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## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY ALONG THE SABAKI (GALANA): COASTAL REGION, KENYA

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### INTRODUCTION

In 2002 a team from Fort Jesus undertook a survey of the lower Sabaki (Galana) River from the mouth into the Ocean up to Baricho, a distance of 70 km. A total of 47 sites were recorded. The sites ranged from those with high concentration of 1<sup>st</sup> millennium pottery to those abandoned in the last years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The finds consisted mostly of Kwale Ware-related ceramics, Tana Tradition (TT) or Triangular Incised Ware (TIW) pottery, daub, eggshell beads and a few imported pottery.

### THESETTING

The area covered stretched from the mouth of River Sabaki up to Singwaya area, a distance of 70 km. The area is differentiated into three main landforms: the low coastal plain found along the coast, the high coastal plain or *nyika* plateau and the coastal upland ridge. The area is mostly below 200 m above sea level, though there are several scattered hills that are above 300 m above sea level. Sabaki (Galana), with its many minor tributaries is the major river. The Sabaki catchment area extends as far as the Eastern Highlands of Central Kenya.

Because of the unreliability of rainfall, there is no intensive agriculture. There is however, subsistence cultivation in the valleys, taking advantage of the flooding of the river. The mean temperature is c.26°C while annual rainfall figures range between 508 mm to 1270 mm distributed within two rainy seasons, the long rains or *vuli* between April and June and the short rains, or *kusi* between October and December.

The soils in the area are derived from rocks of sedimentary nature. The inland margin of this rock, which forms the coastal foot plateau above 300 m, consists of continental