

An Atlas of Groundwater in Africa  
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The availability and accessibility of robust groundwater information and data is a major constraint to developing groundwater resources in Africa, and a barrier to undertaking hydrogeological research. 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 to learning more. Alongside geology and hydrogeology maps and descriptions for each country, the Atlas presents supporting datasets such as rainfall, soil type and surface waters, and information on groundwater status and management. So far, 25 country profiles have been developed in collaboration with 58 hydrogeological specialists for the relevant country, including members of IAH and AGW-Net. A further ten country profiles have been produced by BGS based on published information, without input as yet from country experts. The remaining country profiles are currently 'skeleton' pages with basic maps and information.

The Atlas has been developed in parallel with an online Africa Groundwater Literature Archive, which to date 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 continental 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 detailed information, at a country scale, to better support the sustainable, integrated development of groundwater resources.

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