

The Africa Groundwater Atlas

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Groundwater information and data is vital to sustainably developing groundwater resources, and to hydrogeological research, in Africa. But robust groundwater information for Africa is often not visible, available and/or accessible.

The online Africa Groundwater Atlas is a major initiative involving hydrogeologists across Africa, coordinated by the British Geological Survey and funded by the UK UPGro programme. The Atlas provides a systematic overview of the hydrogeology and groundwater resources of 51 African countries, and a gateway for those wishing to learn more.

Alongside geology and hydrogeology maps and descriptions for each country, the Atlas includes supporting information on rainfall, soils and surface waters; and on groundwater status and management. So far, 25 detailed country profiles have been developed in collaboration with 58 hydrogeological specialists for the relevant country, including members of IAH and AGW-Net. The remaining country pages include the same maps and supporting data, but have been produced without input as yet from country experts and so have more limited information. These will be updated in Phase 2 of the project, which began in May 2017.

The Atlas has been developed in parallel with the online Africa Groundwater Literature Archive, which so far indexes nearly 7000 references related to African groundwater. These can be searched spatially or by thematic keyword, and as many as possibly are freely available as digital downloads.

This initiative grew out of the publication of quantitative groundwater maps for Africa in 2012, which renewed interest amongst donors in the key role that groundwater resources can have in shaping Africa's future, and highlighted the need for more information at a country scale, to better support the sustainable, integrated development of groundwater resources.

The Africa Groundwater Atlas and Literature Archive provide a readily updateable platform to highlight and improve access to the wealth of groundwater information and expertise that already exists in Africa.

More information:

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/africagroundwateratlas/index.cfm>

[http://www.bgs.ac.uk/research/groundwater/international/africanGroundwater/maps.h
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