

NEWS STORY

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Research findings from seven-year groundwater research programme revealed in new film

Five BGS groundwater scientists, based at the Lyell Centre in Edinburgh, have played a major part in 'Unlocking the Potential of Groundwater for the Poor' (UPGro), a seven-year international research programme (2013 - 2020), funded by the Department for International Development, Natural Environment Research Council and the Economic and Social Research Council. A new [film](#), released this week, highlights the use and potential of groundwater for Africa, and the rich research findings from the research programme.

The Lyell Centre geoscientists have been amongst a group of 200 of the world's best researchers from more than 50 organisations across Africa and Europe who have been focused on improving the evidence base around groundwater availability and management in Sub-Saharan Africa. The goal has been to ensure that the hidden wealth of Africa's aquifers benefit all citizens and the poorest in particular. UPGro projects are interdisciplinary, linking the social and natural sciences to address the challenge.

BGS has taken a major role in the programme and has been involved in approximately half of the projects over the seven years, leading one of the five consortium projects and helping to manage two others. The BGS team were also involved in more than a third of the catalyst projects and have worked in 10 African countries undertaking detailed field studies in collaboration with partners

BGS Hydrogeologist Prof Alan MacDonald said: 'The UPGro programme is a rare combination of world class research with tangible local impacts and meaningful partnerships. Together we have uncovered how groundwater is replenished, the quality of groundwater, the permeability of aquifers, and the true state of groundwater infrastructure and management. With partners we have used this knowledge to help identify and develop pathways to unlock groundwater's vast potential and govern it in a sustainable way that benefits all.'

Watch the film [here](#). You can find out more about BGS's involvement in the programme [here](#), the Hidden Crisis consortium, led by BGS, [here](#), and the African groundwater atlas developed by BGS [here](#).

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Notes to editors

The Lyell Centre is a strategic partnership between Heriot-Watt University and the British Geological Survey, funded by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), the Scottish Funding Council and Heriot-Watt University. The partnership enables them to work together combining their expertise in geoscience. Exploring themes ranging from geology and geophysics to marine ecosystems, the centre's combination of pure and applied expertise employs innovative methods and technologies to society's most important environmental science and energy challenges.