

## Note: Namibia hosts the Colloquium of African Geology

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The Colloquium of African Geology (CAG) is a major biennial meeting, held under the auspices of the Geological Society of Africa

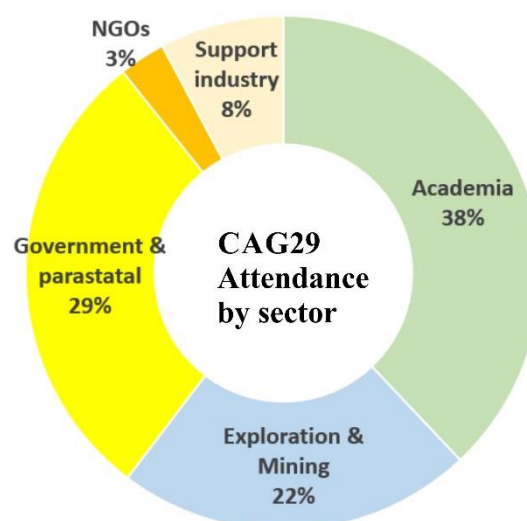


“Namibia – the World’s Geological Paradise”  
(Lion’s Claw, a distinctive sandstone formation at the Twyfelfontein - /Ui-//aes World Heritage Site)

(GSAf). Launched in Europe in 1964 at the University of Leeds (England), it was called into being by Professor W. Q. Kennedy and Dr Tom Clifford, themselves notable experts in the field of African geology, to provide a platform for earth scientists from around the globe engaging in research on the African continent to gather and exchange information and ideas. Since then, CAG has grown exponentially and become a forum not only for academics but for exploration geologists, mineral economists, IT specialists and a host of others, covering the entire spectrum of geoscientific applications and supporting services. Of the 28 events held to date, 18 were staged in Europe, while 10 were hosted by various African countries, i. e. South Africa, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Mozambique, Swaziland, Morocco (twice) and Tunisia.

### The 29<sup>th</sup> Colloquium of African Geology (CAG29)

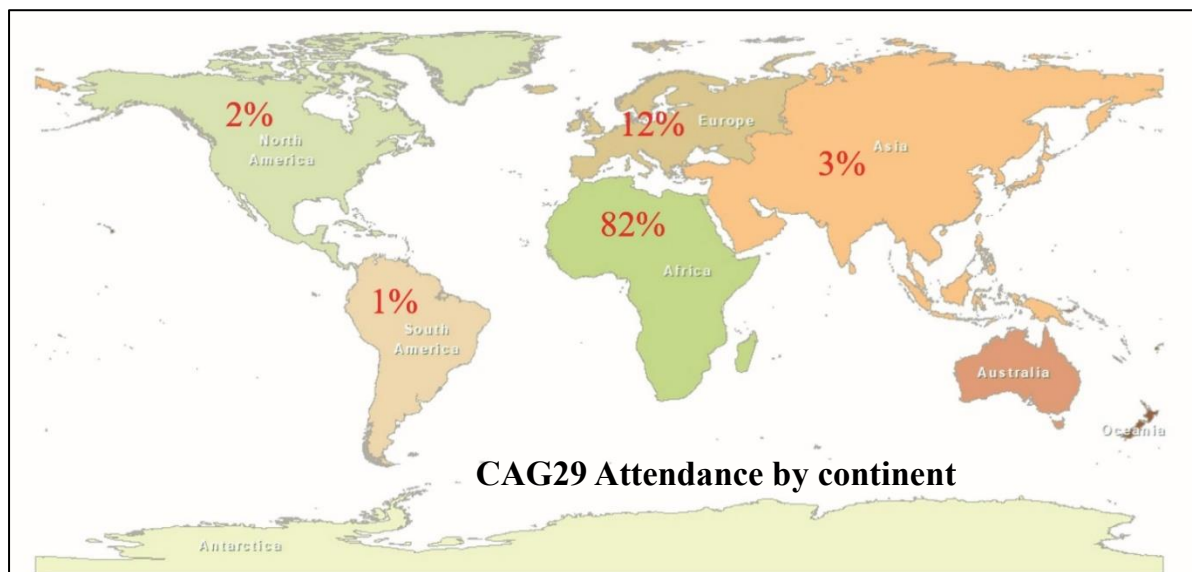
With its acclaimed geodiversity covering some 2.6 billion years of earth history and abundance of natural resources and mineralisation styles, which have contributed - and still contribute - immensely to the country’s economy, Namibia was well qualified to host the 29<sup>th</sup> Colloquium of African Geology during the final week of September 2023. Under the challenging theme “The earth sciences and Africa’s development: Current realities and future projections,” the four-day event took place at the Mercure (formerly Safari) Conference Centre in Windhoek, the country’s capital city. Principal organiser on behalf of GSAf was the Geological Survey of Namibia (Ministry of Mines and Energy), supported by various local stakeholders including the Young Earth Scientists’ (YES) Network Namibia, the Geoscience Department of the University of Namibia, the Geoscience Council of Namibia, the Namibian Hydrogeological Association and the Department



of Mining and Process Engineering (Namibia University of Science and Technology), as well as by the generous financial and in-kind contributions of several local and international sponsors.

More than 400 senior and early-career earth scientists from academia, mining and exploration, government and various NGOs, plus representatives from supporting industries, such as information technology, financial and legal institutions, registered for CAG29. Attendance statistics show that hosting this prestigious event in Africa provides a greater number of geoscientists from the continent with the opportunity to present their work to an international and diverse audience, as well as to initiate, develop and implement collaboration projects, and discuss current challenges from min-

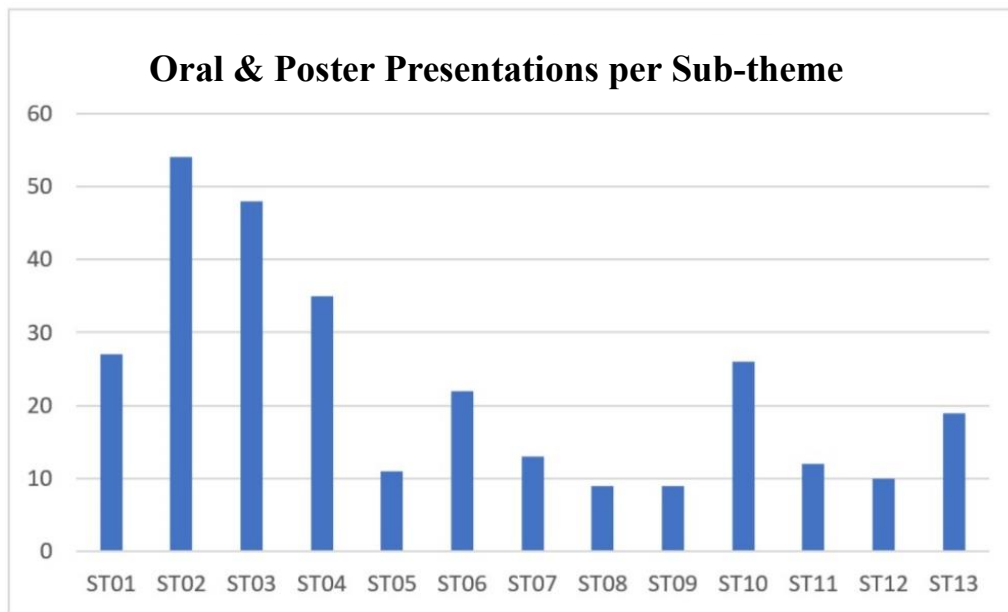
eral resource policy to a changing energy landscape with their peers across Africa. Thirty-one African and eighteen non-African countries were represented at CAG29, with the host country contributing roughly half of the delegates. Speakers at the opening ceremony, which was hosted by Acting Executive Director (Ministry of Mines and Energy) Mr Bryan Eiseb, included Namibian Prime Minister Dr Saara Kuugongelwa - Amadhila, Prof Olugbenga Okunlola (President of GSAf) and Dr Leake Hangala (CAG29 Patron).



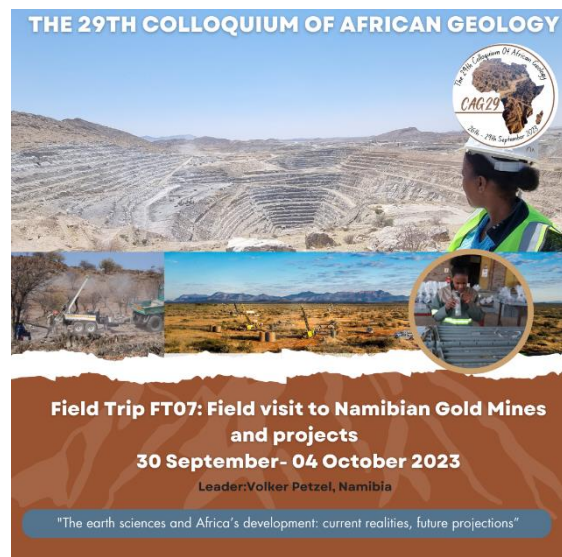
SUB-THEMES CAG29			
ST01	African Geological Record: Palaeontology, ancient environments, and palaeoclimate	ST07	Geoparks, Geotourism and Geo-ethics for Promoting Earth Heritage
ST02	Geodynamic evolution of the African continent	ST08	The role of Minerals and Fossil Fuel Industries in Africa's Energy Transition to Carbon Neutral and Green Hydrogen Energy Economies
ST03	Ore deposit geology of Africa (Mineral Resources and ore forming processes)	ST09	Africa's Nuclear Resources
ST04	Geophysics, Geochemistry and Remote Sensing– Peering into the subsurface and Integrated approaches in Geosciences	ST10	Hydrocarbon Potential in Africa
ST05	Hydrogeology and water sustainability under a changing climate	ST11	Investment in the Mineral Industry: policy issues, legislations, challenges, governance, best practices
ST06	Geology in the service of society: Applied Geosciences in Africa	ST12	Geoscience Education for Sustainable Development
		ST13	The fourth Industrial revolution, Artificial intelligence, and Information management

CAG29 featured four days of nearly 300 technical presentations in four parallel sessions, including 22 keynote lectures, ten plenary talks and two panel discussions. Sub-themes covered the whole range of geoscientific and related fields from the African geological and palaeontological record and ore deposit geology to mineral investment and economics, data management, geo-tourism, climate change

and energy transition, and the relatively new disciplines of medical and agro-geology to name but a few. While the lion's share of presentations predictably came from the classical fields of geology, a goodly number also discussed topics such as mineral policy, geo-ethics and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and its expected impacts on the geoscientific sector.



Surrounding the technical sessions, a variety of activities encompassing nine pre- and post-conference field excursions and twelve workshops and short courses were scheduled, while 16 exhibitors from governmental and parastatal organisations, tertiary institutions, NGOs and the private sector took the opportunity to showcase their services and products to an international audience. Field trips included excursions to the famous “Sperrgebiet” of southern Namibia, the Damara Orogen, the southern margin of the Congo Craton, visits to Namibian gold, lithium and REE mines and development projects, as well as a look at Windhoek’s water supply system and the inspection of a proposed Geopark site in the Kunene Region. More than 120 participants joined the one- to six-day excursions across Namibia. Workshops and short courses were manifold and varied, covering, among others, subjects such as data management, with an emphasis on African geodata organisation, IT solutions, artisanal and small-mining, UNESCO Global Geoparks in Africa, career opportunities in geosciences, geoscience diplomacy, modern drilling and core



logging techniques and a seminar for geoscience teachers.

Taking into account that the organisation of CAG29, owing to financial limitations, rested entirely in the hands of volunteers from the above institutions without the aid and benefit of professional conference coordinators, the



event, which – including associated activities – lasted from 20 September to 4 October, unfolded much as projected. Despite a number of shortcomings, it generally was commented on favourably by participants, who specially commended the core organising team for their untiring efforts in the face of many difficulties during the preceding year to make CAG29 a success.

Conference abstracts and excursion guides can be downloaded from the Ministry of Mines and Energy’s website

<https://www.mme.gov.na/publications/?designation=gsn>