



NEWSLETTER

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The African Water project is coming to an end! However, the process of increasing African involvement in the EU Framework Programme will never be fully completed. From its inception, African Water was conceived and operated as just one of many actions contributing to a larger vision for African, and indeed wider developing country, involvement in the FP. Throughout its life, those involved in African Water have built upon past work, and created synergies with on-going and planned projects. To a large extent we have been successful in this endeavour. A number of linkages are in place to take forward the progress made in African Water.

African Water has been a very timely project. It has coincided with a number of quite independent actions which have all been working towards improving African continental and regional coordination of research and water related development. These African wide initiatives, driven by a wide range of organisations, have enabled African Water to link in with these efforts and hence have a far greater impact. This major African wide movement is affecting organisations and individuals at all levels of African society and African Water has been able to contribute to this process. Highlights include:

- Primarily through the Water Research Commission, and its role in the NEPAD AMCOST process, African Water has been able to input at ministerial level, even affecting recent AU-EU dialogue on water research.
- Synergies have been exploited between the major African Scientific Academies Development Initiative (ASADI) in late 2007, and UK sponsored events for African Academies in early 2007.
- The project has engaged with senior administrators from some of the leading universities in southern, east and west Africa. Through these contacts, we believe we will see these larger universities lead the way in their respective regions - taking with them many other organisations in their region.
- Newly-formed African associations of research administrators (e.g. WARIMA, SARIMA) have been contacted, and communication channels established to feed information of special relevance to them.
- African Water was one of the first concrete examples of coordinated European action arising directly from the EU Water Initiative (EUWI). It has laid the groundwork for the on-going and more substantial SPLASH Era-Net action to coordinate EU Member State water for development research.
- Many individuals have been guided to those parts of FP that are most suitable for their own interests. This has occurred through an efficient web portal, e-bulletins, conferences and training workshops.

African Water has provided a useful test bed upon which a range of different approaches to communication and training have been trialled. Some major lessons have been learned and will be taken forward into future EU efforts to build research collaboration between the EU and Africa.

Neil Runnalls, Project Coordinator

SPLASH - the EUWI Era-Net

SPLASH is a consortium of 15 ministries, funding agencies and national research and technological development authorities from 11 European countries. Its main objectives are to minimise duplication of research, identify areas where there are gaps in knowledge, and share good research management practice, resulting ultimately in joint research programmes. The project focus is Africa and the Mekong region. SPLASH has embarked on a very active programme and wants to publicise its activities to those outside the project consortium and motivate people to get involved. You can find out more at <http://splash-era.net/index.php> If you would like to receive the SPLASH newsletter, please go to <http://splash-era.net/enquiries.php> and simply insert 'subscribe' into the subject line.

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FP7 Calls for Proposals

On 30th November 2007, the European Commission launched its 2008 calls for proposals. A total of 34 calls in many different areas of the FP were published. Participants from African organisation are eligible to participate in any project, and receive funding from the EU. However, this must be in addition to a minimum number of EU partners (usually three organisations from different countries).

The most relevant area to water researchers is likely to be the Environment theme. This theme funds actions focused on: predicting climate, ecological, earth and ocean systems changes; tools and technologies for monitoring, prevention and mitigation of environmental pressures and risks including on health; and sustainability of the natural and man-made environment. A Work Programme sets out a range of topics on which applications can be submitted under this call, and gives details of the aim and focus of each of these, and the type of project that the EU wishes to fund. These topics include a number that are water-related or relevant. The deadline for submission of 2008 Environment projects is **25th February 2008**. A further call, with a new Work Programme and new topics, will be launched later in 2008. There are also topics that may be of interest to water researchers in other Themes of FP7, such as Food, Agriculture, Fisheries & Biotechnology; Nanosciences & Nanotechnology; Space. These can also be found through the 'Find a Call' page, as can opportunities under the Marie Curie programme for research training and fellowships. Deadlines vary according to the call.

Those interested in further information on the call for proposals should go to the 'Find a Call' page on the CORDIS website; this can be found at: <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm>. Then, click on the link to the 'call identifier' for the call that is of interest. The call identifier for environment is FP7-ENV-2008-1, under the Co-operation heading. You can then download the information about the call and how participate. This information includes a Call Fiche (basic information about the call); a Work Programme (a detailed document that sets out which topics proposals are invited for); and Guides for Applicants (which give practical information on the application and submission process). For more information, see the CORDIS FP7 home page at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html

African Water training workshops

The West Africa workshop was held in Dakar, Senegal on 15-16th November 2007, directly after the *Third Annual Conference of the African Science Academy Development Initiative* which focused on water and health. The workshop was run by Neil Runnalls from the UK Centre of Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) and Kevin Pietersen representing the Water Research Commission of South Africa (WRC), with logistical support from Zagry Scholtz, also from WRC. Eighteen participants attended the workshop, drawn not only from Senegal but also from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Uganda. English-French translation was provided.

The East Africa workshop was held in Nairobi, Kenya on 28-30 November 2007, in partnership with *United Nations Environment Programme* (UNEP). It was run by Amanda Crowfoot from the UK Research Office (UKRO) based in Brussels, together with Neil Runnalls and Kevin Pietersen, and with Zagry Scholtz again sorting out the logistics. The workshop was opened by Halifa Drammeh, Special Advisor for African Affairs at UNEP, and was attended by 22 participants, all from Kenya, who particularly appreciated the opportunity for one-to-one discussions with the trainers on the day after the workshop.

Presentations from the workshops will be available to download from the African Water website, in addition to those from the Southern Africa workshop earlier in 2007. The three workshops have provided interested researchers involved in the water research and related areas, as well as research administrators and trainers, with information necessary to participate in FP7. However, there is a clear demand for ongoing support in the future, possible through an African contact point in the EU.

African Water at the 33rd WEDC international conference

African Water will be at the WEDC conference in Accra, Ghana between 7th and 11th April 2008. The conference, entitled "Access to Sanitation and Safe Water: Global Partnerships and Local Actions", is organised in conjunction with the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing in Ghana. There are two main activities planned: firstly, there will be a paper presentation on the different facets of African Water; secondly, there will be an African Water side event on the afternoon of Friday 11th April, where delegates will be able to find out more about opportunities offered by FP7 and show examples of previous relevant work undertaken. Further details of this will appear shortly on the conference website, see <http://wedc.lboro.ac.uk/conferences/conference1.php?ID=8>