Geophysical Research Abstracts, Vol. 7, 08487, 2005 SRef-ID: 1607-7962/gra/EGU05-A-08487 © European Geosciences Union 2005



## Hydrological and climatological implications of rapid glacial recession in the Rwenzori Mountains of East Africa

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Recent field observations of glacial termini retreat and analysis of LandSat imagery confirm that rapid glacial recession observed on the Rwenzori Mountains of East Africa from 1906 to 1990, continues unabated. Measurements of meltwater flows from glacial termini show that, contrary to speculation, recent glacial recession has had an infinitesimal, direct impact on river discharge. The climatological implications of rapid deglaciation in the East African Highlands and their relation to increased incidence of malaria are of considerable debate. Few highland meteorological measurements exist in the Rwenzori Mountains but statistical analysis of lowland meteorological records together with NCEP reanalysis data suggest a small but significant rise in air temperature and a slight decline in precipitation. Records of river discharge at the base of the Rwenzori Mountains, a proxy for alpine precipitation, are limited but consistent with a declining trend in precipitation. The evidence suggest that, beyond an abrupt and destablising shift to less humid conditions since the late  $19^{th}$  century, climate changes (i.e. increased air temperature, decreased precipitation) in the Rwenzori Highlands during the  $20^{th}$  century have contributed to rapid glacial recession.