced during a visit to the University of Amsterdam in 1991. I am particularly thankful to Prof. J. H. J. Terwindt, Dr. P. G. E. F. Augustinus, Dr. A. Kroon, Dr. P. Hoekstra, all of the University of Utrecht, and Dr. F. van der Meulen and Dr. S. M. Arens, both of the University of Amsterdam for the discussions that helped in the formulation of the proposal at the initial stages.

I wish to express my appreciation to a number of persons who also made important contributions to the improvement of this thesis. Particular thanks are due to Mr. C..Agwanda and Mr. H. Mukanga, both of the Department of Resource Surveys and Remote Sensing (DRSRS), Mrs A. Robertson of the National Museums of Kenya and Ms A. A. Owino of the Ministry of Tourism. In this regard also, four former research assistants, Mr. P. O. Orango, Mr. S. K. Kazungu, Mr. C. H. Mwamtsi and Mr. J. C. Mwaduna deserve special mention for the memorably long periods we spent in the field gathering data in the hot sun and dusty conditions.

The Fisheries Department at Malindi provided numerous assistance during the fieldwork for which I am grateful. I particularly wish to thank Mr. B. Kavu, Ms N. Kagau, Mr. S. Mwaura and Mr. G. Mono, the successive District Fisheries Officers who gave their full cooperation during the fieldwork. It is with monumental sorrow that I devote a statement of remembrance to two members of the Fisheries Department who passed away during my stay at Malindi. These are the late Mr. Paul Muthoka whose wise counsel and cheerful rapport I long for even to this day and Mr. Abdalla Juma, the brave Fisheries Department coxswain. I wish their families and friends continued strength to weather this tremendous loss.

I am deeply indebted to the Netherlands University Foundation for International Co-operation (NUFFIC) for their financial support. I wish particularly to thank Prof. A. J. Dietz, Drs. A. van Haastrecht and Prof. G. Linden who certainly went beyond their normal call of duty to ensure that this work came to fruition; for their handling of administrative, financial and technical matters, I can hardly thank them enough.

Encouragement of sorts came from Prof. C. Christiansen, Prof. O. E. Barndorf-Nielsen, Prof. K. R. Rasmussen, of the University of Aarhus, and Dr. M. A. Rice and Dr. B. B. Willets of the University of Aberdeen during a Ph.D. training course in "Similitude, modeling and dimensional analysis in fluid mechanics with particular reference to sediment transport", organized at the University of Aarhus, Denmark, in 1992.

Scientific correspondence with Prof. E. O. Odada of the University of Nairobi, Prof. R. Carter of the University of Ulster and Prof. F. van der Maarel of Uppsala University deserve special acknowledgement.

A special word of thanks goes to Prof. C. O. Okidi. His personal encouragement and advice have been of great value for the preparation of this thesis.

Finally, I wish to express my indebtedness to my wife and children, who were a fountain of inspiration and provided the thrust that led to the completion of this thesis. I especially dedicate this thesis to a humble locomotive driver who was also my first teacher and mentor, my late father, Mr. Zedekia Auma Omogi. It is with honour that I remember the values he inculcated in me that have been a stabilizing force during the most difficult of times.

Joseph Abuodha

ELDORET
June 1 1999