



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

IAH NETWORK – GROUNDWATER IN URBAN AREAS (IAH-UGN)

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Introduction

This report presents the main activities of the International Association of Hydrogeologists Network on Urban Groundwater during the year of 2020.

Membership

The UGN mailing list currently stands at 214 members in 2020. In recent years, conference and workshop events and activities have driven the majority of new members' interest, rather than web searches or presence. As a result, there was only 14 additional people join the network in 2020.

Finance

As an IAH network the UGN does not hold any funds.

Webpages

<https://urbangw.iah.org/>.

A new set of webpages for the UGN network were established in 2018. These are regularly updated by the UGN Chair to signpost relevant activities, resources and wider networks and collaborations.

Activities in 2020

Meetings

There were two network meetings planned in 2020. Unfortunately, both were cancelled due to the pandemic circumstances. Future activities in 2021 and 2022 will look to re-build on these planned meetings.

Network collaborations

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic situation, the network has continued to develop collaboration with other global organisations and initiatives, and urban research groups (IWA, UPGro, AfriWatSan, EU COST Action, Geo-ERA MUSE). There is an increasing cohesion being developed research groups (African and European) across these network activities through EU, UKRI and GCRF research activities. The UGN supported the successful application of a UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship application, led by Adrian Healy, into Urban Water Resilience in Africa. This is now providing a platform for more focused work in Africa, which the network can hopefully collaborate with, including linkages to AMCOW. This also builds from the joint IAHS/IAH urban groundwater session at the IAHS Groundwater Quality conference in 2019, which was focused to urban groundwater in an African context. The IWA specialist groundwater management group, chaired by Stephen Foster, and the UGN network continue to develop collaboration. It is hoped a joint workshop event can be held in 2021 or 2022, following on previous unsuccessful bid in 2019 to hold a joint conference session at ICLEI Resilience Cities 2019.

Future activities and meetings

2021 and 2022 activities are still being planned for Autumn 2021 onwards. The UGN is aiming to: hold a session/online seminar at the IAH congress, Belgium, focusing on Urban Water Resilience; and to develop a number of thematic online workshops over 2021-22 with UGN network collaborations. These are still to be confirmed, but the aim is to have one with an African urban resilience focus; and a second linking to geothermal urban challenges and opportunities. In 2022 a joint conference session will hopefully be possible at ICLEI, or the World Urban Forum, in collaboration with IWA and Urban expert group of EuroGeoSurveys.

Final considerations

The pandemic caused a significant hiatus to the UGN network activities in 2020. The UGN network plans to build up the active collaborations and network discussions again over 2021, with a programme for 2022.

Helen Fallas (UK)