



Project 518066

## **AFRICAN WATER**

Supporting African involvement in the EU Framework Programme

Instrument: Specific Support Action

Thematic priority: Integrating and Strengthening the European Research Area

### **D3.2.1 Training tours of African states**

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Water Research Commission, South Africa; Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, UK & UK Research Office, Belgium

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<b>PP</b>	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
<b>RE</b>	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
<b>CO</b>	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

Revision version 3



## List of contents

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<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Workshop organisation</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Regional training workshops</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Network of Centres of Excellence in water sciences and technologies</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>Appendix 1 List of participants at first training workshop</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>Appendix 2 List of participants at second training workshop</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>Appendix 3 List of participants at third training workshop</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>Appendix 4 Comments from training workshops</b>	<b>11</b>



## 1. Introduction

It is recognised at the highest level that the water-related Millennium Development Goals (water supply, sanitation and resource management) will not be achieved unless new approaches, methods, technologies and improved knowledge management systems are developed. As part of its European Research Area concepts and its commitments to delivery of the Millennium Development Goals, the EU opened up the Thematic Programmes of Framework Programme 6 (FP6) to partners from developing countries. However, participation by developing country partners, including those from Africa, in was significantly less than was hoped. A number of factors are thought to have contributed to this problem, including amongst many reasons:

- Lack of awareness among African water researchers that these FP openings existed.
- Lack of knowledge/experience of the administrative procedures for participation in the FP.
- Lack of access to information about FP opportunities (e.g. calls)
- Lack of awareness by European water researchers of African research capacity.
- The disinclination of European consortia to involve African partners.
- The poor position of African partners with respect to the consortium building process.
- The disadvantages for African partners of participating “remotely” in the FP.

The regional training workshops run by the African Water project provide valuable opportunities to address these issues directly through face-to-face contact between European experts and interested African researchers. The intention of the training workshops was to provide researchers involved in water research and related areas, as well as research administrators and trainers, with all of the necessary information to participate in FP7. The proposed agenda included 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, and developing a strategy for participation.

Originally two workshops were planned, in Southern and East Africa, but a change to the project work programme following cancellation of the FP7 launch event released funds for a third workshop in West Africa, enabling wider regional coverage:

1. Southern Africa workshop: Pretoria, South Africa, 31 January – 2 February 2007
2. West Africa workshop: Dakar, Senegal, 15-16 November 2007
3. East Africa workshop: Nairobi, Kenya, 28-30 November 2007

There was no charge for attendance at the workshops, though no financial support was available either to cover participants’ travel and subsistence costs. It was not felt that this deterred organisations seriously interested in participating in FP7 from sending representatives.

## 2. Workshop organisation

The three workshops were all organised and managed by WRC who were tasked with:

- Securing the venues and arranging with fellow African partners to act as hosts for the workshop.
- Preparing the invitation letters for distribution throughout existing networks.
- Attending a number of planning meetings for the workshops.
- Developing the agendas for the workshops.
- Preparing a presentation on the African Networks for Centres for Excellence initiative.
- Attending and providing logistical support at the workshops.

The invitation letters were disseminated through various databases to African water researchers. Responses were initially slow but a repeat notice sent nearer to the closing due date resulted in a significant response rate with substantial queries that needed e.g. the content of the workshops, financial support, etc. In all cases, there was a drop of 20-30% between those participants who confirmed their attendance and those who actually turned up.

The workshops were run by Neil Runnalls from CEH, Amanda Crowfoot from UKRO (not West Africa) and Kevin Pietersen from WRC. The workshop agendas were modified for each workshop but comprised the same main topics:

- Introduction to EU institutions
- Introduction to FP7
- Water-related research opportunities in FP7
- Proposal preparation (consortium building, proposal writing, proposal submission, etc)
- Discussion of African experiences of participating in the Framework Programme
- Support for African researchers
- Contracts and finance
- Marie Curie Programme
- Opportunities beyond the Framework Programme
- Discussion on institutional strategies for participation

Presentations from all the workshops are available for download from the African Water website (D1.1.1 and D1.1.2). The participants were given feedback forms to provide their thoughts and comments about the training.

### 3. Regional training workshops

#### 3.1 Southern Africa workshop: Pretoria, South Africa, 31 January – 2 February 2007

WRC organised the first African Water training workshop, held in Pretoria, South Africa between 31<sup>st</sup> January and 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2007. Thirty-one participants from the Southern Africa region attended, drawn mainly from South Africa, but also from Kenya, Malawi, Swaziland and Zimbabwe (Appendix 1). The average ratings for each topic received from participant feedback forms, are presented in Table 3.1.

The session on support for African researchers was run by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) of South Africa together with associated institutions that are implementing instruments to support South African researchers to access the FP7 programme. This part of the programme mostly addressed the needs of the South African research community, with presentations on:

- ESASTAP: Opportunities for South Africa's participation in FP by Mmboneni Muofhe
- ST-EAP: Europe Africa partnership in S&T by Takalani Nemaungani
- National Contact Point (NCP) Support for SA participants in FP by Renee le Roux

The need to consider similar support instruments to the above for non-South African researchers was recognised, though the way forward was not clear.

Overall, there was a lot of interest from the participants, and some useful discussion with many pertinent questions, though the diversity of the audience resulted in a lack of focus in the discussions and more small group discussions may have been beneficial. It was felt that better use could have been made of those African participants who have participated in the FP in giving their experiences. The workshop also provided an opportunity for the participants to network amongst themselves.

#### 3.2 West Africa workshop: Dakar, Senegal, 15-16 November 2007

WRC organised the second African Water training workshop, held in Dakar, Senegal on 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> November 2007 (Figure 3.1). The workshop was held directly after the *Third Annual Conference of the African Science Academy Development Initiative* which focused on water and health, and English-French translation was provided. The workshop was attended by 16 participants from the West Africa region (Appendix 2). The average ratings for each topic received from participant feedback forms, are presented in Table 3.1.

Again, there was a lot of interest from the participants, and some useful discussion with many pertinent questions. The workshop also provided an opportunity for the participants to network amongst themselves and slots for one-to-one discussions with the trainers.

#### 3.3 East Africa workshop: Nairobi, Kenya, 28-30 November 2007

WRC organised the third African Water training workshop, held in Nairobi, Kenya between 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> November 2007 (Figure 3.2). The workshop was held in partnership with *United Nations Environment Programme* (UNEP), and was opened by Halifa Drammeh, Special Advisor for African Affairs at UNEP. The workshop was attended by 19 participants all from Kenya (Appendix 3). The average ratings for each topic received from participant feedback forms, are presented in Table 3.1.



*Figure 3.1 Participants at the Dakar workshop*



*Figure 3.2 Participants at the Nairobi workshop*

Again there was a lot of interest from the participants, and some useful discussion with many pertinent questions. The Nairobi workshop also provided an opportunity for the participants to network amongst themselves and slots for one-to-one discussions with the trainers.

### 3.4 Feedback

The regional training workshops aimed to provide the necessary groundwork for African water researchers to become involved in FP7. The evaluations from the workshops are summarised in Table 3.1, and some individual comments are provided in Appendix 4. The greatest unhappiness seemed to be about support to African researchers. The immediate challenge is to ensure continuity of the programmes through follow-up support to the researchers that attended the workshops. These support measures could include:

- An African contact person in the EU. The entity to support such an initiative requires further access to resources.
- Access to EU information sources – perhaps a dedicated website.

*Table 3.1 Feedback from regional training workshops*

Topic	Score (out of 4)		
	Pretoria	Dakar	Nairobi
Introduction to EU institutions	3.5	3.6	3.5
Introduction to FP7	3.5	3.5	3.6
Water-related research opportunities in FP7	3.5	3.5	3.4
Proposal preparation (consortium building, proposal writing, proposal submission, etc)	3.2	3.2	3.5
Discussion of African experiences of participating in the Framework Programme	2.6	2.6	3.1
Support for African researchers	2.5	2.7	2.7
Contracts and finance	2.7	2.8	3.2
Marie Curie Programme	3.2	3.3	3.4
Opportunities beyond the Framework Programme	2.5	2.5	3.0
Discussion on institutional strategies for participation	2.5	2.8	3.2
Registration process	3.5	3.4	3.5
Venue information	3.5	3.5	3.2
During event	3.4	3.3	3.5

#### **4. Network of Centres of Excellence in water sciences and technologies**

The second part of Deliverable 3.2.1 to provide training material (from the training tours of African states) to four major African<sup>1</sup> water research/training centres was not achieved. This was because the new African Centres of Excellence in Water Sciences and Technology Development, being set up under a NEPAD initiative with AMCOW/AMCOST support, and intended as the hosts for this African Water activity, had not been identified by the end of the African Water project. Therefore, it has not been possible for African Water to coordinate with this other process as planned. Instead, African Water has provided information at high level into NEPAD and AMCOST dialogues and laid the ground for future engagement with EU water and sanitation research initiatives. The progress made in the identification of these Centres of Excellence has been communicated from African Water to other key stakeholders across the EU, and to African researchers through the training workshops, African Water Newsletters and project website.

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<sup>1</sup> In the original DoW this was erroneously listed as four major *European* water research/training centres.

## Appendix 1 List of participants at first training workshop

	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Email address</b>
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## Appendix 2 List of participants at second training workshop

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### Appendix 3 List of participants at third training workshop

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19	Kipkemboi	Julius	Dr			-

## Appendix 4 Comments from training workshops

- Personally I found the course very good, as someone interested in understanding how FP7 works and how I can be of help to my colleagues at the University of Pretoria. The water dimension was therefore a bonus for me! I have already been able to use the knowledge gained.
- I would appreciate if the workshop explored how African institutions could be assisted to access funds, including the individual upcoming researchers in the Marie Currie Programme.
- The course was very well organised and presented by knowledgeable presenters – and very interesting for South Africa. Next time it would be useful to have a short recap of all websites and places on the internet where we can find information. Now all the addresses are spread out through the printouts of the presentation that we received.
- Great initiative.
- I would have appreciated being given contact details of the Consortia in Europe that can be approached.
- Participating in the workshop for two days was an enlightening process for me. However, I don't think there is a place for a small consultancy like mine within the EU FP7 water research.
- It would be helpful if the SA researchers could have more time to speak to one another in a more structured manner to formulate collaborative linkages and understand what areas different groupings had strengths and expertise in, and perhaps meet some of the interested parties from the EU in such a setting.
- I suggest a format similar to the SafeWater (SA French Bilateral) workshop in 2005 that was very well managed by WRC-ZA. This made the whole process of forming collaborative linkages so much easier.
- The collaboration between African researchers and western researchers must not be seen like another way of colonisation of ideas and ideology. Instead this must be based on the need of the African countries in order to develop capacity and improve the condition of life.
- Future meetings for beneficiaries of FP7 to be organised to share ideas with partners and progress.
- Very informative, a real eye opener!
- The timing of the FP7 AW workshops was good coming before the call for proposals.
- Having generated quite some interest it would be good to arrange in future more detailed training on preparing proposals for FP7.
- Further opportunities for interaction with researchers who have been successful in the FP7.
- The workshop has been quite an eye opener for possible opportunities for career development. There is, however need for UKRO to in future consider financing of meeting for potential partners which may not be very costly.
- More discussions on partnership on equal footing and needs to treat partners as equal in fund management and accounting.
- May be interesting next time to have a little case study exercise on proposal preparation.
- Nothing to add. Thank you for what you do.