



SADC GROUNDWATER AND DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PROJECT



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Facilitating inclusion of groundwater principles into policy development and decision making in the SADC region

What is SADC GDMP

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) project on Groundwater and Drought Management is part of the Regional Groundwater Management Program (RGMP) which consists of ten sub-projects. The GDMP contributes to six of the 10 sub-projects.

- Capacity Building in the Context of a Regional Groundwater Management Programme.
- Establishment of a Regional Groundwater Information System.
- Establishment of a Regional Groundwater Monitoring Network.
- Compilation of a Regional Hydro geological Map and Atlas for the SADC Region.
- Establishment of a Regional Groundwater Research Institute.
- Groundwater Assessment of the Limpopo River Basin.

One-third of the people in SADC live in drought-prone areas where groundwater is the primary source of drinking water

Aim

- To promote the importance and benefits of proper Groundwater and Drought Management in the region through providing relevant tools, knowledge and information to targeted stakeholders.
- To increase awareness and understanding of Groundwater and Groundwater Drought Management in the SADC member states, resulting in the incorporation of Groundwater principles into policy development and decision making throughout the SADC region.

Objective

To develop a SADC regional strategic approach to support and enhance the capacity of its member States in the definition of drought management policies, specifically in relation to the role, availability (magnitude and recharge) and supply potential of groundwater resources.

Components

The project has four inter-related components:

1. Testing of practical local Groundwater Drought Management strategies at pilot level in two locations in the Limpopo River Basin;

2. Research into Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems, their occurrence, vulnerability, value and protection;
3. Development of Groundwater Drought Management tools and guidelines; and
4. Establishment of a Regional Groundwater Management Institute of Southern Africa to continue long term monitoring and the promotion of better management and awareness in the SADC region and national levels.



Key Outcomes

- Increased awareness on Groundwater and Drought Managements issues of concern in SADC among stakeholders, key policy (senior technical officers), decision makers in the environmental, water and other development-related ministries.
- Increased inclusion of Groundwater issues into the water management framework for the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).
- Establishment of a SADC Groundwater center of excellence.

Why Groundwater Management

Groundwater is an essential resource of great social, environmental and economic importance. In the SADC region groundwater is the source of water for over 70% of the population.

With continuous population growth and industrial expansion impacting the state of Groundwater around the world, implementing comprehensive Groundwater management strategies is critical.

The development of countries in SADC is highly dependent on adequate and reliable water resources. About one-third of the people in the SADC region live in drought-prone areas, where Groundwater is the primary source of drinking water for the human population, livestock, and most other activities.

Despite Groundwater being the source of water for over 70% of the population in SADC, there is inadequate awareness and capacity to implement effective management of Groundwater and drought in the region.

Activities under this project should result in increased awareness on Groundwater and drought-related issues in SADC; thereby contribute to better Groundwater and Drought Management in the region. Good management and protection of Groundwater is crucial to SADC's economy, poverty alleviation, public health and the environment.

Partnership

The Groundwater and Drought Management Project (GDMP) is a partnership between SADC, working through the Water Division, in the Infrastructure and Services Directorate, the governments and government departments of SADC member states.

A Project Management Unit manages the GDMP while a Project Steering Committee comprising a pool of professionals from SADC member states in the area of Groundwater and its management meets twice in year to ensure project coherence, and oversee project policy, strategy and implementation.

Implementation of the project began in January 2007 with support from the World Bank's Global Environmental Facility Trust Fund Grant and the SADC member states.

Groundwater is the water from rain or other precipitation that soaks into the ground and moves downward to fill cracks and other openings in soils and rocks. Groundwater is an abundant natural resource making up 90% of all of the freshwater in the world. In the SADC Groundwater is the source of water for over 70% of the population.

For more information contact:

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