



AGW-Net Annual Report 2008.

Introduction:

Africa Groundwater Network (AGW-Net) was inaugurated in 2008 under the auspices of the Cap-Net family of capacity building networks for the water sector.

This report gives details of the salient activities of AGW-Net in 2008.

Inauguration of AGW-Net.

AGW-Net was inaugurated at a meeting held in Pretoria South Africa on 21st and 22nd July 2008 at the Cap-Net offices in the Water Research Commission building. Institutional participants and partners at this inauguration meeting were Cap-Net (UNDP), BGR, WaterNet, WA-Net, Nile IWRM-Net, GWP-SA and UNW-DPC. Also present was the Burdon Network of the International Association of Hydrogeologists.

Twenty water and groundwater specialists representing 20 educational and public sector institutions from 19 countries across Africa attended the meeting. This group agreed unanimously that there was a need for a groundwater group to raise awareness of groundwater in Africa, to promote better management of the resource and to provide a professional and technical link to recent developments on the continent such as eg: the Africa Groundwater Commission (AGWC) established by AMCOW and the SADC Limpopo Groundwater and Drought Management Project (LGDMP). The meeting agreed to inaugurate the Africa Groundwater Network (AGW-Net).

Key focus areas for AGW-Net were identified as groundwater management and groundwater capacity building. Table 1 shows the key areas for groundwater management and it is anticipated that capacity building activities undertaken by AGW-Net will be targeted towards addressing some of these groundwater management challenges. Various participants to the workshop agreed to develop short training / capacity building courses to address some of the identified issues.

Richard Owen was elected as AGW-Net manager, Moustapha Diene as the WA-Net / West Africa regional coordinator, Muna Mirghani as the Nile IWRM-Net regional coordinator and Simon Kangoma / Mathews Katjimume as the WaterNet / southern Africa regional coordinators.

Table 1 Priority Problems in Groundwater Management

Regulation and Monitoring	Training	Institutional Capacity Building	Information Systems and other technical aspects	Education and Awareness Raising
Regulation of groundwater.	Training of all levels of government.	Institutions for Groundwater management.	Database and monitoring.	Awareness raising for the public and policy makers.
Protocols for participatory monitoring.	Training of staff at government, local authorities and communities in maintenance.	Strengthening tertiary groundwater institutions.	Laboratories (physical + chemical) and monitoring.	Awareness raising of the importance of groundwater in the hydrological cycle.
Quality aspect (mapping, monitoring.).	Increase numbers of trained groundwater professionals.	Coordinate the capacity for sustainable use of groundwater institutional capacity (personal, funds and operations).	Data for more understanding of groundwater.	Specialised groundwater management education.
Groundwater regulation to guide the law.	Address capacity building in working groups for : including groundwater in curriculum; institutional capacity building; general awareness' .	Establishing African wide centres of excellence in groundwater studies.	Building a transboundary data network.	Sensitizing decision makers.
	Lack of professionals within the sector.	Institutional capacities for development of standards, monitoring and implementation.	Groundwater information systems.	Influence of government politics on groundwater management.
	Human resources capacity building (training and research at all levels).		Factors controlling groundwater occurrence.	Awareness creation.
			Differential social and economic aspects for groundwater abstractions.	Groundwater education targeting young people through teachers .
			Developing simple models and decision support tools.	Awareness raising at all levels.
				Adequate coordination if water policies and political will.

International Activities by AGW-Net membership.

Guarani Transboundary Aquifer Congress Brazil Nov 2008.

Two AGW-Net members received sponsorship from Cap-Net to attend the Guarani transboundary aquifer congress held in Brazil during November 2008. Dr Hudson Ngotagu from the University of Dar es Salaam and Mr Mathews Katjimune from the Ministry of Water in Namibia travelled to Brazil and a preliminary report back has been received from Dr Ngotagu. Both members will be asked during 2009 to either present their experiences in Brazil or to develop a short training program on this visit.

Cap-Net network managers meeting, Kandy Sri Lanka Dec 2008.

Dr Richard Owen, the AGW-Net manager, attended the Cap-Net annual managers meeting held in Kandy Sri Lanka during December. This meeting brings together network managers from all the networks across the world to meet and discuss developments, to provide ideas and feedback on programmes and to identify the way forwards for future activities. AGW-Net presented its work-plan for 2009 to this meeting and Dr Owen will be reporting back to the AGW-Net membership on some of the highlights of the meeting in Sri Lanka.

Groundwater in SADC IWRM Initiative Gaborone, Botswana Nov 2008.

Dr Owen participated in this meeting with a specific brief to address capacity building issues in groundwater in the SADC region. AGW-Net was introduced to the participants and copies of the AGW-Net brochure were distributed. Our focus on capacity building short courses was highlighted and new membership applications were received.

Network Development Activities.

AGW-Net prepared and printed 2000 copies of our brochure in French and in English. Copies of the brochure are being sent to all members on our mailing list for dissemination and advertising the network. Simone Noemdoe of Cap-Net is thanked for the immense amount of work that she contributed in preparing and printing the brochure. The brochure has thus far been distributed at the WaterNet annual symposium in Johannesburg in October 2008, the SADC groundwater meeting in Botswana and the Cap-Net managers in Sri Lanka (see above).

AGW-Net received 200 copies of GWMate (Groundwater Management Series) from the World Bank. This educational / training series consists of both electronic and hardcopy material on groundwater management consisting of a) Briefing notes – concepts and tools b) Case histories and c) Groundwater quality (electronic version only). Copies of this material were distributed to regional country representatives at the SADC meeting in Nov. 2008 in Botswana. Other copies have been posted to the AGW-Net membership.

AGW-Net short course program.

As determined at the inauguration of AGW-Net, one of the key network activities is to develop short training courses for a variety of users, and a number of short course topics were identified at this meeting. Arising from this, several draft proposals for short courses have been developed. These are identified in the table below, together with their present stage of development.

The first course in the table (Wits University) is due to take place in July 2009, and funding is being sought for a three year course cycle with it being run once every year.

The second course in the table has been run previously by WA-Net in November 2009, and has been adjusted slightly. It is planned to run this course in both Francophone and Anglophone west African countries in February 2009.

The other course outlines have been submitted but are still undergoing review before a final course outline, host institution etc. are finalized and the course proposal submitted for funding consideration.

Table 2 – AGW-Net short course proposals

Course Title	Host Institution	AGW-Net promoter	Course status	Funding status
Managing groundwater resources water managers: role of hydrogeological science	Witwatersrand University, South Africa	Tamiru Abiye	Course outline and operational details completed and approved.	Submitted for funding to Cap-Net and BGR
Groundwater management within IWRM	Cheikh Anta Diop University Senegal Kwameh Nkrumah University, Ghana	Moustapha Diene - Senegal Geophrey Anornu - Ghana	Course outline and arrangements submitted and awaiting responses	Funders approached – Cap-Net, UNW-DPC and BGR
Groundwater exploration in time of climatic uncertainty	University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania	Hudson Ngotagu	Revised course outline submitted – awaiting further comments	Not yet submitted.
Borehole Drilling, Design and Aquifer Assessment for Groundwater Practitioners, Managers and Supervisors	National Water Resources Institute, Kaduna, Nigeria	Martins Eduvie	Final course revision in progress	Not yet submitted.

Activity plans for 2009.

AGW-Net submitted plans for 2009 to the Cap-Net managers meeting in Sri Lanka. These plans are in part aimed at establishing the network as a functional entity and in part at development of members' activities, especially the development and delivery of a number of short courses with a focus on groundwater management.

Key activities for 2009 are as follows:-

- Development of an AGW-Net constitution with guidelines and objectives.
- Identification of a host institution and establishment of basic secretariat.
- Development and dissemination of the membership list and establishment of a steering committee of elected / nominated members.
- Establishment of links with potential partner institutions such as cap-Net, BGR, Water-Net, WA-Net, Nile IWRM-Net etc....
- Training of AGW-Net members – groundwater management course by GWMate.
- Development of short courses by AGW-Net members.

Summary.

AGW-Net has been in existence for 5 months and the most important activity for 2009 is to make sure that the network does begin to live upto its mandate and both in terms of its memberships' needs and also in terms of its interaction with the wider water sector in Africa. Effort will be needed both to establish the AGW-Net footprint, to encourage productivity from members and to initiate and deliver groundwater training / capacity building products. In this undertaking, positive efforts and contributions from all the membership will be vital.

Signed

Richard Owen, AGW-Net manager. December 31st 2008.