



NEWSLETTER

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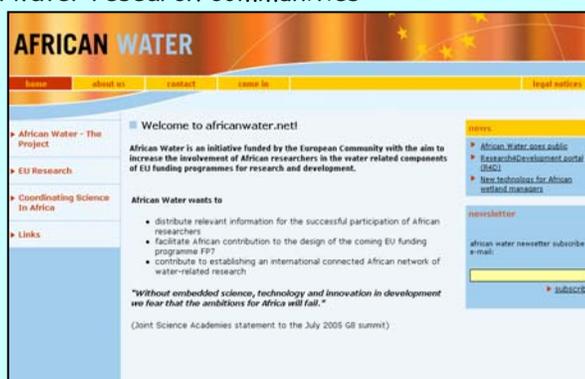
What is African Water?

African Water is a 2-year (2006-2007) Specific Support Action, funded under EU Framework Programme 6, and promoted by the Research Working Group of the EU Water Initiative, to increase involvement of African researchers in the water-related components of EU Framework Programme 7 (FP7), which will be officially launched in Brussels on 7th March 2007.

Neil Runnalls, the Project Coordinator, explains that the project is an integral part of the EU Water Initiative (EUWI) which was launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002. African Water is one component in the delivery of major EU commitments to strengthen African water research capacity. It will assist Africans to define and communicate their research priorities to the European Commission and into the Framework Programme, and it will raise awareness, in Africa and Europe, of the opportunities for participation in research partnerships through:

- A website with African-specific information about participation in FP7
- Newsletters and electronic news bulletins
- Training courses for water researchers in Africa on how to succeed in FP7
- Promotion of partnerships between EU and African water research communities

The African Water website was launched at the start of June 2006 to provide support to African researchers wishing to participate in FP7. Over the coming months, we will provide the latest information about FP7. We will upload training materials and step-by-step guides on every aspect of participation. The news section will keep you up to date with details of training courses, calls for proposals, etc. To comment on the website, please email info-africanwater@ceh.ac.uk putting "website" in the subject line.



The African Water Newsletter is available free of charge. It is produced quarterly, with more frequent email bulletins should there be information that needs to be urgently disseminated. To subscribe to the newsletter and email bulletins, register on www.africanwater.net. To comment on the newsletter, or unsubscribe, please email the editor at info-africanwater@ceh.ac.uk putting "newsletter" in the subject line.

The first training course for African water researchers wishing to participate in FP7 will be held in Pretoria in January or February 2007, around the anticipated time of the First Call for proposals. A second training course is planned in East or West Africa in September or October 2007 before the Second Call. We will inform you as more details become available. All training material will be uploaded to the website for those who are unable to attend training courses.

African Water publicity material (including posters and brochures available in downloadable form through the website) has been used to raise awareness at a range of events and meetings. These include the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico in March 2006, reported in the article on page 4. Approaches have also been made to a number of similar research capacity building projects, including Integration 4 Water (I4W) which seeks to increase involvement of water researchers in New Member States and Associated Accession Countries in FP7. Wherever possible, opportunities are being developed to secure the long-term continuation of support to African water researchers.

Meet the African Water Team

The African Water consortium is headed by the **Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH)** at Wallingford, UK. CEH is involved in several regional research and capacity building projects in Africa, and has links with the UK Department for International Development through the OASIS Resource Centre. The African Water Project Coordinator, **Neil Runnalls**, is a member of the European Water Supply and Sanitation Technology Platform, where he represents the EURAQUA network of European Freshwater Organisations. **Helen Houghton-Carr** manages the project.



Neil Runnalls

The **UK Research Office (UKRO)**, represented by **Amanda Crowfoot**, is the European arm of the UK research community, providing support services for the EC funding process and the Framework Programme.



Eiman Karar



Ian Smout

The **Water Research Commission** of South Africa (WRC) is a parastatal research institute. WRC has links with many regional and continental initiatives within Africa. **Kevin Pieteresen** is a member of the African Ministerial Committee on Science and Technology (AMCOST) Water Task Force. **Eiman Karar** is leading African Water project implementation.

The **Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC)** at Loughborough University, UK, represented by **Ian Smout** and **Julie Fisher**, has worked in the water supply and sanitation sectors in Africa for many years. It is also involved in training and dissemination, and has links with the UK Department for International Development through the WELL Resource Centre.

Hydrophil works closely with the Austrian Development Agency and has interests in the uptake of hydrology, water supply and sanitation research in development projects.

Thomas Zipper is the African Water Website Manager.



Thomas Zipper

FP7 news

The decision-making process for the EU's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) is well underway. A budget of approximately 48 Billion Euros has now been agreed for the 7-year programme which will be officially launched in Brussels on 7th March 2007. Although the formal procedure for adopting FP7 is not yet complete, and although many details of its implementation are still to be decided, the basic structure is clear. **Amanda Crowfoot** from UKRO explains that FP7 will be grouped into four blocks, or 'Specific Programmes'. These are:

- **Co-operation** - collaborative research projects, networks, co-ordination and support activities, organised around nine themes. One of these themes is 'Environment', encompassing climate change, sustainable management of resources, conservation, environmental technologies, and earth observation and assessment. Each will cover a range of topics, including many water-related ones.
- **Ideas** - frontier research projects. A new European Research Council (ERC) will provide support to individual teams, promoting excellence through Europe-wide competition in all areas of research.
- **People** - projects to improve human potential, including initial training of researchers, life-long training and career development, industry-academia partnerships, international fellowships, and excellence awards. Like 'Ideas', this is 'bottom up', and open to all research areas.
- **Capacities** - activities to increase research capacity, such as research infrastructures, research for the benefit of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), science in society, and activities of international co-operation.



Amanda Crowfoot

There will be many opportunities for researchers outside of the EU to participate in FP7. For example, each thematic priority will include specific topics aimed at international co-operation, as well as allowing for the participation of non-EU organisations. Also, there will be international fellowships, and return and re-integration grants. The development of a new FP is a lengthy process, in which the European Parliament and the Member States jointly decide and approve the programme and its rules and procedures. This process, together with the European Commission's preparation of all of the necessary supporting documentation, such as work programmes, guides and application forms, is due to be completed by the end of 2006, with FP7 starting at the beginning of 2007. Further information on FP7 can be found at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/index_en.cfm

African FP6 participation

In this section, we present an example of an existing FP6 water research project involving African partners, to give an impression of the sort of project possible. For this edition, **Ian Smout** from WEDC outlines the **SWITCH** project which aims to improve urban water management.

SWITCH is an acronym for the FP6 Integrating Project called "Sustainable Urban Water Management Improves Tomorrow's City's Health". SWITCH is one of the largest environmental research projects funded under FP6. It aims at the development, application and demonstration of a range of tested scientific, technological and socio-economic solutions and approaches that contribute to the achievement of sustainable and effective urban water management schemes in 'The City of the future' (projection 30-50 years from now). The approach will be to develop efficient and interactive urban water systems and services (city level) in the context of the city's geographical and ecological setting (river basin level), which are robust, flexible and adjustable to a range of global change pressures (global level). A key proposition is that sustainable urban water management is only possible if the urban water cycle is managed in a holistic manner, rather than by a piecemeal approach.



Urban water management problems in Accra (photo Columbia University)



Consortium members at the project kick-off meeting in Delft in April 2006

The African partners in the consortium (**KNUST**, **IWMI**, **CEDARE**) are involved in workpackages on:

- Safe water reuse
- Eco-sanitation and decentralised waste water management in an urban context
- Use of urban water (fresh and wastewater) for urban agriculture and other livelihood opportunities
- Maximising the use of natural systems in all aspects of the municipal water cycle
- Governance for integrated urban water management
- Optimising social inclusion
- Dissemination and training

The project has nine demonstration cities, including Accra, Ghana, and Alexandria, Egypt, where Learning Alliances will be established to bring together the major stakeholders who can drive the research and demonstration activities and disseminate their benefits.

A proposal has recently been submitted to the European Commission to extend the project to include Makerere University and the National Water and Sewerage Corporation, both in Uganda, and the University of Cape Town in South Africa. Their research would relate to the existing workpackage in Water Demand Management which is lead by WEDC. **Ian Smout** and **Sam Kayaga** are the WEDC staff involved.



Sam Kayaga

SWITCH: Project details

Aim: To achieve a sustainable, healthy and safe urban water system, through a paradigm shift in water management

Duration: 2006-2011 (5 years)

Coordinator: UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education

Partners: 32 total, made up of 17 from EU, 12 from developing countries, 3 others.

African partners comprise:

- Kwame Nkrumah University (KNUST), Ghana
- International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Ghana
- Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), Egypt

Budget: 23 Million Euros, of which 14.75 Million Euro is EU contribution

Website: www.switchurbanwater.eu (from late June 2006)
www.unesco-ihe.org/switch (currently)



African Water at the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico

Neil Runnalls (CEH), Eiman Karar (WRC) and Ian Smout (WEDC) of the African Water team attended the 4th World Water Forum (WWF) in Mexico in March 2006. The WWF provided an excellent opportunity to publicise African Water to the many delegates from Africa and to contact many other donors / stakeholders involved in water research capacity building in Africa.



Working from the European Commission stand, both English and French language African Water publicity brochures were distributed to many hundreds of WWF delegates. Actions at the WWF specifically targeted events with an African focus, explaining the project to delegates and building synergies with other complementary initiatives.



Eiman Karar stressed the need for Africa to adopt solutions that are appropriate for African socio-cultural dimensions, and not necessarily directly imported from the West, and for the West to better understand African dynamics. In particular, she called for a halt to the pressure on African countries to legislate for a plethora of new water management institutions, rather than build upon existing institutions. She said, "An important lesson is that one size does not fit all as far as institutional arrangements are concerned".

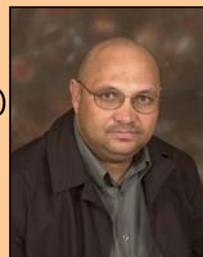
Photos: Top right and above: the African Water stand at WWF (photo CEH); bottom right: Eiman Karar (right) and Kevin Pietersen (left) on the South African Water Sector stand (photo WRC).



African Water in context

Participation of the Water Research Commission (WRC) in the African Water team has facilitated strong synergies between African Water and the African Ministerial Conferences on Science and Technology (AMCOST) and on Water (AMCOW). Eiman Karar and Kevin Pietersen from WRC explain that the research organisation is a leading member of the AMCOST Water Task Force which is made up of representatives of the five sub-regions of Africa. Water scarcity and related insecurity have been identified as one of the sources of the continent's under-development and increasing economic decline and, therefore, issues associated with the development, supply and management of water are high on the agenda. Water is included in Programme Cluster 2 of the *Plan of Action* which consolidates the science and technology programmes of the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The *Plan of Action* has been used to inform the European Commission of African water research priorities during the development of FP7. Specific water topics include:

- Scientific assessment of Africa's water resources and systems, and their improved conservation and utilisation
- Research and technologies to assess and monitor water-related disasters (eg floods)
- Knowledge and technologies to improve water quality and quantity, and access to affordable water
- Promoting exchange of scientific information on the causes and extent of drought and desertification in Africa



Kevin Pietersen