

Maps and Satellite Images of Simien Mountains National Park (World Heritage Site)



Maps showing the location of the Simien Mountains National Park in northern Ethiopia (from www.AfricanNaturalHeritage.org, left; University of Berne World Heritage Site map, right)

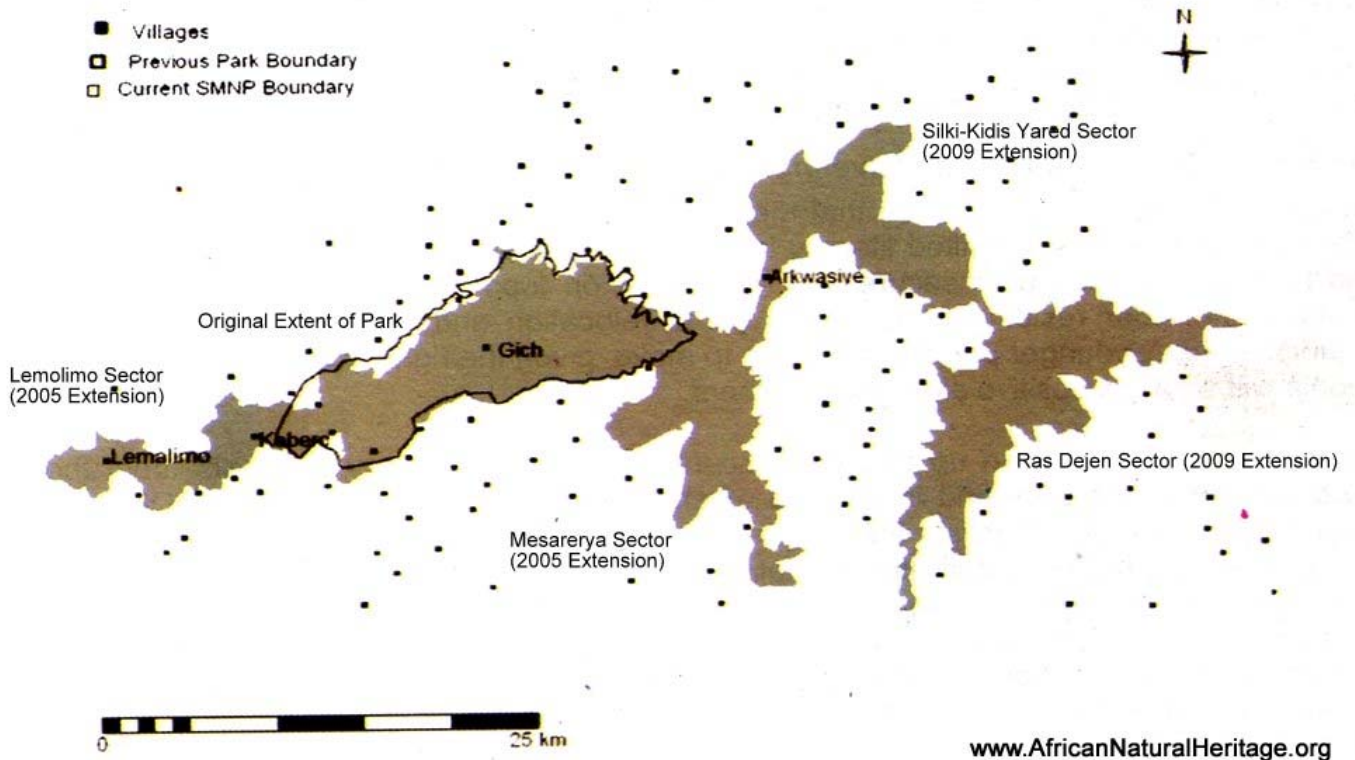


Map showing the road network, topography and other features of Gondar Region in northern Ethiopia (from the University of Berne World Heritage Site Map and Guide, 2003)

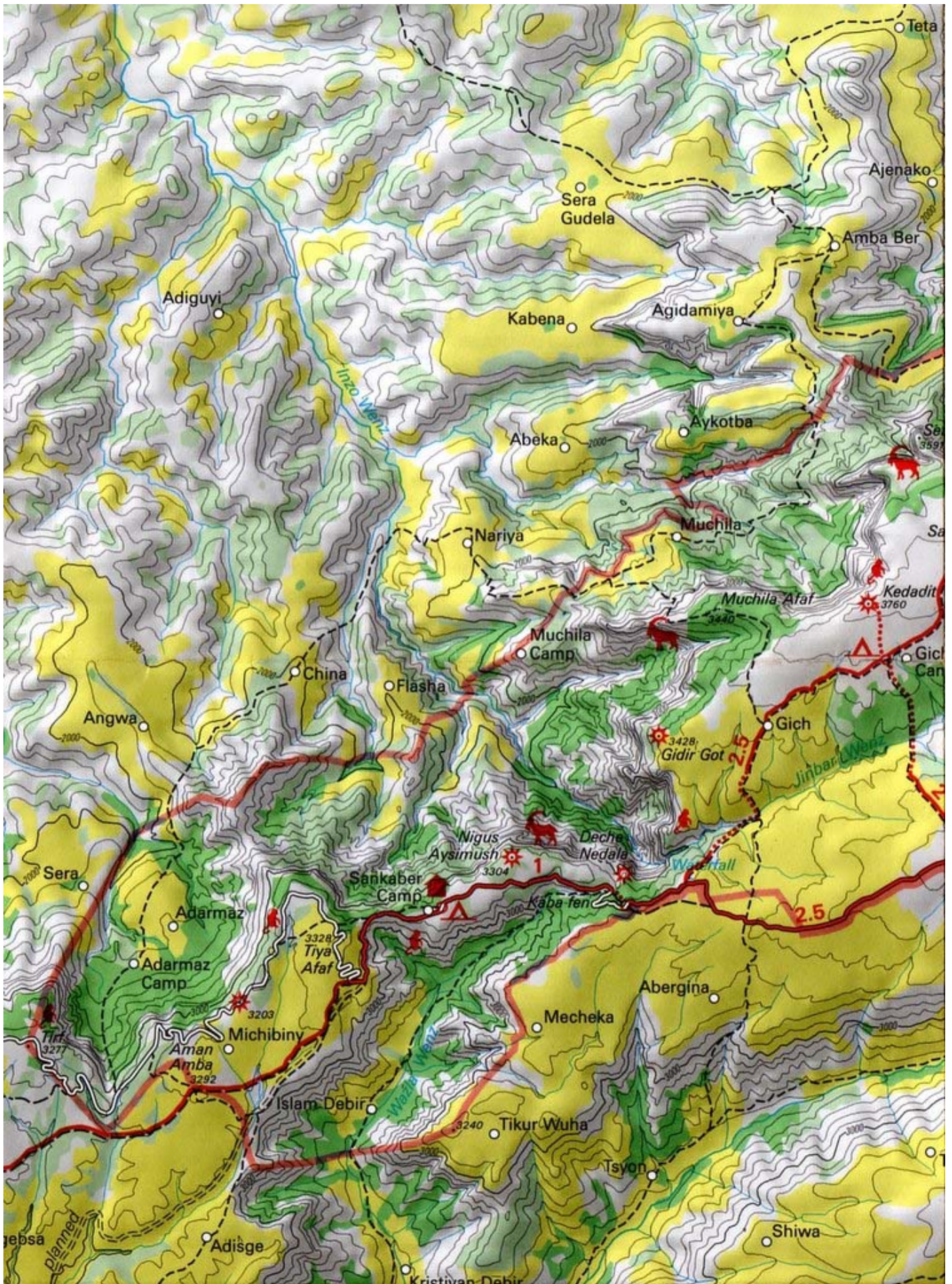


Section of the University of Berne's World Heritage Site Map and Guide, 2003 showing the principal trekking route from Debarq through Simien Mountains National Park to Ras Dejen

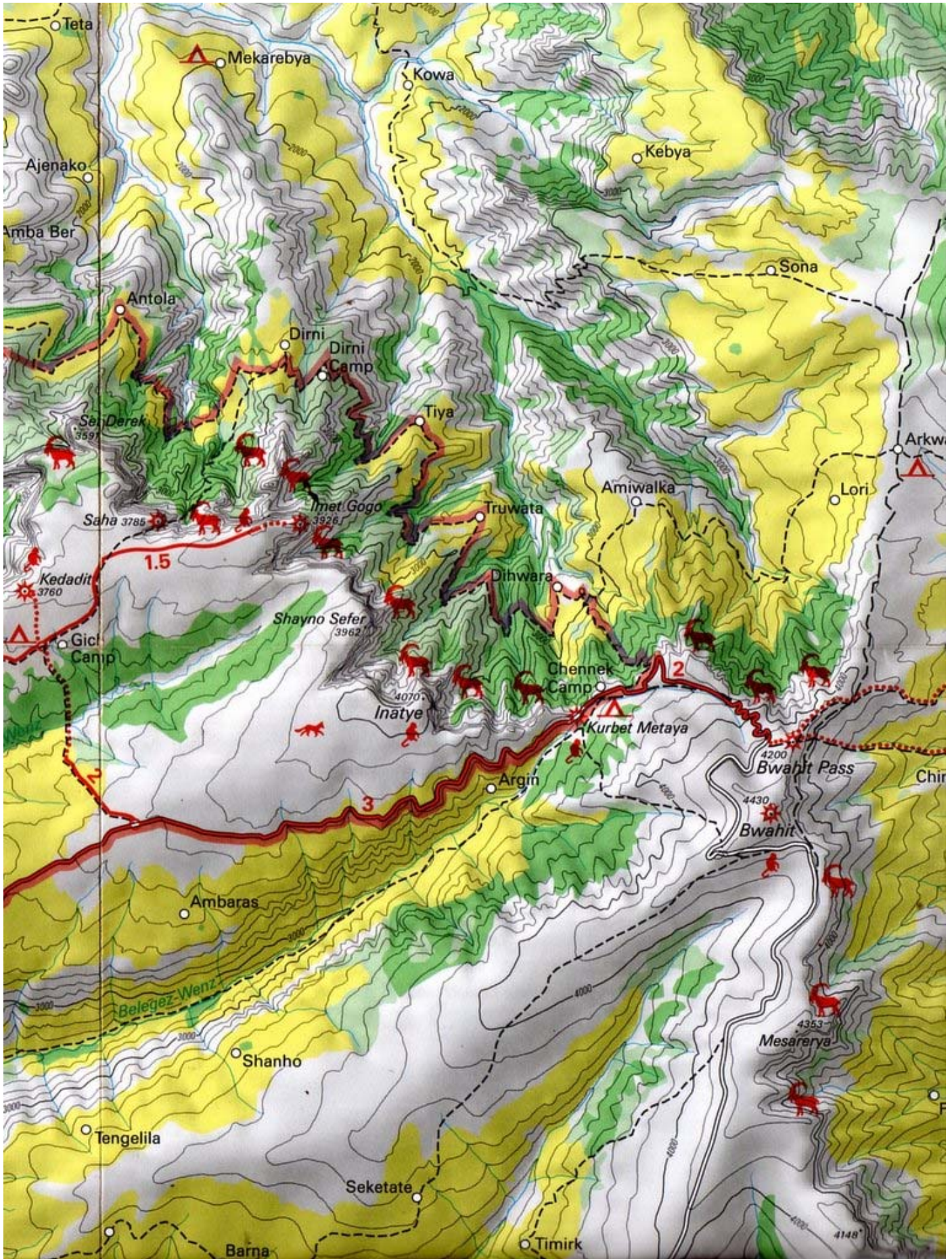
Simien Mountains National Park Boundary Extensions (2005 and 2009)



Outline map showing the original extent of the Simien Mountains National Park, with 4 extensions added in 2005 and 2009 (adapted from the park's General Management Plan, 2009-19)



Section of the University of Berne's World Heritage Site Topographic Map and Guide, 2003 showing the western half of the 'standard' trekking route through Simien Mountains National Park.



Section of the University of Berne's World Heritage Site Topographic Map and Guide, 2003 showing the eastern half of the 'standard' trekking route through Simien National Park (Gich Plateau, Imet Gogo, Chennek and Bwahit Pass).



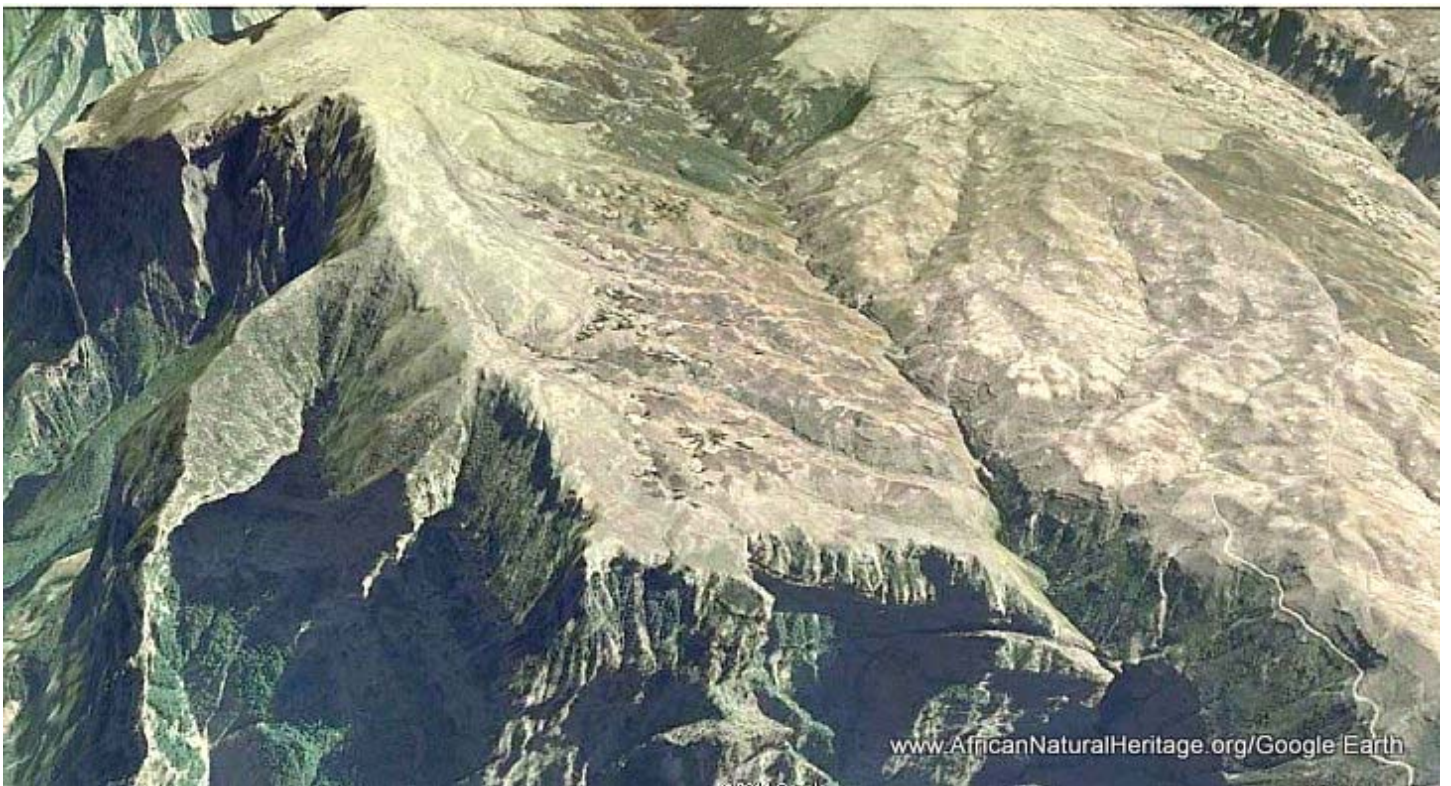
Google Earth satellite image of the main part of Simien Mountains National Park, viewed from the north and encompassing the whole of the Gich Plateau and escarpment from Chennek (far left) to Sankaber (far right). The 'standard' trekking route for hikers follows the rim of the escarpment, via the spectacular viewing point at Imet Gogo (centre, foreground).



Looking west along the escarpment the road (and hiking trail) can be clearly seen as it follows the ridge from Kaba Fen (foreground) via Sankaber (middle distance) to the settlement of Michibiny (top) (Google Earth satellite image).



The Simien Mountain Trek (Day 1): satellite image of the Simien Mountain escarpment looking east from Buyit Ras (where there is comfortable lodge accommodation) via the settlement of Michibiny (right, middle distance), to the narrow ridge at Sankaber (camp). A dirt road (visible in photo) follows the top of the escarpment, providing easy access for visitors and a spectacular hiking route (Google Earth image)



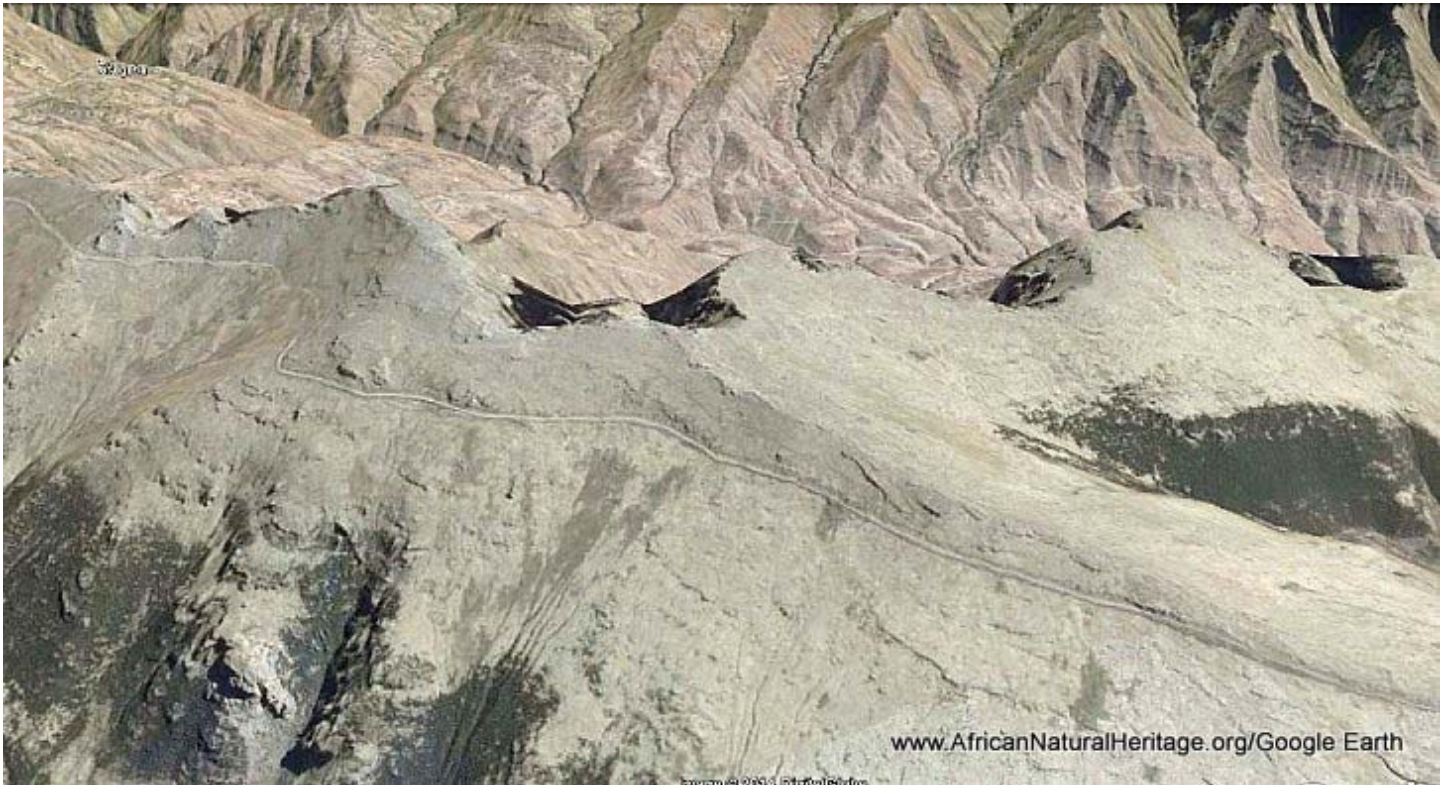
The Simien Mountain Trek (Day 2): satellite image of the Simien Mountain escarpment looking east from Sankaber (camp) to the settlement of Gich (camp), across the Gich plateau towards the spectacular viewing site at Imet Gogo. This section of the trek leaves the road and crosses the Gich plateau past some spectacular waterfalls, with opportunities to leave the main trail to take in the dramatic landscape from the rim of the escarpment (Google Earth image).



The Simien Mountain Trek (Day 3): satellite image of the Simien Mountain escarpment looking east from Imet Gogo to Chenek. This section of the trek follows a trail through spectacular Afro-alpine vegetation (giant *Senecio* plants etc) across the eastern part of Gich plateau before following the rim of the escarpment and rejoining the road just before Chenek. Chenek Camp provides the most spectacular overnight location in the entire trek (Google Earth image).



The Simien Mountain Trek (Day 4): satellite image of the Simien Mountain's Bwahit Pass, a high point lying to the east of Chenek camp which is a worthwhile target for a day excursion from Chenek if time allows. The main (dirt) road winds its way up the ridge to an altitude of around 4,200m, from where various trails can be taken to other sections of the newly-extended National Park. This area is prime habitat for two of the Simien's iconic animals – the Walia ibex and Simien fox. Ibex are commonly seen around Chenek and Bwahit Pass, while sightings of Simien fox require a bit more determination.



Satellite image of the high plateau south of Bwahit Pass (the Mesarerya extension of Simien Mountains National Park)



Satellite image of the summit and upland plateau of Ras Dejen (4,533m), Ethiopia's highest peak and now part of the extended Simien Mountains National Park. The peak is easily accessible on a 3-day hike from the road head at Bwahit Pass (or Chiroleba) (Google Earth image)



View of the Silki – Kidis Yared park extension looking southeast along the high plateau (Google Earth satellite image)



Satellite image of the rim of the escarpment (looking east) at Arkwasiye where voluntary resettlement of a village has enabled the establishment of a narrow 'wildlife corridor' between Bwahit Pass and the Silki-Kidis Yared park extension. The darker patches visible in this photo are areas under cultivation, while areas of settlement in the valleys and hillsides can be seen beyond. Walia ibex have started to use the corridor. (Google Earth image).



View from the top of the escarpment at the western end of Simien Mountains National Park, looking west towards Buyit Ras. The farms and settlement of Michibiny can be seen on the top of the plateau (left) while the village of Adarmaz lies at the foot of the escarpment in an area cleared of forest. Human activities such as cultivation, firewood collection and grazing of livestock represent the greatest threat to the integrity of the park and the survival of its unique threatened wildlife. (Google Earth satellite image).



Aerial view of homesteads (round huts with surrounding enclosures) and cultivated land (darker brown) in the settlement of Gich. This settlement is by far the largest settlement within the park, and lies at its geographical centre. Cultivation and grazing of livestock on surrounding areas of the Gich plateau leads to serious degradation of the park's resources and ecological integrity. There are plans for voluntary resettlement of residents outside the park, but funds to implement the plan have not yet been found.