

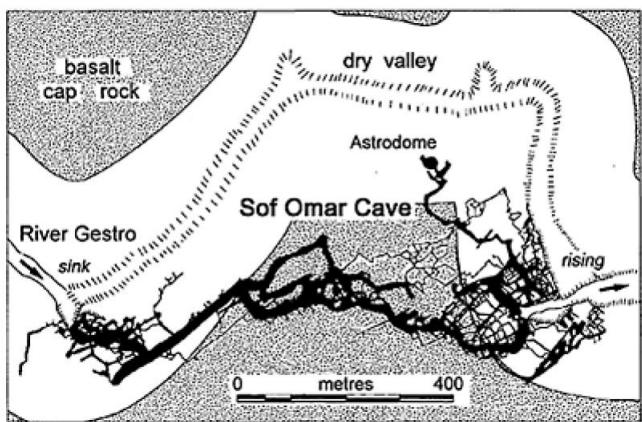


Country	MIKAS springs	Coordinates / Nearby City	Spring discharge (Q in l/s,min/av/max) / tapped or not	Criteria* in order / Main justification */ H-historic, A-aesthetic, S-scientific, E-Economic, Ec-ecologic	Data collected by
Ethiopia 	1. Sof Omar (Sof Umar)	6° 53' 57" N 40° 51' 02" E Z = 1200 m asl Oromia National Regional State, Bale Admin Zone, Weib River	- / few tens L/s / - Not tapped	<p>H, A, E, S</p> <p><i>Sof Omar is a meander cut-off cave with c. 15.1km of passage carved in Jurassic Antalo Limestone Unit, Gabredare Series (c. 100m thick). The Antalo Unit is overlain by Cretaceous Sandstone (Ambaradam Formation) and Oligocene basalt. This is the longest cave in Ethiopia and one of the longest caves in Africa. About 1.5km is active river passage 20m high and wide, although the straight line distance sink to spring is only 825m. During the dry season water depth in the cave river is c. 1m, but during flood this rises at least 7m flooding several km of passage that are normally dry. There is a fine dry valley between river sink and resurgence and a large (c. 150m diameter) caprock doline. The catchment is c. 3800 km² and extends back some 120 km to the 4300 m high Bale Mountains. The cave and spring are named after Sheikh Sof Umar Ahmed, who took refuge in the cave during the early 11th Century CE. The cave is a religious sanctuary where both traditional ritual ceremonies and Islamic worship took place. It is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage tentative list.</i></p>	John Gunn

MIKAS – Sof Omar



Location map of Sof Omar Cave



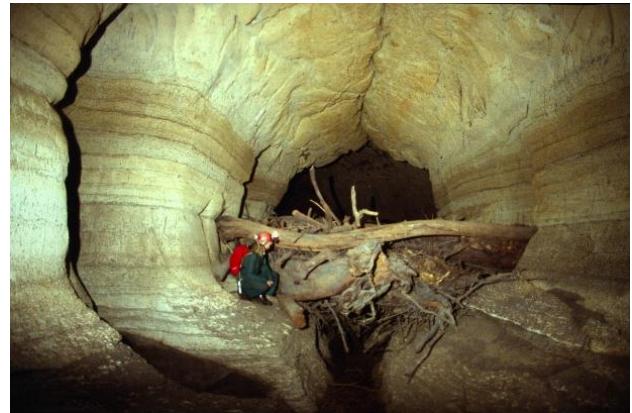
Sof Omar cave map (from Worthington, 2004).



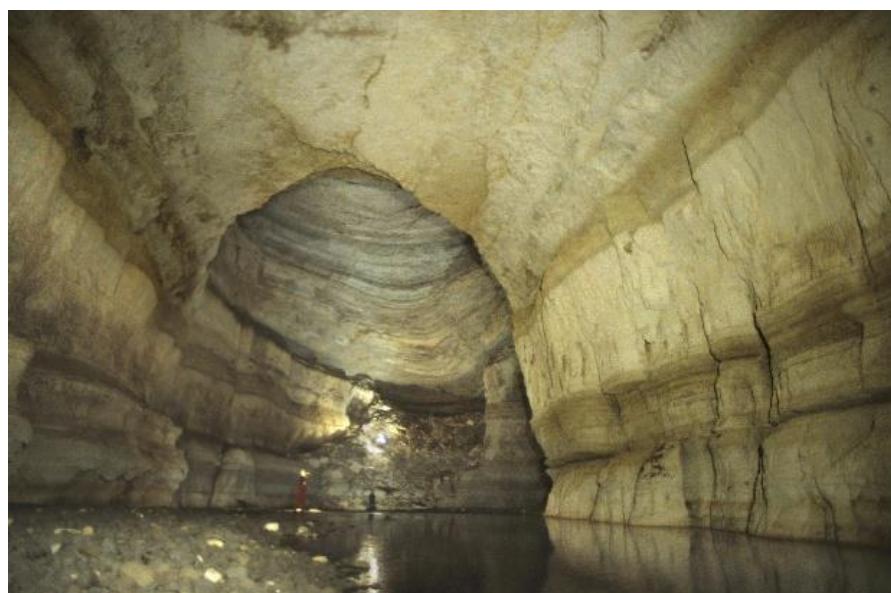
Sof Omar Resurgence (photo by John Gunn)



Sof Omar sink (photo by John Gunn)



Flood debris in Sof Omar cave (photo by John Gunn)



Cave passage (photos by John Gunn)