



NEWSLETTER

Number 5 September 2007

Welcome to the fifth African Water newsletter.

African Water is a 2-year (2006-2007) Specific Support Action to increase involvement of African researchers in the water-related components of EU Framework Programme 7 (FP7). Interest in the African Water project has increased significantly over the past year, since the website www.africanwater.net and first newsletter were launched in June 2006. The web statistics show an average of 17 visitors per day. These have been referred to African Water through search engines like Google, but came also from sites closely related to African Water like IGRAC, CORDIS or ESASTAP. There are also 253 registered subscribers to the newsletter. The African Water Newsletter is available free of charge. To subscribe to the newsletter and email bulletins, register on www.africanwater.net. To comment on the newsletter, or unsubscribe, please email info-africanwater@ceh.ac.uk putting "newsletter" in the subject line.

The African Water website is continuously updated with information relevant for science cooperation in Africa. New items are presented on the entry pages of the various sub-sites and the most relevant ones are also collected on the home page to give an overview. Links to relevant institutions and other projects and initiatives are regularly added.

This edition brings you the latest news on FP7, as well as details to coincide with the forthcoming training workshops in East and West Africa which will take place immediately after the second call in the Environment priority. There is also a report of the 2007 UKRO conference, attended by three African Water subscribers, and other conferences and meetings at which African Water has been publicised, including the 2007 Stockholm World Water Week.



Neil Runnalls

This is the penultimate edition of the newsletter as the African Water project finishes in December 2007. **Neil Runnalls**, the Project Coordinator, believes that, though ambitious, the project has been largely successful in assisting Africans to define and communicate their research priorities to the European Commission and into the Framework Programme, and raising awareness, in both Africa and Europe, of the opportunities for participation in research partnerships, thereby helping to deliver major EU commitments to strengthen African water research capacity.

However, we feel it is essential that this process continues in 2008 and beyond. When we report to the EU in December we will be making recommendations on how to continue, expand and improve the African Water concept. We would welcome your input, as our stakeholders, to this. If you have any comments on the activities of African Water, or suggestions for the future, please email them to info-africanwater@ceh.ac.uk by 30th November 2007, putting "recommendations" in the subject line.

FP7 news

The EC has announced that the second call of the Environment priority under FP7 will be published on 20 November 2007 with the 19 February 2008 as deadline for submissions. An indicative budget of about €216 million is allocated to the 2008 work programme, where more than 50 topics for research have been identified. A DRAFT of the second call is available on the website - note that the final version may vary from this, but the draft does give an indication of likely topics. Remember, there are also opportunities for water-related projects in other priorities, but note that deadlines vary across different work programmes. For further information see the CORDIS FP7 webpage which contains links to documents and submission mechanisms http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html

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UK Research Office (UKRO) Annual Conference, July 2007, Imperial College, London UK

UKRO is the European arm of the UK research community, providing support services for the EC funding process. The annual conference is targeted primarily at European research and liaison officers from universities and research institutes; in other words, those responsible for promoting and supporting their institution's European activity.

Nineteen African Water subscribers responded to the invitation to apply for sponsorship to attend this year's conference. The selectors were looking for applicants who could not only describe how their organisation would benefit from their attendance at the conference, but could also provide an indication of how they would use their networks of contacts to disseminate the information gained to others in their region. Three successful applicants were eventually selected from the extremely strong field, from South Africa, Mauritius and Ethiopia. The African representatives were accompanied to the conference by African Water's **Neil Runnalls** and **Helen Houghton-Carr (both CEH)**. African Water was publicised at the conference, to inform UK research administrators of this mechanism by which their water researchers can make contact with potential African partners.

The conference attracted approximately 200 delegates, who heard about various different issues including the European Research Area, Intellectual Property Rights in FP7, ethics in FP7, international cooperation across FP7, financial provisions of FP7 grant agreements, EuropeAid and the European Research Council, many direct from European Commission speakers. Copies of presentations from the event can be found at: http://www.ukro.ac.uk/annual_conference/index.htm. As well as the networking opportunities presented at the event, the African Water team also allowed time for discussions with the three African representatives regarding their specific research challenges and how these issues mapped on to the European Research programmes.

Feedback from the African representatives was very positive. The South African delegate said "With most of the presentations I could think of people in my university or elsewhere that should have been sitting there with me and could benefit from what was being shared. Fortunately the availability of the presentations gives me an opportunity to bring it to their attention and, where practical, discuss with them. The exposure to the conference, people and presentations was an extremely positive experience. It has answered a number of my questions (and created new questions!). It will help me to improve efforts to facilitate participation by my university in FP7 projects. I am sure my colleagues from Africa had a similar positive experience!"



Neil Runnalls with delegates from Ethiopia and Mauritius

European liaison officers in African research organisations should consider attending the 2008 conference, details of which will be announced on the UKRO website.

African Water training workshops

Following the successful training workshop for water researchers in the Southern Africa region, held in Pretoria, South Africa in early 2007, two further workshops are being organised for researchers in East and West Africa. The West Africa workshop will be led in Dakar, Senegal on 15-16th November 2007. The East Africa workshop will be held in Nairobi, Kenya on 28-30 November 2007.

The workshops will provide interested researchers involved in the water field, as well as research administrators and trainers, with all of the necessary information to participate in FP7. They will include sessions introducing the EU and FP7, water research opportunities within the programme, how to get involved in a project, and how to prepare a proposal, contractual and financial issues. Many of the sessions will be interactive, with some group sessions and plenty of time for discussion. In addition, there will be an opportunity to speak to the trainers on a one-to-one basis, in order to discuss your personal strategy for participation. Details of both these events have been emailed to African Water subscribers and are available on the website. Places are limited so early registration is advised (preferably by 19th October).

Centres of Excellence in Water Science and Technology

WRC organised a meeting with the French International Development Institute in July 2007 to discuss the progress of the NEPAD Centres of Excellence. The main aim was to further the progress since the 2006 Cairo summit between AMCOW and AMCOST. The second draft of the business plan for the network of Centres of Excellence in Water Science and Technology has been completed and submitted to NEPAD for their consideration. NEPAD is planning a stakeholder workshop/meeting that will look and discuss the content of the business plan. The business plan will be tabled in the next AMCOST meeting this November in Nairobi. The invitation or call for submission of Institutional Profiles closed at the end of July 2007. Around 15 institutions from all over Africa submitted their profiles so that they can be considered as members of the proposed African network.

Other Africa news and events

Eiman Karar (WRC) attended the preparatory African Science Academy Development Initiative Planning Meeting and Workshop in Dakar between 2nd and 4th May 2007. The African Science Academy Development Initiative (ASADI) is organising an annual Africa-US symposium and joint working session spanning the ten years of the project in November 2007. A major underlying goal of these ASADI annual meetings is to use the theme of the conference as a vehicle to help African academies explore their role with respect to evidence-based advising for policy in their respective nations. The conference theme is "Water and Health". The West Africa African Water training workshop will be attached to this event.



Dr Xola Mati (South African Academy of Sciences), Eiman Karar (WRC) and Prof. Eugene Cloete (University of Pretoria)

June 2007 saw the inauguration of the North-South Centre at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich. The activities of the Swiss Centre for International Agriculture (ZIL) and the Network for International Development and Cooperation (Nideco) are now jointly executed under the umbrella of the new North-South Centre which aims at promoting research and education in the field of international development and cooperation in technical, natural, human and social sciences. During discussions, information on African Water as an EC initiative targeting African researchers to access EU funding was shared.

Information on African Water was shared with delegates at the International Association of Local Government (ICLEI) symposium on "Water for Local Needs - the Contribution of Local Governments to IWRM" in July 2007, and with a high-level delegation from the Kenyan water sector to South Africa in September 2007. At the latter event, the East Africa training workshop was also publicised.

African Water at World Water Week in Stockholm



African Water posters in an EUWI session

Large posters publicising the African Water project were prominently displayed at all of the EU Water Initiative (EUWI) meetings held during the World Water Week in Stockholm, Sweden in August 2007. A large number of brochures were also distributed to delegates. The audiences at the EUWI meetings were typically high level national representatives from EU Member States, developing countries, NGO's and the European Commission. **Neil Runnalls and Helen Houghton-Carr (CEH), Ian Smout and Julie Fisher (WEDC) and Thomas Zipper (Hydrophil)** were in Stockholm during the event.

The publicity created considerable interest and helped raise the profile of African Water at the political level, and provide impetus for establishing longer term support to African water researchers beyond the project.

Other forthcoming events

8th WATERNET/WARFSA/GWP-SA symposium

The 8th WATERNET symposium will take place in Livingstone, Zambia between 30th October and 3rd November 2007. The symposium is organised by: WATERNET, the Institute of Water and Sanitation Development (IWSD), the Water Research Fund for Southern Africa (WARFSA), and the Global Water Partnership-Southern Africa (GWP-SA). The theme of this year's symposium is "Integrated Water Resource Management - from Concept to Practice". Information on African Water will be shared at the conference. For more information, see <http://www.iwsg.co.zw/waternet.cfm?pid=56>

UNESCO HELP (Hydrology for Life, Environment and Policy) Southern Symposium

"HELP in Action: Local Solutions to Global Water Problems - Lessons from the South" will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa between 4th and 9th November 2007. The symposium is aimed at bridging the gap between science and policy towards sustainable development at local, national and the international levels. Information on African Water will be shared at the symposium. For more information, see <http://unescohelp2007.com/>

33rd WEDC international conference

The 33rd WEDC conference will take place in Accra, Ghana between 7th and 11th April 2008. The conference is organised in conjunction with the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing in Ghana. The theme of this year's conference is "Access to Sanitation and Safe Water: Global Partnerships and Local Actions". A review paper on African Water will be presented at the conference, and there will be an African Water side event. For more information, see <http://wedc.lboro.ac.uk/conferences/conference1.php?ID=8>

New links

Recent links added to the website:

- **SPLASH** is the name of the European Union Water Initiative European Research Area Network (EUWI Era-Net). It is a consortium of 15 ministries, funding agencies and national research and technological development authorities from 11 European countries. SPLASH aims to improve the effectiveness of European funded research on water for development and to develop the capacity of local organisations to coordinate and communicate their research activities. The project focus is Africa and the Mekong region.

<http://www.splash-era.net>

- **ASKIA** (Access to Scientific Knowledge in Africa) is an online information source to help African researchers find scientific information on the Internet. The project — run by the Ethiopia-based UN Economic Commission for Africa through their Information and Communication Technology division — aims to support and promote access to scientific knowledge for scientists, university students, lecturers and policymakers.

<http://www.uneca.org/askia>

- **International Foundation for Science (IFS)** is a research council with international operations and the mission to build the scientific capacity of developing countries in sciences related to the sustainable management of biological and water resources. Since 1974, IFS has provided support to more than 3500 IFS Grantees in some 100 developing countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The IFS released its report "Strengthening Capacity for Water Resources Research in Countries with Vulnerable Scientific Infrastructure" at the Stockholm World Water Week. <http://www.ifs.se>

