

Surface water

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[Jump to navigation](#) [Jump to search](#)

[Africa Groundwater Atlas](#) >> [Additional resources](#) >> [Supporting environmental information](#) >>

Surface water

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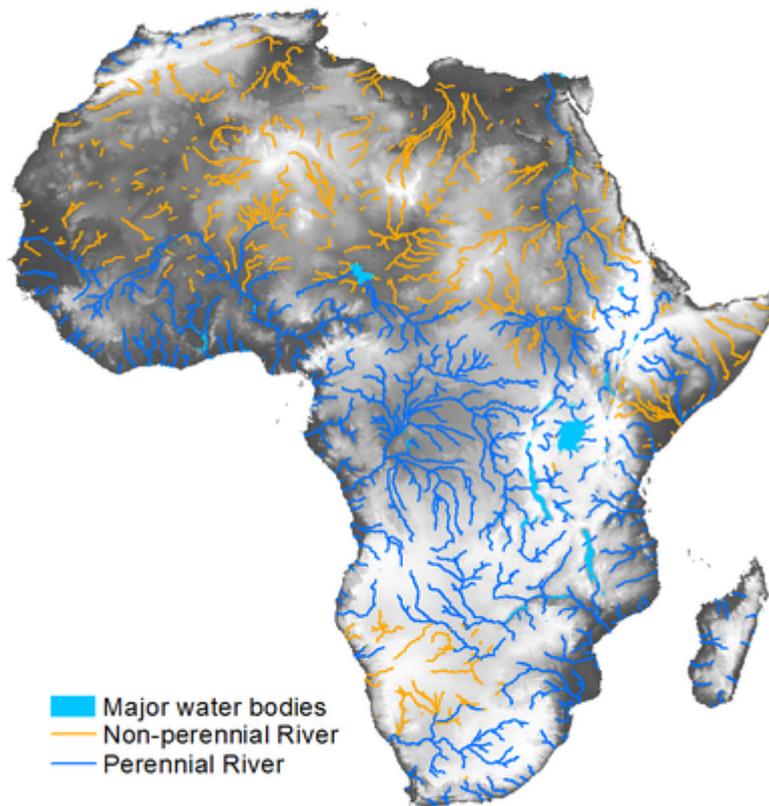
Contents

- [1 Major surface water features in Africa](#)
- [2 Data sources](#)
 - [2.1 Rivers of Africa: HydroSHEDS drainage direction & stream network layer](#)
 - [2.2 Digital Chart of the World \(DCW\) drainage layer](#)
 - [2.3 Inland water bodies in Africa: Food and Agriculture Organisation \(FAO\)](#)
- [3 Further sources of information on surface waters in Africa](#)
 - [3.1 Africa Water Atlas](#)
 - [3.2 AQUASTAT](#)
 - [3.3 Global Runoff Data Centre](#)
 - [3.4 Global River Discharge Database](#)

Major surface water features in Africa

A new map showing major surface water features (rivers and lakes) in Africa was derived for this Atlas by combining three separate open source datasets from three third party providers. Maps for each country were clipped from this new Africa-wide map and can be seen on each country page.

If you reproduce any of the surface water maps from this Atlas, please cite both the Africa Groundwater Atlas and the WWF, Digital Chart of the World and FAO (for more details see Data sources, below).



Rivers and major surface water bodies in Africa. Derived from World Wildlife Fund HydroSHEDS; Digital Chart of the World drainage; and FAO Inland Water Bodies

Data sources

Rivers of Africa: HydroSHEDS drainage direction & stream network layer

The Rivers of Africa dataset is produced by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). It is derived from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) HydroSHEDS drainage direction and stream network layer. The drainage direction layer was created from NASA's SRTM 15-second DEM. The stream network layer was created from the HydroSHEDS flow accumulation grid (using an upstream area threshold of 100 km²). For this Atlas, only larger rivers - those with a Strahler order greater than 4 - are shown.

The Rivers of Africa dataset is available through the [FAO GeoNetwork](#).

Digital Chart of the World (DCW) drainage layer

The Digital Chart of the World dataset is a freely available database of global data (1:1 000 000 scale) including a number of themes. The drainage thematic layer contains a drainage network that classifies streams and rivers into perennial and non-perennial. This classification has been spatially joined with the Rivers of Africa dataset to give an indication of where rivers are likely to be flowing all year round.

Inland water bodies in Africa: Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

The Inland Water Bodies in Africa dataset originates from the 1:1 000 000 Digital Chart of the World. It shows the location of major lakes and is provided by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) through the [FAO GeoNetwork](#).

Further sources of information on surface waters in Africa

Africa Water Atlas

The [Africa Water Atlas](#), produced in cooperation with the African Union Commission, Africa Ministers' Council on Water, European Union, US Department of State and US Geological Survey, was published by the United Nations Environment Programme in 2010 and is available to download as a [pdf file](#).

The Africa Water Atlas provides a useful overview of water resources in Africa, with particular focus on the social context of water resource development. The main transboundary surface water basins and aquifers are summarised, and the Atlas contains a short profile on the water resources of each country.

AQUASTAT

[AQUASTAT](#) is the FAO's global water information system, providing data for countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Each country profile contains general information on the geographical and economic situation of the country, and more detailed information on water resources (major sources of surface water and groundwater), water use (with a particular focus on irrigation), and water management.

Global Runoff Data Centre

The [Global Runoff Data Centre](#) (GRDC) is an international archive of river discharge data. The map shows the stations in Africa for which data is available, and the length of the observed record. River discharge data can be ordered for specified stations through the [GRDC](#)

Global River Discharge Database

The [Centre for Sustainability and the Global Environment](#) (SAGE) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, maintains the Global River Discharge Database, which contains river flow data for over 3500 gauging stations worldwide. The data can be accessed directly from the [SAGE website](#).

[Africa Groundwater Atlas](#) >> [Additional resources](#) >> [Supporting environmental information](#) >>
Surface water

Retrieved from 'http://earthwise.bgs.ac.uk/index.php?title=Surface_water&oldid=54079'
[Categories](#):

- [Additional resources](#)
- [Africa Groundwater Atlas](#)

Navigation menu

Personal tools

- Not logged in
- [Talk](#)
- [Contributions](#)
- [Log in](#)
- [Request account](#)

Namespaces

- [Page](#)
- [Discussion](#)

Variants

Views

- [Read](#)
- [Edit](#)
- [View history](#)
- [PDF Export](#)

More

Search

Navigation

- [Main page](#)
- [Recent changes](#)
- [Random page](#)
- [Help about MediaWiki](#)

Tools

- [What links here](#)

- [Related changes](#)
- [Special pages](#)
- [Permanent link](#)
- [Page information](#)
- [Cite this page](#)
- [Browse properties](#)

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- [Privacy policy](#)
- [About Earthwise](#)
- [Disclaimers](#)

