

## The Groundwater Project: Background Information

The Groundwater Project (GW-Project), a Canadian non-profit charitable organization incorporated in 2019, committed to advancement in education by creating and making available online free high-quality groundwater educational material for all. The GW-Project is led by Dr. John Cherry, *recipient of the 2020 Stockholm Water Prize*, GW-Project Leader and Chair of the Board of Directors. The GW-Project manages key activities with a small staff and the support of a Board of Directors, and relies on contributions from many more volunteers (authors, reviewers, editors, translators).

The UN Secretary-General's message on World Water Day (March 22, 2019) stated that *2.1 billion people live without safe water, and that growing demands, coupled with poor management, have increased water stress in many parts of the world. Climate change is adding dramatically to the pressure, and by 2030, an estimated 700 million people worldwide could be displaced by intense water scarcity*. The global water crisis is urgent and requires innovation to identify, prioritize, and accelerate global solutions. **The focus must include groundwater because it makes up 99% of the Earth's liquid freshwater.** Groundwater is key to the UN Sustainable Development Goal 6 (*ensure access to water and sanitation for all*) but also directly contributes to *poverty eradication* (Goal 1), *food security* (Goal 2), *gender equality* (Goal 5), *sustainability of cities and human settlement* (Goal 11) *combatting climate change* (Goal 13), and *protecting terrestrial ecosystems* (Goal 15).

### Mission

Making Groundwater Understandable

### Vision

Build the human capacity for sustainable  
development and management of  
groundwater

The GW-Project's mission is innovative in that it encompasses an entire realm of environmental science (**all things groundwater**) documented by volunteer experts from around the globe in online books aimed at education for readership at all levels and all global circumstances to serve humanity and our Planet's ecology. The GW-Project is aimed at **raising groundwater consciousness and strengthening groundwater expertise** worldwide, in addition to making groundwater knowledge accessible for everyone everywhere.

Key to the mission of the GW-Project is fostering rapid dissemination of knowledge and learning tools to universities everywhere including those in developing countries so that those with inadequate teaching resources for comprehensive groundwater education can direct students to synthesized knowledge at a high global standard. Emphasis is on overcoming inadequacy in knowledge and technical resources for improved access to safe drinking water in both remote rural areas and large urban centers where there is water poverty, as well as on understanding and avoidance of contamination of Earth's groundwater resources.

The GW-Project publishes original books in four categories: (1) Children’s Books - dedicated to all sorts of groundwater information for children; (2) Introductory Books - covering a wide range of groundwater topics and written for a broad audience; (3) Overview Books - comprehensive books that cover groundwater topics in a larger context in a descriptive manner (mostly without equations); and (4) Specialized Books – tailored towards groundwater education at the university level and continuing education for groundwater professionals. Since its inception in 2017, the GW-Project has successfully created a list of hundreds of books within carefully selected topic areas and domains, encompassing nearly the entire scope of groundwater. Each Domain emphasizes one or more topic areas or interfaces with another discipline.

The GW-Project has developed an educational philosophy and methodology for implementation of the project and has a formalized, rigorous, peer-review process for all materials issued by the GW-Project. The GW-Project’s vision of book writing has an emphasis on visual content (diagrams, freehand sketches, schematics) as the primary means to create readily understandable and engaging books.

Each book is a stand-alone copyrighted publication, to be published in other languages. All publications can be downloaded for free from the [GW-Project website](#) (pdf format) and are freely available as webbooks on our website. Since the publication of its first book in 2020, the GW-Project has published *40 original books*, with 36 books in our review and production process and 140 more in preparation. Furthermore, 45 book translations have been published and 137 book translations underway (covering 47 languages). The GW-Project also has a *preserved books category* which includes exceptional groundwater books previously published and for which the GW-Project has received the online publication rights (as sole distributor) or received permission to publish the publication online.

The volunteer group is growing in number, and over 1,000 well-recognized scientists and practitioners (including retirees) have volunteered as authors and reviewers. These contributors are associated with over 300 organizations throughout the world. The GW-Project also welcomes volunteerism by means of writing or sharing short books, monographs, open-source software, reports, course notes, stand-alone worked problem sets, old (decades ago) publications, and educational videos. The GW-Project has been extremely fortunate to have participation of scientists (current and emeritus) from government organizations such as geological surveys, who have committed to authoring and/or co-authoring books for the project. This strong-showing of early participants has been crucial to the GW-Project and shows that the GW-Project is aligned with many organizations around the globe. The GW-Project focuses on active collaborations with organizations around the globe engaged in the creation and/or delivery of educational materials based on the GW-Project products.

The GW-Project engages with its stakeholders through virtual media outlets in addition to its website ([gw-project.org](#)). The GW-Project [YouTube Channel](#) hosts engaging interview with book authors, groundwater talks, and educational short videos for Children. In 2021 and 2022 the GW-Project has organized virtual annual events to bring together the global groundwater community through presentations and discussions.

The GW-Project has over 8,000 subscribers to our mailing list, and over 180,000 book downloads from 174 countries since the first book release in August 2020. This is a testimony to the world’s recognition of the GW-Project’s value.

The GW-Project is volunteer-based but relies on funds through donations and sponsorships to support employed professionals for project coordination and other tasks for which volunteerism is not effective such as, among others, supporting book production, artistic support (visualizations), marketing, creating educational videos, developing self-learning modules, and outreach activities (*see our Project & 2023 – 2028 Vision and Plans document*).

In case of questions or request for further information on ways to get involved or support us, please contact Amanda Sills, Project Manager (+1 519-498-6562; [amandasills@gw-project.org](mailto:amandasills@gw-project.org)).



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