Abstract

In this paper I document the history of hunting and foraging in the Eyasi Basin, northern Tanzania, from about 130,000 bp to contemporary times, by reviewing the available archaeological, palaeontological, historical and ethnographic data. The review reveals a complex co-existence and interactions between hunter-foragers and herders and farmers from about 3,000 bp until the present. In addition, the review exposes intricate opportunities and at the same time risks/constraints that face extant Hadzabe hunter-foragers in the 21st century. The Hadzabe are a group of about 800–1,000 people who live in the Eyasi Basin. Traditionally, they are viewed as hunterforagers—people who acquire nearly all of their food by hunting wild animals and foraging wild plant foods and honey. Although Hadzabe have been closely surrounded by other ethnic and cultural groups with whom they have interacted, for at least the last 100 years, their existence as a cultural group in the 21st century is in doubt. Mitigation measures are required in order to enhance the existence of this important cultural group.