This special issue of Marine Botany of the Eastern African region is dedicated to the memory of Professor Adelaida Kleti Semesi, who was greatly involved in this research in the region. She was one of the organisers of the meeting in Maputo which generated the publications printed here. Professor Adelaida Semesi passed away in February of this year.

Prof. Adelaida Kleti Semesi was born in 1951 in Haubi, in the Kondoa district of the Dodoma Region, Tanzania. After school she joined the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) for a BSc degree programme and graduated in 1975. Professor Semesi joined UDSM as a Tutorial Assistant in 1975 and rose to the rank of full Professor.

She completed her PhD on the phycocolloids (polysaccharides) from marine algae in Tanzania. During her career she produced over 100 publications in the form of books, journal papers and scientific reports. Her research activities had both academic and economic impacts. Her seaweed research conducted since 1982 has greatly improved the introduction and stabilisation of the seaweed industry in Zanzibar and along the coast of mainland Tanzania.

In addition to hundreds of undergraduates, Professor Semesi was supervisor to over 20 MSc and 10 PhD students. Her contribution to national and international human resource development was particularly beneficial to the Western Indian Ocean Countries, e.g. Mozambique, Kenya, Comoro Islands, Reunion, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and Tanzania. The success of the Sida/SAREC Regional and bilateral Marine Science Programmes and the development of WIOMSA would not have materialised without her considerable input.

Apart from being an excellent scientist, Professor Semesi, known as MAMA, was also a very warm and special person. All those who had the great pleasure of working with her, will miss her sadly.

Associate Professor Mats Björk
Special Issue Editor