

**PRESENTATION OF THE REGIONAL CENTRE ON GROUNDWATER RESOURCES
EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH IN EASTERN AFRICA
CATEGORY 2 CENTRE UNDER THE AUSPICES OF UNESCO**

**DURING THE KICK-OFF MEETING: NEPAD NETWORKS OF CENTRE OF
EXCELLENCE IN WATER SCIENCES PHASE II**

SOUTHERN SUN THE CULLINAN HOTEL, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA,
24 TH -26 TH MAY 2016

By

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WHAT IS A UNESCO CATEGORY II CENTRE?

- Category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO are **established and funded by Member States to contribute to the achievement of UNESCO's objectives** by way of global, regional, sub-regional or interregional activities.
- They are **not legally** a part of the Organization, but are **associated** with it through formal agreements between UNESCO and the Member State hosting the centres.
- The centres are intended to serve as international or regional centres poles of expertise or excellence to provide technical assistance and services to Member States, cooperation partners and also to the network of UNESCO field offices.
- The Category 2 centres are expected to contribute directly to achieving the Strategic Programme Objectives or programme priorities and themes of the Organization, and specifically to UNESCO's programme results at the MLA (Main line Action) level.

THE REGIONAL CENTRE ON GROUNDWATER RESOURCES EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH IN EASTERN AFRICA.

- Name of Centre:
 - Regional Centre on Groundwater Resources Education, Training and Research in Eastern Africa under the Auspices of UNESCO.

- Location:
 - Offices are in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation Building, Maji House; Nairobi, Kenya

- Year of establishment:
 - Established through Kenya legal Notice No.252 of 18th December, 2015 and became operational February, 2016

THE REGIONAL CENTRE ON GROUNDWATER RESOURCES EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH IN EASTERN AFRICA.

- Board of Directors:
 - Nine Members inclusive of the Acting Director and the chairperson.)

- Major Field of Activity and expertise:
 - Ground water Resources Education, Training and Research.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE CENTRE

- Kenya realised that information on Groundwater Resource is scarce within the different African countries and particularly for transboundary aquifers.
- There are very few studies and hence limited information for the sustainable management of Groundwater Resources in Africa.
- African countries through Africa Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW) recognized the importance of Groundwater in Africa and establishment of an Africa Groundwater Commission (AGWC).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE CENTRE

- There is limited human capacity not only in Kenya but in the African Region with regard to professionals on Water Resources and particularly on Groundwater.
- It is in view of the above that the Kenya Government proposed to UNESCO the establishment of a UNESCO Category II Regional Centre of Excellence Groundwater Resources Education, Training and Research Centre for the sub-Saharan Africa.

Justification

- In the sub-Saharan countries there is a need for the integration of both Surface and Groundwater Resources. It has been observed that there is over exploitation for some aquifers in Africa particularly coastal aquifers leading to the deterioration of some of Groundwater Resources.
- There is still limited **understanding and knowledge** on Groundwater Resource in many sub-regions. There exists crucial Groundwater Management challenges in Region.
- Groundwater experts and water governance managers within the sub-Saharan region require capacity building in groundwater research.

Some of the key areas that require urgent attention:

1. Capacity building,
 2. Domestication of groundwater research
 3. Data management
- Therefore the new Institute will seek to contribute to addressing the global agenda for sustainability of Water Resources through:
 - Provision of technical support
 - Facilitating capacity building as well as knowledge sharing.
 - It will build the capacity of the experts in the region in water resource management with a particular emphasis on the integration of both Groundwater and surface water.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CENTRE

With the above knowledge of need of a Groundwater Resources Institute, Kenya Government made a proposal to UNESCO to establish such a Centre, which was:

- Approved by the **General Conference of UNESCO in 2011.**
- In **February 2013 at UNESCO Headquarters**, UNESCO and Kenya Government signed an agreement to set up the Centre.
- It is now established and with nine Members of the Board of Directors, who were inaugurated by the Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation on 29th March, 2016. **I am honoured to be the Chairperson of this Board.**



Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Hon. Eugene Wamalwa, EGH, with Board of Directors of the Centre during the Inauguration Ceremony on 29th February 2016

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE CENTRE

The centre will act as a regional platform for Education, Training and Research on Groundwater Resources.

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The following summarizes the main objectives and overall scope of activities to be undertaken by the regional centre:

- Initiate and conduct research in mapping and assessment of aquifer systems; Management, conservation, protection and Governance of ground water resources; through generation and providing scientific and technical information
- Promote professional training by offering training programmes, workshops, seminars in ground water resources management and development;

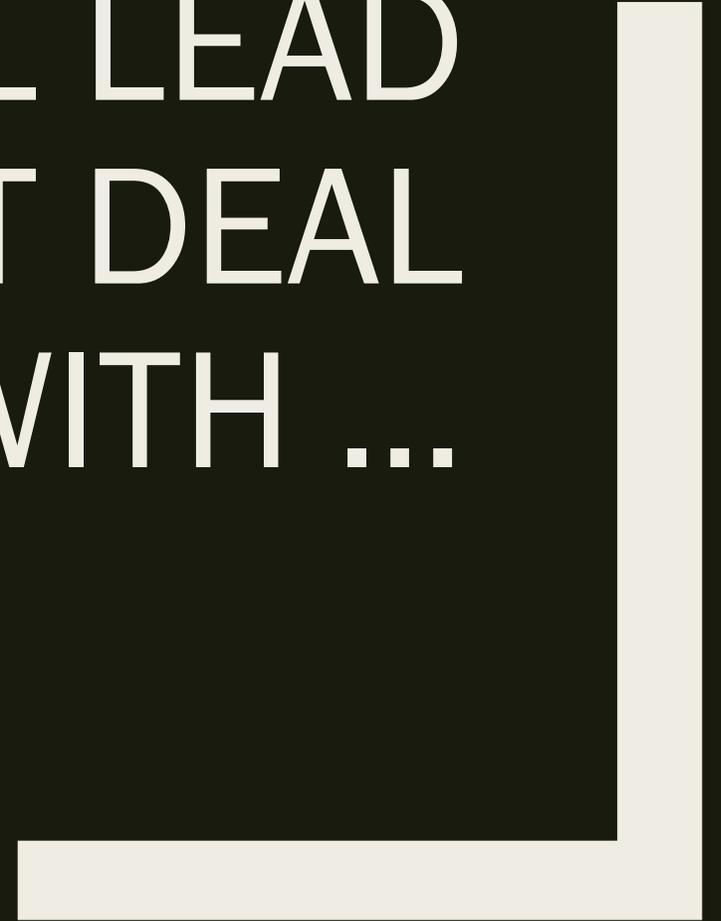
MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE CENTRE

- Initiate and propose Policy review on groundwater management, then provide policy advice, through promotion of public outreach including to policy-makers and specific targeted audiences, through awareness-raising activities;
- Facilitate technology transfer and promote regional cooperation by seeking and responding to invitations for cooperation with national, regional and international institutions and also inviting representatives of UNESCO IHP centres and chairs, UNESCO Offices and UNESCO partners to contribute to the centre's activities and provide their suggestions and inputs
- Exchange of experience by supporting the exchange of information, in particular with regard to local scientific, technical and managerial knowledge, in the various domains of groundwater knowledge and management. This will be done through provision of forums for effective collaboration with the public, private sector and all other persons, whether local or foreign.

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE CENTRE

- Prepare, disseminate and transmit scientific and technical information through the mass media, e-learning, distance learning and any other mode especially with regard to local and regional scientific, technical and management knowledge in the various domains of groundwater management and development.
- Offer consultancy services in groundwater management.
- **Aim at becoming an African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) focal point for groundwater resources and provide support to the AMCOW Groundwater Commission.**

THE ABOVE WILL LEAD
INTO AREAS THAT DEAL
WITH ...



Adaptations and Mitigations to the impacts of global Climate changes

- Managing groundwater systems' in response to global climatic changes
- Groundwater storage and influxes
- Awareness of stakeholders on importance of groundwater resources management
- Groundwater management and modelling with specific attention to transboundary aquifers
- Groundwater Quality and Management

Water Governance

- Managing Water resources as a shared responsibility and recognizing other line-sectors (i.e. environment, land, forest, etc.)
- Joint/collaborative management of Transboundary aquifer
- Abstraction and pollution control measures
- Periodic review of Water laws and policies to address dynamics of water resources
- Groundwater resources planning
- Institutional Reforms and Participatory Management

Eco hydrology for sustainability

- Artificial groundwater recharge
- Catchment protection and management
- Integrated environmental management

Water and life support systems

- Aquifer protection especially in groundwater conservation areas
- Sustainable urban water management

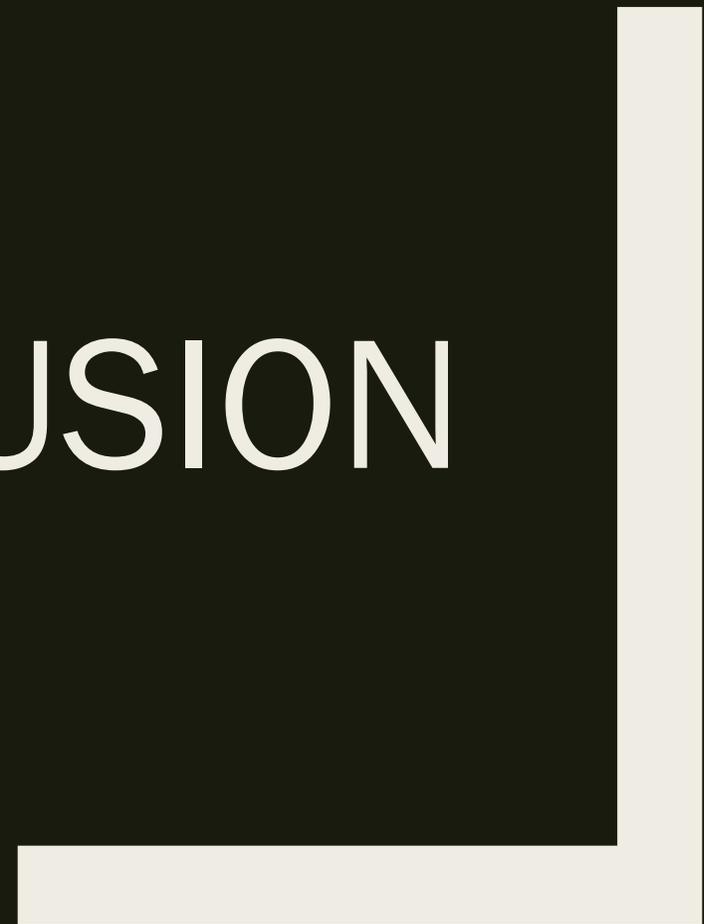
Water and education

- Water education for communities and stakeholders
- Link education systems in the region by linking schools and other higher Institutions – leading to youth empowerment
- Water and sanitation –supporting poverty eradication programmes.
- Reduction of water stress in support of decent work to solve security challenges or forced migration.

Geohydrology-informatics and related services

- Data collection, documentation and dissemination (information Networking)
- Website and Publications (year books, periodicals, Newsletters and Bulletins)
- Archiving and dissemination of information

CONCLUSION



Conclusion...

- **Finally in Kenya**– the Institute will support economic growth in the Kenya in varied ways as water is needed in Agriculture, industries, transport and in production of energy.
- The Institute will organise and host high level meetings, thus contributing to Conference tourism.
- The Board promises to make this a great Regional Institute.



Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Hon. Eugene Wamalwa, EGH, with Board of Directors of the Centre during the Inauguration Ceremony on 29th February 2016



The Cabinet Secretary, Hon. Eugene Wamalwa, E.G.H. and the UNESCO Africa Special Envoy for Water, H.E. Hon Mwai Kibaki, C.G.H. the Third President of the Republic of Kenya receiving a copy of the World Water Development Report 2016



The Cabinet Secretary, Hon. Eugene Wamalwa and the UNESCO Africa Special Envoy for Water, H.E. Hon Mwai Kibaki, C.G.H., arriving at the meeting organised by UNESCO Regional Office Director, Dr, Mohamed Djelid for Launching the World Water Report.

THANK YOU

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