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# TECHNICAL COOPERATION

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# **Groundwater Resources Management**

# **TECHNICAL REPORT NO. 2**

# **Criteria for the Preparation of Groundwater Vulnerability Maps**

prepared by

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Amman

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# **Foreword**

This report is part of a series of Technical Reports published by the Jordanian-German Technical Cooperation project 'Groundwater Resources Management', which is being implemented by the Federal Institute of Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR), Germany, and the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI). This project started in June 2002 with a first phase ending in May 2005.

The main goal of the project is to elaborate and implement groundwater protection measures by

#### (1) Establishing **Groundwater Protection Zones** *Activities:*

- Preparation of a national quideline for the delineation of groundwater protection zones
- Delineation of groundwater protection zones in two areas
- Coordination of the implementation of the groundwater protection zones with the municipalities
- Giving support to the municipalities in establishing groundwater protection zones and the monitoring of compliance with restrictions
- (2) Applying **Concepts for Groundwater Contamination Prevention** *Activities:* 
	- Elaboration of a criteria catalogue for groundwater vulnerability maps
	- Preparation of groundwater vulnerability maps for two areas
	- Giving advice to the planning authorities on consequences for land use decisions
	- Investigating the effects of salt-water intrusion in the Azrag region
	- Investigating the effects of anthropogenic contamination at selected sites
	- Increasing the capability of MWI staff to formulate land use recommendations for the protection of groundwater resources
- (3) Supporting the **National Water Master Plan (NWMP)** in the field of groundwater management

# *Activities:*

- Preparation of a nationwide groundwater flow model
- Adjusting the rainfall-runoff model (NWMP-GTZ) and the groundwater flow model (NWMP-BGR) to one another
- Integration of the results of the groundwater protection studies into the NWMP
- Supporting the updating of the NWMP groundwater report.

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The present report deals with the preparation of Groundwater Vulnerability Maps.

Since Jordan's renewable water resources are very scarce the sustainable management of these resources with regard to quantity and quality is a task of prime importance. Presently around 58 % (2000) of the water consumed in Jordan is abstracted from groundwater. In the late 1990s the annual deficit in the groundwater budget was around 230 MCM (MARGANE et al. 2002). Consequently groundwater levels throughout the country have declined over the past decades at rates of 1-1.5 m/yr and more. With the introduction of a stricter licensing and payment policy in the mid and late 1990s groundwater abstractions are now starting to slowly decrease.

The agricultural development in Jordan started in the early 1970s and nowadays around 70% of the abstracted groundwater is being used for irrigation. The increased agricultural land use brought about a deterioration of groundwater qualities in many areas through the application of fertilizers and pesticides. This is noticed chiefly by the increasing salinities caused by irrigation return flows, such as in the Azraq region, the Dhuleil-Hallabat region and the northeastern desert, but also by continuous increases in the nitrate contents in groundwaters downstream of extensively cultivated areas.

Groundwater quality is also largely affected by other land uses, such as industrial sites, oil storage/filling facilities, sewage effluents (treated and untreated sewage), waste disposal sites (legal/illegal), etc. This is noticed especially in urban and heavily industrialized areas, such as the Amman-Zarqa region.

In order to protect and conserve Jordan's groundwater resources measures for the protection, such as the establishment of groundwater protection zones are immensely important. To help implementing such protection zones the project 'Groundwater Resources Management has proposed a National Guideline for the Delineation of Groundwater Protection Zones (Technical Report No. 1). Based on this guideline protection zones may be defined, in which certain activities and land uses are allowed or restricted.

However, to provide an effective protection of the groundwater resources, it is also important to convince the land use planning authorities to take the issue of groundwater protection into consideration when deciding about locations and conditions for the establishment of facilities and activities which are possibly hazardous to groundwater, such as waste disposal sites, sewage treatment plants and sewer mains, industrial and commercial estates, storage facilities for oil products and toxic hazardous substances, etc. By locating such sites in areas where, and treating and discharging effluents in a manner that contamination of the groundwater resources cannot occur, a deterioration of the groundwater resources can be actively avoided.

The preparation of groundwater vulnerability maps helps to create awareness among land use planners for the issue of groundwater protection.

# **1 Introduction**

Groundwater vulnerability maps have become a standard tool for protecting groundwater resources from pollution. They are especially valuable in the decision making process related to land use planning. Land use planners have mostly little experience and expertise at hand to decide which land uses and activities could be allowed in certain areas without causing a negative impact on the quality of groundwater resources.

Within the framework of the Technical Cooperation project 'Advisory Services to the Water Authority of Jordan – Groundwater Resources of Northern Jordan' (1992- 2001) between the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) and the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR), groundwater vulnerability maps have been prepared for two areas: the area around Irbid (MARGANE et al. 1997, MARGANE et al. 1999) and the South Amman area (HOBLER et al. 1999). They were supplemented by maps of hazards to groundwater in order to identify where groundwater resources might be at risk and draw the necessary conclusions concerning groundwater monitoring for these hazards and land use planning decisions. The mapping scale was 1:50,000 and the output scale 1:100,000. This scale was chosen in order to provide land use planners with appropriate planning tools for larger areas. As a standard method the method proposed by HOELTING et al. (1995) was used, which is largely applied in Germany.

Within the framework of the new Technical Cooperation project 'Groundwater Resources Management' the project team will delineate groundwater protection zones for at least two wells or springs. Since large parts of the country are dominated by carbonatic rock aquifers, which are karstified to a variable degree, groundwater vulnerability maps are also needed to facilitate the process of groundwater protection zone delineation (MARGANE & SUNNA 2002). In Switzerland groundwater vulnerability maps are used as a standard tool for groundwater protection zone delineation in karstic areas (BUWAL 2000). The Swiss Government decided to use the EPIK method (SAEFL 2000) for this purpose. Other European countries intend to follow this concept in the near future. So far, however, few practical experiences have been made with the EPIK method.

The proposed Jordanian Guideline for the Delineation of Groundwater Protection Zones (MARGANE & SUNNA 2002) equally suggests the use of groundwater vulnerability maps for the delineation of groundwater protection zones in karstic areas but leaves open which method is being applied. The main reason for this is that data concerning the EPIK parameters are not easy to obtain for the aquifer systems in Jordan. The project therefore intends to directly compare both methods by preparing groundwater vulnerability maps using both methods, the one suggested by HOELTING et al. (1995) and the EPIK method. Based on the results, it will then be decided which is the more appropriate method to be used in the long run in Jordan.

There are a number of other methods used worldwide (VRBA & SAPOROZEC 1994, MARGANE et al. 1997). Many of them are, however, rather simple and fail to yield appropriate results. This was the main reason for selecting the method proposed by HOELTING et al. (1995) for the groundwater vulnerability maps of the Irbid area and the South Amman area.

# **2 Definition of Groundwater Vulnerability**

Although many efforts have been made to reach a common understanding of the term ground-water vulnerability, different authors still use it in a different sense. FOSTER & HIRATA (1988) defined **'Aquifer Pollution Vulnerability'** as the *'intrinsic characteristics which determine the sensitivity of various parts of an aquifer to being adversely affected by an imposed contaminant load'*. He describes **'Ground Water Pollution Risk'** as *'the interaction between the natural vulnerability of an aquifer, and the pollution loading that is, or will be, applied on the subsurface environment as a result of human activity'*. The US EPA (1993) distinguishes between 'Aquifer Sensitivity' and 'Ground Water Vulnerability'. Although these definitions are more closely related to agricultural activities, they should hold true for all other activities as well. US EPA defines **'Aquifer Sensitivity'** as the *'relative ease with which a contaminant applied on or near the land surface can migrate to the aquifer of interest. Aquifer sensitivity is a function of the intrinsic characteristics of the geologic materials of interest, any overlying saturated materials, and the overlying unsaturated zone. Sensitivity is not dependent on agronomic practices or pesticide characteristics'*. According to US EPA **'Ground Water Vulnerability'** is *'the relative ease with which a contaminant applied on or near the land surface can migrate to the aquifer of interest under a given set of agronomic management practices, pesticide characteristics and hydrogeologic sensitivity conditions'.*

The definitions used in this report were set up by the COMMITTEE ON TECHNIQUES FOR ASSESSING GROUND WATER VULNERABILITY (1993) and by VRBA & ZAPOROZEC (1994). Accordingly **'groundwater vulnerability'** is defined as *'the tendency or likelihood for contaminants to reach (a specified position in)* the groundwater system after introduction at some location above the uppermost *aquifer'.* In addition, distinctions are made between 'Intrinsic Vulnerability' and 'Specific Vulnerability'. For the determination of the **'Intrinsic Vulnerability'** the characteristics and specific behaviour of contaminants are not taken into consideration, whereas the term **'Specific Vulnerability'** refers to a specific contaminant, class of contaminants or a certain prevailing human activity.

# **3 Parameters determining Groundwater Vulnerability**

FOSTER & HIRATA (1988), MORRIS & FOSTER (2000) and VRBA & ZAPOROZEC (1994) list possible processes and mechanisms leading to an attenuation of the contaminant load in different media, through which water and contaminants pass on their way to the water table (soil, unsaturated and saturated zone).

The following factors determine the protective effectiveness or filtering effect of the rock and soil cover :

- mineralogical rock composition,
- rock compactness,
- degree of jointing and fracturing,
- porosity.
- content of organic matter,
- pH,
- cation exchange capacity (CEC),
- thickness of rock and soil cover
- percolation rate and velocity.

Specific chemical characteristics have to be taken into account when considering the behaviour of pollutants below the ground and the time they take to migrate through the soil, in both the unsaturated and the saturated zone. Such characteristics include:

- dispersion,
- chemical complexation, sorption and precipitation
- degradation (biochemical transformation, hydrolysis, etc.).

The behaviour of each chemical substance differs considerably in the underground. When assessing the specific vulnerability of a natural groundwater system, the specific behaviour of the expected individual chemical substances has to be evaluated.

For mapping purposes, with the evaluation of the intrinsic vulnerability the behaviour of different pollutants is not taken into consideration. In this case the assessment of vulnerability is reduced to the parameters determining the general protective effectiveness of the soil and rock cover. Such a simplification allows for the assessment of groundwater vulnerability over large areas at a relatively low cost and in a comparatively short amount of time. This general assessment forms the basis of further investigations. Studies of the specific vulnerability could then be performed at a later stage, in sensitive areas, where groundwater pollution is expected to occur in the near future or already exists.

Soil cover often plays an important role in the attenuation process as it leads to retardation of contaminants of adsorbable pollutants. Furthermore, soils can promote elimination of contaminants by chemical complexation or precipitation and biochemical transformation or degradation (*Figure 1*). Depending on the type of consolidated or unconsolidated rocks these processes are often less effective in the unsaturated zone due to limited availability of oxygen, moisture and microbes, and the often lower cation exchange capacity.



(line width indicates relative importance of process in corresponding zone)

> Figure 1: Processes leading to contaminant attenuation (after MORRIS & FOSTER 2000)

# **4 Methods**

# *4.1 The German Concept of Vulnerability Mapping*

This methodology (HOELTING et al. 1995; *Annex 1*) is based on a point count system. It only takes the unsaturated zone into consideration. Attenuation processes in the saturated zone are not included in the vulnerability concept. The degree of vulnerability is specified according to the **protective effectiveness** of the soil cover and the unsaturated zone. The following parameters are considered for the assessment of the overall protective effectiveness :



The overall protective effectiveness  $(P_T)$  is calculated using the formula:

$$
P_T = P_1 + P_2 + Q + HP
$$

- $P_1$  protective effectiveness of the soil cover:  $P_1 = S^* W$
- $P_2$  protective effectiveness of the rock cover:  $P_2 = W * (R_1 * T_1 + R_2 * T_2 + \dots)$ +  $R_n$ <sup>\*</sup>T<sub>n</sub>).

To adopt this method the factor for the percolation rate (W) was modified as follows:

In many areas of Jordan groundwater recharge is below 100 mm/a. However, according to the German mapping approach, the highest value assigned for factor W, would be 1.75 for a groundwater recharge of less than 100 mm/a (HÖLTING 1995). Therefore, a modified scale for the factor W was introduced which reflects the low amounts of groundwater recharge in the study area (*Table 1*).



Table 1 : Modification of Factor W (Percolation Rate)

The application of these higher factors for the percolation rate leads to a higher overall protective effectiveness of the soil and rock cover in areas of low groundwater recharge.

True groundwater recharge varies considerably from place to place. The amount of recharge depends on factors like topography (slope), soil cover, fracturing, etc. Indirect recharge plays an important role in the study area and might lead to higher recharge in certain areas, such as wadis or morphological depressions. These local differences were taken into consideration by assigning lower values for the percolation factor to such areas.

The process of calculating the overall protective effectiveness is very complex and requires the use of ARC/INFO or similar software.



Figure 2: Overlay process for vulnerability mapping

Over the past few years, the German system has been tested in several countries and has proven to be useful and effective. For this reason the German approach has been applied to the groundwater vulnerability mapping of the Irbid area and the South Amman area.

# *4.2 The EPIK Method*

This method was elaborated in the framework of the COST activities of the European Commission by the University of Neuchâtel, Center of Hydrogeology for groundwater vulnerability mapping in karst areas. It was later developed by the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape into a standard tool for groundwater protection zone delineation in karst areas (SAEFL 2000).

EPIK takes the following parameters into account:

- Development of the **E**pikarst,
- effectiveness of the **P**rotective cover,
- conditions of **I**nfiltration and
- development of the **K**arst network.

A standard classification matrix for each of these parameters is used (*Table 2*) together with standard values (*Table 3*). For each parameter a standard weighing coefficient is used (*Table 4*). The classification for each parameter and area is obtain by systematic mapping for these parameters. A guidance on how to classify the different features in the field is laid down in chapter 3.1 of the EPIK practice guide (SAEFL 2000, compare *Annex 2*).



#### Table 2: Standard classification matrix for the EPIK parameters

<sup>1&</sup>lt;br><sup>1</sup> E.g.: scree, lateral glacial moraine<br><sup>2</sup> E.g.: silt, clay





Table 4: Standard weighing coefficients for the EPIK parameters



The overall protection index F is calculated based on the following equation:

$$
F = \alpha E + \beta P + \gamma I + \delta K
$$

F can obtain values between 9 and 34. The following matrix of protection indices provides the basis for the classification of the groundwater vulnerability into three classes:

- high (corresponding to Swiss protection zone S1),
- medium (corresponding to Swiss protection zone S2) and
- low (corresponding to Swiss protection zone S3)



#### Table 5: Protection index

Non-existent situation in the field

 Protection index value corresponding to high groundwater vulnerability, respectively Swiss groundwater protection zone S1

 Protection index value corresponding to medium groundwater vulnerability, respectively Swiss groundwater protection zone S2

 Protection index value corresponding to low groundwater vulnerability, respectively Swiss groundwater protection zone S3

Conditions applicable to the rest of the catchment area

# **5 Criteria for the Preparation of Groundwater Vulnerability Maps**

This chapter describes which methodological approach should be used for which purpose, which parameters are needed and how they can be obtained, what are the input and output scales, and which the process of map compilation is.

#### *5.1 Groundwater Vulnerability Maps for Land use Planning Purposes (Scales 1:50,000 or 1: 100,000)*

Not all geological units in Jordan consist of carbonatic rocks. For this reason a method must be used by which all different lithological units can be mapped. It is for this reason recommended to use the method proposed by HOELTING et al. (1995, *Annex 2*), which has already been used to prepare the groundwater vulnerability maps of the Irbid area (MARGANE et al. 1997) and the South Amman area (HOBLER et al. 1999), for the preparation of groundwater vulnerability maps at the regional scale.

#### The following parameters are needed :

Table 6: Parameters required and Source of Information for the Preparation of a Groundwater Vulnerability Map following the German Concept



#### **Recommendations for the assessment of the needed parameters with special emphasis of the local conditions in Jordan**

For assessment of the effective field capacity of the soil (ΣeFC) the maps of the Land Use Project (HUNTING TECHNICAL SURVEYS & SOIL SURVEY AND LAND RESEARCH CENTER, 1994) provide an excellent base. Soil maps at the following scales are available:

- level 1, reconnaissance level, soil maps of the entire country; scale of 1:200,000
- level 2, soil maps of the intensively cultivated parts of the country; scale of 1:50,000
- level 3, detailed mapping for certain small areas of special interest; scale of 1:10,000.

The explanatory notes to these maps contain the names of the soil types, their USDA code together with their equivalent Jordanian soil code, their description, average composition, average thickness, average elevation, average slope, average rainfall and average effective field capacities. From these values the effective field capacity of the soil (ΣeFC) can be calculated easily (compare Table 3 of MARGANE et al. 1997). According to HOELTING et al. (1995), the total effective field capacity of the soil is calculated by multiplying the effective field capacity [mm/m] by the average thickness of the soil down to a depth of 1 m (the average rooting depth). The value of effective field capacity of the soil then is converted to factor S, based on Table 1 of Annex 1 of this report. The maps of the scale 1:50,000 were used for the vulnerability mapping in the Irbid area. The soil maps are available at the Soil Survey Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture's Department of Lands and Survey (presently near Suweileh).

For assessment of the parameter percolation rate the classification proposed by HOELTING et al. (1995) had to be modified. In large parts of the study area groundwater recharge is below 100 mm/a. Because of these low values, a modified scale for Parameter 2, the percolation rate W, had to be introduced in order to adapt the methodology to the situation in Jordan (compare Table 1 of this report). It is recommended to prepare a map that displays the spatial distribution of the percolation rate.

For the parameter rock cover (R), the lithological composition and especially the degree of fracturing and karstification should be known as precisely as possible. The geological maps 1:50,000 (issued by the NRA) often do not yield sufficient information on the location and effect of fractures. If possible fracture zones should be mapped by aerial photograph and satellite image interpretation. It is recommended to prepare a map that displays the value of factor R for each geological unit above the main saturated aquifer.

The accuracy of the assessment for the parameter thickness of the rock cover above the aquifer (T), depends on the accuracy of the piezometric maps. In many parts of the country the accuracy of the piezometric maps for the relevant aquifers are not very precise because only very few reference points are available. It is recommended to prepare a map that displays the unsaturated thickness for the relevant geological units.

Information on the appearance of perched aquifers (parameter Q) is usually not available. Such localized aquifers may play a role in alluvial aquifers. Since the mapping of this parameter would be too costly and time consuming and the parameter is not really relevant in Jordan, it is recommended to neglect it, if not local circumstances warrant its evaluation.

The parameter hydraulic pressure (HP) is relevant mainly in areas with an upward hydraulic gradient, as is the case generally at the foot of the escarpment to the Jordan Valley and the Araba Valley. Since there are until now no multi-level piezometers in Jordan, a meaningful evaluation of this parameter is somehow difficult. Where required, it is recommended to prepare a map that displays the zones of appearance of upward hydraulic gradients.

#### *5.2 Groundwater Vulnerability Maps for the Delineation of Groundwater Protection Zones (Scales 1:10,000 or 1: 25,000)*

For groundwater protection zones with predominantly carbonatic rocks (limestone, dolomite, dolomite limestone), the EPIK method (*Annex 2*) should be used as standard method. However, in areas with mixed lithologies, i.e. where other lithological units comprised of sandstone, alluvial deposits, basalt, etc. occur, the method proposed by HOELTING et al. (1995) should be applied, because only in this case the calculated vulnerability values will be comparable. The EPIK method uses the following parameters :

Table 7: Parameters required and Source of Information for the Preparation of a Groundwater Vulnerability Map following the EPIK Method



#### **Recommendations for the assessment of the needed parameters with special emphasis of the local conditions in Jordan**

The classification of the parameters E, P, I and K is based on a detailed mapping in the field and by aerial and/or satellite images of high resolution/output scale. The mapping scale for the preparation of a groundwater vulnerability map for the delineation of groundwater protection zones will usually have to be 1:10,000 or maximum 1:25,000. The purchase and processing of high resolution satellite images can, however, be quite expensive. Also, since the catchment areas of some groundwater protection zones can reach several km in length (zone III of the protection zone for the Tabaqat Fahel (Pella) spring established by the WAJ-BGR project 'Groundwater Resources of Northern Jordan' (MARGANE et al. 1999) measures 11 km), the total costs of vulnerability mapping can become quite high and the process could be very time consuming. A balance has to be stricken between what is scientifically required and what is absolutely necessary. When establishing a mapping program it has therefore to be weighed between what means are available (budget, existing data, required data) and what has to be achieved.

# *5.3 Criteria for the Selection of Mapping Areas*

Groundwater vulnerability maps at a scale of 1:100,000 or 1:50,000 should be prepared for all urban areas in order to assist land use planning. Only by providing the decision makers in the land use planning agencies with suitable planning tools a better land use planning can be reached that takes the needs of groundwater protection into consideration. All groundwater vulnerability maps should in general be supported by a map of hazards to groundwater, which displays all relevant potential pollution sources in the area. For the preparation of a map of hazards to groundwater an inventory of all potential pollution hazards needs to be established (Annex 3). This requires extensive field work. Finally a data base of groundwater hazards should be established (Annex 4) based upon which the map could be prepared. Annexes 5 and 6 may help in assessing which hazardous substances could occur in which process or land use activity, so that a monitoring program for the relevant substances could be established.

Since the preparation of groundwater vulnerability maps is a costly and time consuming task, it is recommended first to establish a ranking list for the regions to be mapped that ranks the priority of map preparation. It is recommended to start with areas where a rapid expansion of activities hazardous to groundwater, such as industry, commercial activities or agriculture, is expected.

Groundwater vulnerability maps at a scale of 1:100,000 or 1:50,000 should also be prepared for the main recharge areas of groundwater resources of prime importance, such as the A7/B2 aquifer. Only by these means it can be avoided that important groundwater resources become polluted by facilities and activities which are potentially hazardous to groundwater.

A third target area for groundwater vulnerability mapping is the mapping of groundwater protection zones. The project 'Groundwater Resources Management' has proposed the use of groundwater vulnerability maps for the delineation of groundwater protection zones in karst areas (MARGANE & SUNNA 2002). In this case mapping needs to be more detailed, if possible at a scale of 1:10,000 or at least 1:25,000. Since topographic maps are available only at a scale of 1:50,000 and are mostly rather outdated, it is recommended to use geocoded aerial photographs or high resolution satellite images, such as ICONOS (1 m resolution) or SPOT (5 m resolution). For this process too, a ranking list should be established, as mentioned above.

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# **Annex 1: German Concept of Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping**

**Concept for the determination of the effectiveness of the rock and superficial cover above the topmost aquifer as a protective barrier against groundwater pollution** [translated by BGR from HOELTING et al. 1995]

#### **1. Introduction**

When assessing the vulnerability of the groundwater to contamination, the protective effect of the cover of rocks and superficial deposits above the topmost aquifer in of decisive importance. This in true when considering the impact of agriculture (fertilizers, pesticides) and when assessing potential waste disposal sites, abandoned hazardous sites etc. Determination of the protective effectiveness of the rock or superficial cover above an aquifer is carried out to assess the risks to groundwater by pollutants migrating through the soil and rock cover into the groundwater, und to represent the degree of risk on a map.

The protective effectiveness or filtering effect of the rock and soil cover depends an many different factors, mainly the compactness, mineralogical composition, porosity, content of organic matter, pH, and cation exchange capacity, the thickness of rock and soil cover, as well as the percolation rate and percolation velocity. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that the numerous substances that may pollute groundwater show differing migration, sorption and degradation behavior underground, about which little is known.

In principle, it would be necessary to develop special assessment methods for all of these pollutants or at least for the main pollutant groups, depending on their behavior in the ground, and then compile the corresponding hazard maps.

In order to provide a practical method for the qualitative determination of the protective effectiveness of the rock und soil cover above an aquifer in spite of these problems, assessment scheme was developed. Although it involves considerable simplification, it provides valuable information related to many of the pending problems. Starting from assessments at point sites on the basis of existing data and without any costly determination of further parameters, the method allows the protective effectiveness of the rock and soil cover above an aquifer to be assessed over large areas. Thus, in many individual cases, time-consuming, detailed investigations and/or mapping can be avoided.

Maps showing the protective effectiveness of the rock and soil cover above an aquifer represent a valuable tool for the remediation of contaminated catchment areas for potable groundwater. This is due to the fact that they show areas where changing the land-use or removing sources of contamination can lead to a comparatively rapid diminution of pollutant input and thus and thus an improvement of groundwater quality. Additionally, such naps provide useful information for assessing the effects of water pollutants originating from point sources.

#### **2. Basic aspects**

During the passage of percolating water through the rock and soil cover above the topmost aquifer, pollutants in the water may be subject to mechanical, physicochemical, and microbial processes leading to their degradation. The effectiveness of these processes is mainly determined by the residence time of the percolating water in the rock and soil cover. The longer the residence time, the longer the degradation and sorption processes can be effective and thus reduce the input of pollutants into the groundwater. In the most favorable case, contamination does not even reach the groundwater, even in the long term.

The cover dealt with in this paper comprises the rock and superficial deposits above the uppermost, interconnected, generally laterally extensive aquifer system that can be used far groundwater development.

The residence time of the percolating water in the rock and soil cover is mainly determined by three factors:

- the thickness of the rock and soil cover,
- the permeability of the rock and soil cover, which depends on the pedological constitution and/or lithology,
- the percolation rate.

When assessing protective effectiveness, the soils and the lower part of the cover below the soil are considered separately. These two zones are linked by the amount of water, which passes the lower boundary of the rooting zone.

For soils, the effective field capacity (eFC) is taken as a measure of the capacity of a soil to store plant-available water. The residence time of the percolating water in the soil, and thus also the evapotranspiration and groundwater recharge, are considerably affected by this parameter. The effective field capacity of a soil depends mainly on grain size, degree of compaction and humus content and is generally determined for the profile down to the effective rooting depth (AG BODENKUNDE, 1982) [The handbook on pedological mapping generally used in Germany, third edition 1982].

The residence time of percolating water below the soil, i.e. in the rock and superficial deposits covering the aquifer, depends not only on the percolation rate but also on the geohydraulic rock properties. Due to their fundamentally different geohydraulic properties, unconsolidated sediment and solid rock are assessed on the basis of different criteria.

In unconsolidated deposits below the soil it is mainly the fine-grained sediments or sediment components that reduce the permeability and thus reduce the percolation velocity. The cation exchange capacity, upon which sorption depends, increases from sand via silt to clay. A decrease in the percentage of clay and/or silt, however, causes a decrease in the residence time and cation exchange capacity and is equivalent to a decrease in the protective effectiveness.

Determination of the permeability of unconsolidated rock on the basis of a lithological description, or figures for the percolation velocity or residence time, especially in the case of coarse-grained material, is rather reliable. For the purpose of keeping the assessment scheme consistent, a method of determination analogous to that used for soil, i.e. via the effective field capacity, would be desirable. Since, however, if this method were used, complex model calculations would be necessary, problems would occur in the case of non-log-normal grain-size distributions, and the cation exchange capacity would have to be taken into consideration, a simpler way is chosen here. This does not involve any significant loss of essential information. Due to its ease of estimation, the cation exchange capacity can function as an approximate measure of the residence time and, at the same time, appropriately, measure of the protective effectiveness of unconsolidated deposits below the soil. Coarse elastic sediments, which have no cation exchange capacity worth mentioning, and unconsolidated rocks for which the close relationship between cation exchange capacity and residence time mentioned above is hardly valid (e. g. peat, sapropel), are accommodated in the system in a way which takes account of the shorter residence time of percolating water in these sediments (see Table 3).

A different assessment scheme is used for solid rocks, since water moves mainly along joints and/or karst cavities; for this reason, the percolation velocity is generally high, and, due to the comparatively small contact area, the cation exchange capacity is likely to be correspondingly low. Thus it must be concluded that the properties of solid rocks are altogether less favorable with regard to protecting an underlying aquifer from contamination, even when the permeability is low. Decisive for the assessment of the protective effectiveness of these rocks are primarily the rock properties that determine its permeability.

Due to the relatively low protective effectiveness of solid rocks, primary importance must be assigned to the protection provided by a possible weathering zone and Quaternary cover. Therefore, strongly and deeply weathered zones must be assessed using criteria normally applied to unconsolidated rock.

The percolation rate, i.e. the amount of water infiltrating the ground per unit time, affects the movement and thus the residence time of the percolating water, both in the soil and in the lower parts of the rock cover above the aquifer. A high percolation rate means more rapid downward movement of water (possibly contaminated) and thus a lower protective effectiveness.

Moreover, it must be considered that, in the curse of the sorption and exchange processes in the lower parts of the rock cover above the aquifer, the potential of the cover to retain and/or degrade pollutants is gradually reduced. This is due to the fact that here, in contrast to the soil zone, which contains the normal assemblage of organisms, the absorption capacity is not regenerated. Therefore, in the case of a persistently large input of pollutants, it must be expected that in the long run the protective effectiveness of the lower part of the reek cover will be reduced, possibly to zero.

As the long-term maintenance of this "purifying potential" is of fundamental importance for groundwater protection, large quantities of percolating water and/or a high groundwater recharge rate must be regarded as having a negative effect on the protective effectiveness of the cover above an aquifer. It is true that a high percolation rate tends to dilute any pollutants in the water; however, the total amount of pollutants leached from the ground is higher than when the groundwater recharge rate is low. This means that the reactive and/or absorptive components in the substrate are more rapidly "used up".

The protective effectiveness of the soil and rock cover above groundwater aquifers is assessed on the basis of the assumption that the sole source of the percolating water is rainfall. In the case of high input of pollutants from a point source, e.g. a spillage of a toxic chemical, this is not strictly true, and in this case specific studies on the pollutants themselves and the amounts involved are necessary.

Perched aquifer systems may delay or even prevent downward transport of pollutants. Moreover, artesian conditions make it almost impossible for contaminated water to percolate downwards into the aquifer. Local hydrogeological conditions, such as these, which provide additional protection for the main aquifer, will be considered in the final assessment by assigning extra points in the grading.

The protective effectiveness of the soil and rock cover above an aquifer, is assessed on the basis of a point system, a large number of points denoting a high protective effectiveness. The assignment of points to the different parameters and the protection-effectiveness classes are partly based on the system compiled by the Working Group "Criteria for the assessment of the soil and rock cover above an aquifer within the framework of the soil in formation system". The assessment of the different parameters is explained below.

# **3. Assessment of the parameters**

# **3.1 Soil**

# **Parameter 1**: *Effective field capacity* (eFC) (number of points = **S**)

The effective field capacity [mm/dm] is determined for each individual soil horizon by field and laboratory measurements or is derived using standard tables in the Pedological Mapping Handbook (AG BODENKUNDE 1982). The eFC is then multiplied by the thickness of the horizon in decimeters [dm]. To simplify the calculation, the rooting depth is assumed to be constant at 10 dm. The total effective field capacity of a soil (ΣFC) is obtained by addition of the effective-field-capacity values calculated for each horizon down to 1 m depth (or to the water table if < 1 m below ground surface). For shallow soils, the effective field capacity of the substrate below the actual soil zone is assessed down to a depth of 1 m and included in the calculation.

The total effective field capacity is subdivided into 6 classes as in the Pedological Mapping Handbook. Each of these classes is given a number of points, a large number corresponding to a comparatively long residence time of the percolating water (Table 1).

**Table 1**: Assessment of soils on the basis of effective field capacity (eFC) (number of points = **S**)



In the calculations on the basis of the effective field capacity referred to here, comparatively unfavorable assessment is made of argillaceous soils. However, this feature of the classification is justified because the soils often show regular desiccation cracks, which tend to accelerate the downward migration of pollutants.

Within this scheme, the protective effectiveness of the soil in general is assessed rather unfavorably in order to take into consideration the effect of macro-pores, which give rise to considerable small-scale variations.

#### **Parameter 2**: *Percolation rate* (factor **W**)

As far as possible, the available data on the annual groundwater recharge from rainfall is used to determine the percolation factor W (see Table 2). If this data is not available, a comparable figure is determined by taking the difference between the annual rainfall (N) and the potential evapotranspiration ( $ETP<sub>pot</sub>$ ). Due to the lack of initial data, the effect of the slope cannot normally be taken into consideration, which means that the calculation is done on the basis of an almost horizontal ground surface.

Table 2: Percolation rates and the corresponding factor (W), based on the actual groundwater recharge *(GWR)* or an alternative figure given by N - ETP<sub>pot</sub>.



#### **3.2 Rock cover above the uppermost aquifer, below the soil**

The protective effectiveness of the rock cover above the uppermost aquifer and below the soil, i.e. from a standard depth of 1 m below ground surface down to the water table (in the case of a confined aquifer down to the top of the aquifer), is calculated for each bed individually. The points for all the beds in the section are then added up. The protective effectiveness of the rock cover below the soil depends on various parameters, which are assessed as follows:

#### **Parameter 3**: *Rock type* (number of points = **R**)

Due to their fundamentally different geohydraulic rock properties, unconsolidated and consolidated rocks are assessed separately.

In the case of unconsolidated rocks, the residence time is derived via the cation exchange capacity (CEC), since both these factors depend directly on the proportion of fine-grained material present. The cation exchange capacity is more easily quantifiable because it can be obtained from standard lithological tables. To incorporate coarse material, which has a negligible cation exchange capacity, in the system, its residence time, which is invariably low, has been estimated.

The proportions of clay and silt contained in different soil types are given in weight percent in Table 11 and Figure 3 in AG BODENKUNDE (1982). On the basis of literature data, the cation exchange capacity of clay is taken as 60 cmol $_{c}$  /kg and that of silt as 10 cmol. /kg. Using these figures, a mean cation exchange capacity was calculated for different types of unconsolidated rock (100 g) and converted into mol<sub>c</sub> /m<sup>3</sup>, assuming an average dry density of 1.5 g/cm<sup>3</sup>. The number of points (R<sub>u</sub>) was then estimated on the basis of the cation exchange capacity for each of the different types of unconsolidated rock. These are listed in Table 3.



**Table 3**: Assessment of unconsolidated rocks (number of points = **Ru**)

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If the rock contains visible amounts of organic matter, the number of points is increased by 75 per meter thickness (not applicable to peat and sapropel).

If the content of organic matter is visibly elevated, 75 points are added per meter thickness. In the cases of peat, consolidated volcanic material and sapropel, as with the coarser material mentioned above, there is limited correlation between cation exchange capacity and residence time; thus a large number of points are given to reflect the comparatively high percolation velocity.

Owing to the presence of deep desiccation cracks, clay- and silt-rich superficial deposits up to 3 m thick resting on permeable bedrock containing no groundwater are treated as moderately jointed claystone (Table 4).

**Solid rocks**, in spite of their mostly very low intrinsic permeability, often show high permeability due to jointing and/or karstification, and thus comparatively short residence times for percolating water. Therefore, the umber of points  $(R<sub>e</sub>)$  is determined as the product of a figure (O) for the rock type that reflects the low intrinsic permeability of the rock, and a factor (F) reflecting the presence of joints, karst cavities, etc. (Table 4).

The numbers of points given in Table 4 apply to consolidated rocks which are only slightly weathered. Thoroughly weathered rocks should be assessed as if they were unconsolidated rocks (Table 3).

#### **Parameter 4**: *Thickness of the soil and rock cover above the aquifer* (factor **T**)

The distance covered by percolating water (assuming vertical percolation), i.e. the thickness of the soil and rock above the topmost aquifer, affects the residence time and thus the time that percolating water is exposed to mechanical, physico-chemical, and microbial processes. In assessing the protective effectiveness, the thickness of each bed in meters is used as a factor in the calculation.

Table 4: Assessment of consolidated rocks (number of points  $=$   $\mathbb{R}_s$ ) = product of points for rock type (**0**) and factor for joints, karst cavities, etc. (**F**), i.e.  $R_s = O x F$ 





Local conditions that may provide additional protection to the main aquifer are taken account of using standard point bonuses as follows:

#### **Parameter 5**: *Perched aquifer systems* (number of bonus points **Q**)

A perched aquifer may prevent the migration of pollutants to greater depths and/or may prevent or delay contamination of the main aquifer system. This protection is most effective where natural springs occur.

A bonus (**Q**) of **500 points** is added for each **perched aquifer with springs**.

#### **Parameter 6**: *Hydraulic pressure conditions* (number of bonus points **HP**)

The hydraulic pressure conditions depend, among other things, on the lithology of the soil and rock cover above the aquifer, which has already been taken account of by the points awarded for each rock type. However, permanent **artesian conditions** are particularly effective as a natural protection against percolation of contaminated water into the aquifer. Therefore, a bonus (**HP**) of **1500 points** is given in this case.

#### **6. Determination of the overall protective effectiveness**

To determine the overall protective effectiveness  $(P<sub>t</sub>)$  of the soil and rock cover above the topmost aquifer, the following procedure is used: initially, the protective efficiencies of the soil (**P1**) and the rock cover (**Ps**) are calculated separately.

# Soil cover (P<sub>1</sub>)

The number of points (S) given for the effective field capacity (eFC) of the soil from Table 1 is multiplied by factor W, which represents the percolation rate (see Table 2).

#### $P_1 = S \times W$

# **Rock cover (P2)**

Each individual bed in the rock cover below the soil (below one meter depth) and above the aquifer is assessed separately: in the case of unconsolidated rock (no. of points =  $\mathbf{R}_{\mathbf{u}}$ ) using Table 3 and in the case of solid rock (no. of points =  $\mathbf{R}_{\mathbf{s}}$ ) using Table 5; the number of points is then multiplied by the stratigraphic thickness in meters (factor **T**). The sum of all the points for the individual rock units, i.e. the entire section from 1 m below the surface to the water table (to the top of the aquifer in the case of a confined aquifer) gives a figure representing the protective effectiveness of the rock cover below the soil. This figure, as in the case of the soil cover, is multiplied by factor **W** (from Table 2), which represents the percolation rate.

If applicable, bonus(es) is (are) then added for each perched aquifer with springs (bonus **Q**) and/or artesian conditions (bonus **HP**).

The number of points  $(P_2)$  representing the protective effectiveness of the rock cover below the soil is calculated as follows

# $P_2 = W * (R_1T_1 + R_2T_2 + \dots + R_nT_n) + Q + HP$

The protective effectiveness coefficient  $(P_t)$  for the entire soil and rock cover above the aquifer is the sum of  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ .

$$
P_t = P_1 + P_2
$$

In Table 5, five classes of protective effectiveness are shown, based on the above coefficient, and for which the ranges of the residence times of percolating water in the soil and rock cover above the aquifer are given.





# **5. Examples**

In examples 1 to 4 the following assumptions are made:

- soil containing 2 X of organic matter and having a effective average density (referred to as Ld 3 in AG BODENKUNDE 1982)
- $N ETP_{pot.} = 250$  mm/a
- no perched mater table present
- topmost aquifer unconfined

# **Example 1:**

Total thickness of soil and rock cover above aquifer = 6 m.

- O,8 m topsoil, sandy with gravel - 2.0 m slightly silty sand with gravel - 3,0 m sandy gravel
- $-4,0 \text{ m}$  sand
- 6.0 m sandy gravel

 points \* W S = 10 = 10 x 1,0 =  $P_1$  $R_{u1}$ <sup>\*</sup>T = 50 <sup>\*</sup> 1,0  $R_{u2}$ <sup>\*</sup>T = 10 <sup>\*</sup> 1,0  $R_{u3}$ <sup>\*</sup>T = 25 x 1,0Jt  $R_{u4}^{\ast}T = 10 \times 2.0$  $105 * 1,0 = P_2$ 

 $P_1 = P_1 + P_2 = 115$  points

Protective effectiveness very low.

# **Example 2:**

Total thickness of soil and rock cover above aquifer = 16 m.

- 1,1 m topsoil, silty loam
- 5,0 m silty clay
- 15,0 m slightly silty clay
- 16,0 m slightly silty sand with gravel

 points x W  $S = 500 = 500 \times 1.0 = P_1$  $R_{u1}$ <sup>\*</sup>T = 320 x 4,0 = 1280  $R_{u2}^{*}T = 400 \times 10,0$  = 4000<br> $R_{u3}^{*}T = 50 \times 1,0$  = 50  $R_{u3}^{\ast}T = 50 \times 1,0$  $5330 \times 1,0 = P_2$ 

 $P_1 = P_1 + P_2 = 5830$  points

Protective effectiveness very high.

# **Example 3:**

Total thickness of soil and rack cover above aquifer 50 m.

- 1,2 m topsoil, silty loam
- 2,2 m loamy silty sand
- 50.0 m strongly karstic limestone

 points \* W S =  $500 = 500 * 1,0 = P_1$  $R_{II}^{\ast}T = 140 \times 1,2 = 168$  $R_s$ <sup>\*</sup>T = (5 x 0,2) x 47,8 = 72  $\sim$  240 x 1,0 = P<sub>2</sub>

 $P_1 = P_1 + P_2 = 740$  points

Protective effectiveness Iow.

# **Example 4:**

Total thickness of soil and rock cover above aquifer m 70 m.

- 1,2 m topsoil, silty loam
- 40,0 m sandy silty gravel
- 60,0 m conglomerate
- 70,0 m sandy gravel

 points x W S =  $500 = 500 \times 1,0 = P_1$  $R_{u1}$ <sup>\*</sup>T = 60 x 39,0 = 2340  $R_s$ <sup>\*</sup>T = (5 x 1,0)  $\times$  20,0 = 100  $R_{u2}$ <sup>\*</sup>T = 10 x 10,0 = 100  $2540 * 1.0 = P_2$ 

 $P_1 = P_1 + P_2 = 3040$  points

Protective effectiveness high.

# **Example 5:**

Assumptions as in examples 1 to 4, but  $N - ETP_{pot} = 350$  mm/a, total thickness of soil and rock cover above aquifer = 80 m.

- 0,8 m topsoil, sandy with gravel
- 2,4 m sandstone, strongly weathered (equal to sand with gravel)
- 5,5 m claystone, strongly weathered (equal to silty clay)
- 11,0 m claystone, slightly jointed
- 80,0 m sandstone, moderately jointed, with intercalations of moderately jointed claystones and siltstones totaling 18,0 m thickness

 points x W S = 10 = 10 x 0,75 = P1 Rs1\*T = 10 x 1,4 = 14 Rs2\*T = 400 x 3,1 = 1240 Rs3\*T = (20 x 4,0) x 5,5 = 440 Rs4\*T = (15 x 1,0) x 51 = 765 + (20 x 1,0) x 18 = 360 2819 x 0,75 = P2 2114 = P2

 $P_1 = P_1 + P_2 = 2122$  points

Protective effectiveness high.

# **Example 6:**

Assumptions as in examples 1 to 4, but perched aquifer with springs present; total thickness of soil and rock cover above aquifer = 10 m.





 $P_1 = P_1 + P_2 = 1370$  points

Protective effectiveness moderate.

#### **Example 7:**

Assumptions as in examples 1 to 4, but  $N - ETP_{pot} < 100$  mm/a and confined aquifer, total thickness of soil and rock above aquifer = 5,0 m.

- 0,8 m topsoil, sandy with gravel
- 4,0 m sandy clayey gravel
- 5,0 m very silty clay



 $P_1 = P_1 + P_2 = 2258$  points

Protective effectiveness high.

# **6. Plausibility test**

To test whether the points assigned to the various rock types and the suggested calculation methods lead to plausible results, comparisons are made of the protective effectiveness of lithologically different rock types.

a) The protective effectiveness of 1.0 m clay corresponds to that of

 1,6 m silty clay 1,9 m very silty clay; sandy clay 2,3 m very clayey silt; silty loam 2,5 m very sandy clay 3,2 m slightly clayey silt; silt; very sandy loam 3,6 m clayey sand; loamy silty sand 5,6 m very silty sand 7 m slightly clayey sand; sandy clayey gravel 8 m sandy silty gravel 10 m slightly silty sand 20 m sand 50 m sand with gravel; sandy gravel 100 m gravel, gravel with breccia

b) comparison of the protective effectiveness of different rock types, each rock type is assumed to be 10 m thick. The soil cover is neglected.





c) As in b) but thickness of each rock type is assumed to be 25 m


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# **Annex 2: Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karst Areas – The EPIK Method**

(from SAEFL 2000)

# **Practical Guide**

**Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)** 

1998

**Application to Groundwater Protection Zones** 

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# **ABSTRACTS**

## Vulnerability mapping in karst areas (EPIK)

EPIK is a multiparameter method that was developed as an aid in mapping groundwater vulnerability in karst regions, with special respect to catchment areas of sources. Groundwater vulnerability maps based on this method are an indispensable tool for establishing groundwater protection zones.

EPIK is based on the specific groundwater dynamics in karst aquifers. Four parameters are taken into account: (1) Development of the Epikarst, (2) effectiveness of the Protective cover, (3) conditions of Infiltration and (4) development of the Karst network.

After having been given a quality-ranking index, each of the four parameters is mapped throughout the groundwater catchment area. A weighting coefficient is then attributed to each of the indexed parameters according to their degree of protection against contamination. By adding the protection values of each parameter a protection index F for each surface element of the catchment area is calculated. In this way a groundwater vulnerability map is produced, representing the spatial distribution of F. F may be determined manually or by means of a GIS. Furthermore, F values can be used to establish the groundwater protection zones S1, S2 and S3 in an objective manner.

The EPIK method was adjusted in several pilot studies in different types of karst in Switzerland where groundwater is polluted mainly by agricultural activities. The groundwater vulnerability maps allowed the establishment of new protection zones, which were subsequently verified by tracer tests and geophysical investigations.

**Key words:** Groundwater, karst hydrology, vulnerability, mapping, source protection zones, Switzerland, EPIK.

# Cartographie de la vulnérabilité en régions karstiques (EPIK)

La méthode multicritère EPIK a été établie pour cartographier de manière générale la vulnérabilité des aquifères karstiques et plus spécifiquement celle des bassins d'alimentation des sources ou captages en milieu karstique. La carte de vulnérabilité obtenue constitue ainsi une base indispensable pour la délimitation des zones de protection.

Basée sur l'organisation spécifique des écoulements dans les aquifères karstiques, cette méthode prend en compte 4 critères: 1) développement de l'Epikarst, 2) importance de la couverture Protectrice, 3) conditions d'Infiltration et 4) développement du réseau Karstique.

On évalue chaque critère en le qualifiant par des indices, qui sont cartographiés sur l'ensemble du bassin d'alimentation des sources ou captages considérés. A chaque critère indexé, on attribue une valeur en fonction du rôle protecteur qu'il représente. L'addition des valeurs obtenues pour chacun des critères fournit la valeur du facteur de protection F pour chaque élément de surface du bassin d'alimentation étudié. De cette manière on obtient, sous forme d'une carte de vulnérabilité, une représentation de la répartition du facteur F pour l'ensemble du bassin. Cette opération peut se faire manuellement ou à l'aide d'un système d'information géographique. Grâce à une relation d'équivalence, on peut transformer de manière rigoureuse le document obtenu en carte des zones de protection S1, S2 et S3.

Cette méthode a été ajustée sur plusieurs sites en milieu karstique en Suisse (différents types de karst) où se posaient des problèmes de contamination des sources essentiellement dus à l'agriculture. Les cartes de vulnérabilité ont permis d'établir de nouvelles zones de protection, vérifiées à l'aide d'essais de traçage et d'investigations géophysiques.

Mots-clés : Eaux souterraines, karst, vulnérabilité captages, cartographie, zones de protection, Suisse, EPIK.

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### Kartierung der Vulnerabilität in Karstgebieten (Methode EPIK)

EPIK ist eine Multikriterien-Methode zur kartographischen Erfassung der Vulnerabilität in Einzugsgebieten von Karstquellen und Karst-Grundwasserfassungen. Vulnerabilitätskarten bilden die Grundlage für die Ausscheidung der Grundwasserschutzzonen in Karstgebieten.

Die EPIK-Methode trägt der spezifischen Grundwasserdynamik in Karstaquiferen Rechnung. Berücksichtigt werden vier Kriterien: (1) Entwicklung des Epikarsts, (2) Schutzwirkung der Deckschicht (Protection), (3) Infiltrationsverhältnisse und (4) Entwicklung des Karstnetzes.

Für jedes Flächenelement eines Untersuchungsgebietes werden für jedes der vier Kriterien E, P, I und K die zugehörigen Indizes ermittelt und separat auskartiert. Jedes Kriterium ist zudem, in Abhängigkeit seiner Schutzfunktion, mit einem Koeffizienten gewichtet. Die Summe der ermittelten Werte ergibt den Schutzfaktor F für jedes Flächenelement. Aus der räumlichen Verteilung von F resultiert eine Vulherabilitätskarte, welche manuell oder mittels eines GIS erstellt werden kann. F-Werte können direkt und in nachvollziehbarer Weise zur Ausscheidung der Grundwasserschutzzonen S1, S2 und S3 verwendet werden.

Die EPIK-Methode wurde im Rahmen mehrerer Pilotstudien in verschiedenen Gebieten der Schweiz mit unterschiedlichen Karsttypen - im Zusammenhang mit periodischen Verschmutzungen des Trinkwassers durch die Landwirtschaft - geprüft. Dabei ermöglichten die Vulnerabilitätskarten die Ausscheidung neuer Schutzzonen, die in der Folge durch Markierversuche und geophysikalische Untersuchungen verifiziert wurden.

Stichworte: Grundwasser, Karst, Vulnerabilität, kartographische Aufnahme, Grundwasserschutzzonen, Schweiz, EPIK.

# Cartografia della vulnerabilità in regioni carsiche (EPIK)

Il metodo a più criteri EPIK è stato concepito allo scopo di cartografare in generale la vulnerabilità degli acquiferi carsici e in particolare quella dei bacini di alimentazione delle sorgenti o captazioni in regioni carsiche. La carta della vulnerabilità ottenuta costituisce una base indispensabile alla delimitazione delle zone di protezione.

Tale metodo, basato sull'organizzazione specifica del deflusso negli acquiferi carsici, prende in considerazione quattro criteri: 1) lo sviluppo dell'Epicarso, 2) l'importanza della copertura di Protezione, 3) le condizioni d'Infiltrazione, 4) lo sviluppo della rete carsica (Karst).

Ogni criterio viene valutato in base a una qualificazione per indici che sono cartografati sull'insieme del bacino di alimentazione delle sorgenti o captazioni considerate. A ogni criterio indicizzato viene attribuito un valore in funzione del ruolo di protezione che esso rappresenta. L'addizione dei valori ottenuti per ciascun criterio fornisce il valore del fattore di protezione F per ciascun elemento della superficie del bacino di alimentazione studiato. In questo modo si ottiene, sotto forma di una carta della vulnerabilità, una rappresentazione della ripartizione del fattore F per l'insieme del bacino. Tale operazione può essere svolta manualmente o con l'aiuto di un sistema d'informazione geografica. Grazie a una relazione di equivalenza è possibile trasformare in modo rigoroso il documento ottenuto in carte delle zone di protezione S1, S2, S3.

Detto metodo è stato adattato su diversi siti carsici in Svizzera (tipi differenti di carso) in cui vi erano problemi di inquinamento delle sorgenti dovuti essenzialmente all'agricoltura. Le carte di vulnerabilità hanno permesso di stabilire nuove zone di protezione che sono state valutate per mezzo di prove con traccianti e di analisi geofisiche.

Parole chiave: acque sotterranee, carso, vulnerabilità delle captazioni, cartografia, zone di protezione, Svizzera, EPIK.

Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)

# **PREFACE**

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With the objective of ensuring potable water quality, the water protection law states that groundwater protection zones must be determined for public groundwater catchment installations. For interstitial porosity aquifers, the delineation of the size of a protection zone is based on the distance travelled by water over a given period of time, before reaching the catchment installation. Determination of this distance and consequently the size of the protection zone are generally ascertained based on specific measurements taken during a hydrogeological investigation.

In karstic aquifers the distribution of groundwater flow velocities is very heterogeneous, such that the risk of groundwater supply pollution does not decrease in a regular manner with increasing distance from the catchment installation, as is generally the case for interstitial porosity aquifers. Moreover, karstic groundwater flow velocities vary greatly with atmospheric conditions. Consequently the time criteria used for interstitial porosity aquifer protection zone delineation is not applicable to karstic aquifers.

The current publication provides a hydrogeological basis for the determination of protection zones in karstic regions. The method is not based on the evaluation of flow velocities, rather on the evaluation of a certain number of hydrogeological parameters which characterise the degree of groundwater protection in different parts of a catchment area of a source. The protection zones are consequently defined on the basis of their sensitivity to groundwater pollution, in other words, based on groundwater vulnerability.

This method was developed by the Centre of Hydrogeology of the University of Neuchâtel on behalf of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL) and with the assistance of the Swiss National Hydrological and Geological Survey (SNHGS). A work group consisting of members of the Swiss Society of Hydrogeology was given responsibility for the projects oversight, in collaboration with the Water Protection and Fisheries Division of the SAEFL along with the SNHGS.

This publication is intended for authorities, consulting geologists and engineers as well as research specialists.

# **PREFACE**

Dans le but d'assurer la qualité des eaux potables du pays, la loi sur la protection des eaux exige que des zones de protection des eaux souterraines soient délimitées autour des captages d'intérêt public. Pour les aquifères à porosité d'interstice, le dimensionnement de ces zones de protection est basé sur la distance parcourue par l'eau, pendant une durée déterminée, avant d'arriver au captage. La détermination de cette distance, et donc le dimensionnement des zones de protection, sont généralement effectués sur la base de mesures spécifiques réalisées dans le cadre d'une étude hydrogéologique.

Dans les aquifères karstiques, la répartition des vitesses de circulation des eaux souterraines est très hétérogène, de sorte que le risque de pollution de l'eau captée ne diminue pas régulièrement avec l'éloignement du captage, comme c'est généralement le cas pour les aquifères à porosité d'interstice. De plus, les vitesses de circulation des eaux souterraines karstiques sont très variables en fonction des conditions atmosphériques. Le critère temps utilisé pour la délimitation des zones de protection dans les aquifères à porosité d'interstice n'est donc pas applicable aux aquifères karstiques.

Avec la présente publication, on a voulu jeter les bases d'une délimitation hydrogéologiquement fondée des zones de protection dans les régions karstiques. La méthode proposée n'est pas basée sur la détermination des vitesses de circulation des eaux souterraines, mais sur l'évaluation d'un certain nombre de critères hydrogéologiques caractérisant le degré de protection des eaux souterraines dans les différentes parties du bassin d'alimentation d'un captage. Les zones de protection sont par conséquent délimitées sur la base de leur sensibilité à la pollution des eaux souterraines, autrement dit, de la vulnérabilité des eaux souterraines.

Cette méthode a été développée par le Centre d'hydrogéologie de l'Université de Neuchâtel dans le cadre d'un mandat de l'Office fédéral de l'environnement, des forêts et du paysage (OFEFP) et du Service hydrologique et géologique national (SHGN). Un groupe de travail composé de membres de la Société suisse d'hydrogéologie a été chargé d'accompagner le projet, en collaboration avec la division Protection des eaux et pêche de l'OFEFP et avec le SHGN.

Cette publication s'adresse aux autorités, aux géologues et ingénieurs conseils, ainsi qu'aux spécialistes de la recherche.

# **VORWORT**

Zum Schutz der im öffentlichen Interesse liegenden Trinkwasserfassungen vor Verschmutzungen verlangt das Gewässerschutzgesetz die Ausscheidung von Grundwasserschutzzonen. Die Dimensionierung dieser Schutzzonen beruht in Lockergesteins-Grundwasserleitern auf einer bestimmten Fliesszeit, welche das Grundwasser braucht, um zur Fassung zu gelangen. Die Bestimmung dieser Fliesszeit - und damit auch die Bemessung der Grundwasserschutzzonen - erfolgt in der Regel aufgrund eindeutiger Resultate einer hydrogeologischen Untersuchung.

In Karst-Grundwasservorkommen sind die Fliessgeschwindigkeiten des Grundwassers sehr heterogen, sodass die Gefahr einer Verschmutzung des gefassten Wassers nicht generell mit zunehmender Entfernung des Gefahrenherdes abnimmt, wie dies bei Lokkergesteins-Grundwasser normalerweise der Fall ist. Zudem wird die Fliessgeschwindigkeit des Karst-Grundwassers von den meteorologischen Verhältnissen beeinflusst. Das Kriterium der Grundwasserfliesszeit ist demnach für die Ausscheidung von Grundwasserschutzzonen in Karst-Grundwassergebieten grundsätzlich ungeeignet.

Mit der vorliegenden Publikation - welche sich an Fachbehörden, beratende Geologen und Ingenieure sowie an Fachkreise in der Forschung wendet - wird dem Bedürfnis nachgekommen, die Ausscheidung von Grundwasserschutzzonen in Karstgebieten auf eine hydrogeologisch fundierte Basis zu stellen. Es wird eine Methode zur Ausscheidung von Grundwasserschutzzonen vorgestellt, die nicht auf der Bestimmung von Grundwasserfliessgeschwindigkeiten, sondern auf der Beurteilung verschiedener hydrogeologischer Kriterien beruht, die den Schutz des Grundwassers für die verschiedenen Teilgebiete des Einzugsgebiets einer Fassung kennzeichnen. Die Grundwasserschutzzonen werden also aufgrund der Vulnerabilität (Empfindlichkeit in Bezug auf eine Verschmutzung des Trinkwassers) ausgeschieden.

Diese Methode wurde im Auftrag des Bundesamtes für Umwelt, Wald und Landschaft (BUWAL) und der Landeshydrologie und -geologie (LHG) durch das "Centre d'hydrogéologie" an der Universität von Neuenburg entwickelt. Eine Arbeitsgruppe, bestehend aus Mitgliedern der Schweizerischen Gesellschaft für Hydrogeologie, in Zusammenarbeit mit der Abteilung Gewässerschutz und Fischerei des BUWAL und der LHG, begleitete das Projekt.

### **SUMMARY**

Groundwater produced from karstic aquifers plays a vital role in providing potable water for large parts of Switzerland. In order to apply the federal water protection law 814.20, studies to improve groundwater protection in karstic areas have been carried out. It is acknowledged that, amongst other things, current groundwater protection zones in karstic areas frequently lack a hydrogeological basis, and for that reason, often have a limited effect. Under these conditions, it is not unusual for groundwater pollution to occur. In order to remedy this situation, the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), in collaboration with the Swiss National Hydrological and Geological Survey (SNHGS), has initiated investigations for a new approach to groundwater source protection area delineation that incorporates the most recent conceptual models of groundwater flow in karstic aquifers. This approach needs to provide protection zones that have a hydrogeological basis, which are based on scientifically credible parameters. These protection zones must satisfy the aims of a groundwater protection strategy concerning land use activities.

Given the above requirements, a new method called EPIK has been developed by the Centre of Hydrogeology of the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland. It employs an evaluation of ground conditions and field mapping to assess the groundwater vulnerability of catchment areas. Groundwater vulnerability is defined here as an intrinsic property of aquifers which expresses their sensitivity to natural and human impacts. The method is based on objective geological, geomorphological and hydrogeological factors. Moreover, it is independent of current or future land use activities and of economic considerations.

EPIK is a multiparameter-based method. It is based on a groundwater vulnerability map of a spring or a borehole catchment area and takes the following four objective parameters into account: Epikarstic development ("E", the subsurface zone adjacent to the surface which is intensively karstified and has a very high permeability), protective cover properties ("P"), infiltration conditions ("I"), which can be focused or diffuse, and the development of a karstic network ("K"). These parameters are necessary and sufficient to define groundwater vulnerability.

After the zone of contribution of a spring or borehole supply has been delineated, the EPIK method is implemented in three stages:

(a) Semi-quantitative evaluation and field mapping of the four parameters mentioned.

(b) Calculation of a protection index by combining and weighting the values of the four parameters for each unit area in the catchment.

(c) Cartographic representation of the distribution of the protection index for the entire catchment; thanks to an equivalence relationship between this index and the groundwater protection zones, the resulting map allows the protection zones (S1, S2 and S3) to be defined accurately according to the Swiss water protection legislation.

The EPIK method was tested and adjusted at a number of sites in Switzerland (St. Imier, Bure, St. Gingolph, and Lenk) that have different geological settings and where groundwater contamination problems due to agriculture regularly occur.

Application of the method in two of these test sites, one in the Folded Jura Mountains and the other in the Helvetic Alps are presented in this report. The examples demonstrate the feasibility and the use of this novel approach. Karstic aquifer contamination does not occur by chance. Protection zones that are delineated with appropriate consideration

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given to karstic hydrogeological characteristics combined with appropriate protective measures can reduce the risk of contamination considerably. The EPIK method, based on specific hydrogeological parameters must allow for better protection of drinking water produced from springs and wells in karstic environments. The SAEFL has incorporated the results of these studies in its new water protection ordinance of October 28, 1998  $(814.201).$ 

Les eaux souterraines provenant des aquifères karstiques jouent, pour de larges régions de Suisse, un rôle décisif dans l'approvisionnement en eau potable. Afin de faciliter l'application de la loi fédérale sur la protection des eaux de 1991 (RS 814.20), des études destinées à améliorer la protection des eaux souterraines dans les régions karstiques ont été réalisées. On constate, entre autres, que les zones de protection établies en régions karstiques manquent, fréquemment, de fondement hydrogéologique et, pour cette raison, montrent souvent une efficacité limitée. Dans ces conditions, il n'est pas rare que des pollutions se produisent. Pour remédier à cette situation, l'Office fédéral de l'environnement, des forêts et du paysage (OFEFP), en collaboration avec le Service hydrologique et géologique national, a cherché une nouvelle approche de la délimitation des zones de protection dans les régions karstiques, qui tienne compte des connaissances les plus récentes relatives au modèle conceptuel de l'écoulement des eaux souterraines dans les aquifères karstiques, et qui conduise à des zones de protection fondées au point de vue hydrogéologique et établies selon des critères rigoureux. De telles zones de protection sont alors à même de satisfaire aux buts d'une stratégie de protection des eaux souterraines agissant sur l'utilisation du territoire.

Ainsi, une nouvelle méthode, appelée "EPIK", a été développée par le Centre d'hydrogéologie de l'Université de Neuchâtel. Elle est basée sur l'évaluation et le lever cartographique de la vulnérabilité du bassin d'alimentation des captages. La vulnérabilité est définie, ici, comme une propriété intrinsèque des aquifères, qui exprime la sensibilité de ces derniers aux impacts naturels et anthropogènes. La méthode se veut rigoureuse; elle est basée sur des critères géologiques, géomorphologiques et hydrogéologiques. De plus, elle est indépendante de l'occupation du sol actuelle ou future et des considérations économiques.

La méthode EPIK est une méthode multicritère à indices. Elle repose sur une carte de la vulnérabilité du bassin d'alimentation d'une source ou d'un puits de captage donné, qui prend en compte les quatre critères objectifs suivants: développement de l'épikarst ("E", un domaine du sous-sol voisin de la surface du terrain, intensément karstifié et de perméabilité très élevée), propriétés de la couverture protectrice ("P"), conditions d'infiltration ("I", infiltration diffuse ou ponctuelle) et développement du réseau karstique ("K"). Ces critères sont nécessaires et suffisants pour définir la vulnérabilité.

Après la délimitation du bassin d'alimentation de la source ou du captage étudié, la méthode se déroule en trois étapes:

- a) évaluation semi-quantitative et lever cartographique de chacun des quatre critères mentionnés:
- b) calcul de la valeur d'un "facteur de protection", par combinaison et pondération de la valeur des quatre critères, pour chaque surface unitaire du bassin d'alimentation;
- c) représentation cartographique de la répartition du facteur de protection pour l'ensemble du bassin d'alimentation; grâce à une relation d'équivalence entre ce facteur et les zones de protection, la carte obtenue permet de délimiter de manière rigoureuse les zones définies par la législation suisse en matière de protection des eaux (S1, S<sub>2</sub> et S<sub>3</sub>).

La méthode EPIK a fait l'objet de tests et d'ajustements sur plusieurs sites en Suisse (St-Imier, Bure, St-Gingolph et La Lenk), dans différents contextes géologiques, où des problèmes de contamination des sources dus à l'agriculture se posent régulièrement.

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L'utilisation de la méthode dans le cas de deux de ces zones tests, dans le Jura plissé et dans les Alpes helvétiques, est présentée dans ce rapport. Les exemples d'application ont démontré la faisabilité et l'intérêt de cette nouvelle approche. La contamination des aquifères karstiques n'est pas une fatalité. Des zones de protection délimitées en adéquation avec le fonctionnement hydrogéologique du karst, combinées avec leurs mesures de protection respectives, peuvent à l'évidence réduire considérablement les risques de pollution. La méthode EPIK, basée sur des critères hydrogéologiques spécifiques, doit permettre une meilleure protection des sources et captages en milieu karstique. L'OFEFP a tenu compte du résultat de ces études dans la nouvelle ordonnance sur la protection des eaux du 28 octobre 1998 (RS 814.201).

#### 1 **INTRODUCTION**

Karstic groundwater resources are important potable water supplies for several Swiss regions such as the Jura Mountains, the northern part of the Alps and some regions in the southeast of the country (in the Austro-alpine domain). Agricultural and forestal activities are common in these regions; industry and tourism also often play an important role in regional economic development. From a water quality perspective, Swiss karstic aquifers generally do not pose major problems; often simple water treatment processes (such as flocculation, sedimentation, filtration and/or disinfection) are sufficient for drinking water supply. However, water quality can be altered following high discharge periods by an increase in turbidity or organic matter content. Furthermore karstic groundwater is often sensitive to human impacts and consequently, can be generally considered vulnerable.

This *vulnerability* can be mainly explained as a result of the highly heterogeneous structure of karstic systems, which on the one hand have diffuse and focused recharge, and on the other have very high permeabilities in subsurface conduits and a low permeability in the blocks of unkarstified rock. This double duality manifests itself in characteristic hydrodynamic behaviour; high discharges due to concentrated infiltration in highly permeable zones occur rapidly. Filtration and natural purification processes do not have time to have an effect, as in primary porosity aquifers. Given their specific behaviour, karstic aquifers require particular protection measures.

Article 20 of the Swiss Federal Law on the Protection of Water (Water Protection Law) of January 24, 1991 (814.20) requires the determination of groundwater protection zones for all public groundwater catchments (springs and wells), as well as artificial recharge facilities of public interest. The most important restrictions in these zones are limitations on industrial development and a ban on extractive activities. Application of the law is the responsibility of the cantons, based on federal ordinances. The Water Protection Ordinance of October 28, 1998 (814.201) advocates three protection zones. These zones, called S1, S2 and S3 come with rules relating to land use.

# Groundwater protection zones must guarantee the prevention objectives (see the boxed  $text$ .

Protection zones established in karstic regions frequently lack a hydrogeological basis. Notably, the necessary objective factors for delineation of Zones S2 and S3 are lacking. For this reason, protection zones in karstic areas often have limited efficiency. Since the publication of a practical guide for the determination  $\sigma$ f water protection areas and groundwater protection zones (OFPE  $-$  Office fédéral de la protection de l'environnement 1982), knowledge of the hydraulic behaviour of karst has evolved significantly.

### Groundwater protection zones

S1 Zone. This zone must prevent damage to the groundwater catchment installations or artificial recharge facilities as well as prevent pollution in their immediate surroundings.

S2 Zone. This zone defines an area suitable to prevent biological contamination to reach drinking water catchments. It must also prevent drinking water supply from being polluted by excavations and subsurface works, or that the flow of water towards the source is disturbed by subsurface works.

S3 Zone. This zone must provide sufficient space and time for remediation when accidental pollution threatens a catchment installation.

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Consequently, it was necessary to develop a new approach to improve the means of preventing contamination. Groundwater vulnerability mapping methods in karstic environments based on different scientific parameters concerning specific system behaviour must meet this objective. Methods need to be rigorous, i.e. based on geological, geomorphological and hydrogeological principles. In addition they need to be independent of current or future land use and economic considerations. In particular cases, notably delineation in non-karstic subcatchments and urbanised areas, the method must be applied with caution.

#### SOURCE VULNERABILITY IN KARSTIC ENVIRONMENTS  $2<sup>1</sup>$

# **Karstic Processes**

Particular geomorphological features and hydrological phenomena characterise karstic aquifers. Geomorphological features include sizeable springs, swallow holes, the absence of surface drainage networks and the presence of karstic drainage networks due to the dissolution of carbonate rocks. Hydrological features include spring hydrographs that have peaky discharge, fast recession and low base flow rates, Water quality reflects chemical variations as a function of groundwater discharge rates.

Based on these characteristics, a karstic aquifer can be defined as follows

# Vulnerability

Vulnerability is defined and used in the scientific literature in a number of ways. For the current study, the following definition was employed.

Valnerability is an intrinsic aquifer property which depends on an aquifers sensitivity to natural and human impacts (Gilbrich & Zaporozec 1994). It cannot be measured directly, but is determined by using geological and hydrogeological data and by the sensitivity of an aquifer to point and diffuse human contamination.

Contamination sources such as landfills, underground oil storage tanks, oil spills due to road accidents and natural or artificial fertiliser spreading are accounted for in this definition.

(Jeannin et al. 1993): An aquifer consisting of a network of interconnected conduits (a karstic network) flowing to discharge zones and draining, or being supplied by water from low permeability fissured and fractured rock.

Basin scale flow balance studies in the karst of the Swiss Jura Mountains have shown that between 50% and 75% of effective rainfall recharges groundwater by rapid drainage conduits; the remaining 25% to 50% infiltrates directly into lower permeability blocks which provide spring baseflow during dry periods (Jeannin & Grasso 1995). Rapid infiltration does not flow through low permeability blocks but rather through *focussed infiltration points* such as swallow holes that connect directly to the karstic network as well as the *epikarst*.

Epikarst is defined as a very fissured zone corresponding to the decompressed and weathered formations in the vicinity of the ground surface (Dodge 1982). This upper karstified zone is not continuous. It can be decimetres to metres thick and can contain perched aquifers which can rapidly concentrate infiltrating water towards the karstic network (Mangin 1975).

# **Consequences of Karstic Processes for Groundwater Vulnerability**

The schematic representation of a karstic aquifer shown in Figure 1 corresponds to a coherent conceptual model of hydrodynamic behaviour and transport processes in karstic media. Karstic groundwater vulnerability is based on this model.

In terms of baseflow, water flowing through low permeability blocks provides the main contribution to spring discharge. This water spends a relatively long time in the aquifer and flows mainly through lower permeability zones. In periods of high water-level, more than half the infiltrating rainfall resulting from a precipitation event flows rapidly through the aquifer via the main conduits. Filtration processes have a limited influence at this time but dilution potential for contaminants is generally high. Groundwater vulnerability therefore depends on aquifer infiltration conditions, as well as on the spatial distribution of hydraulic conductivity and storage coefficients (the range of physical parameters) which play a primary role in flow and transport processes.

The spatial distribution of aquifer parameters and their influence on source vulnerability are linked to two main parameters in the field: the karstic network and the epikarst. Karstic networks have complex geometries because of the numerous possible influences on the three dimensional formation of the aquifer. They may be more or less developed and subdivided as a result of their geological, hydrogeological, chemical, physical and biological history.



Figure 1. Schematic representation of the hydrological processes operating in a karstic *aquifer.* 

Wells and springs in karstic media are, in principle, very vulnerable if there is a well developed karst network and epikarst which are directly linked to them (Figure 2c). Wells and springs are less vulnerable if the epikarst is not directly linked to the karstic network; in general the source is less vulnerable if the aquifer contains neither a karstic network

Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)

nor epikarst (it may then be regarded as a fissured non-karstic aquifer). Consequently, it is obvious that protection zone delineation in karstic media cannot be completed based on a single criterion. In fact the implementation and use of a *multiparameter-based* method, which accounts for karstic processes is essential.



Figure 2a,b,c. Some examples of combinations of the main vulnerability factors in a karst aquifer.

# The Role of Protective Cover and Infiltration Conditions

Aquifer cover is one of the natural *protection* parameters generally accounted for in vulnerability mapping. It is routinely considered to have an important attenuating influence (Zaporozec 1985) depending mainly on the following parameters: thickness, texture/structure, organic matter and clay mineral content, cation exchange capacity, water content and hydraulic conductivity.

Infiltration conditions determine the means by which aquifer recharge occurs. They can be concentrated, intermediate or diffuse. In the former two cases it is defined by the surface runoff properties (slope, runoff coefficient) and by the presence of preferential infiltration zones. Infiltration conditions can influence karst water source vulnerability in three ways:

(a) Concentrated infiltration of precipitation in swallow holes and their supplying streams. Concentrated surface water infiltration represents very high vulnerability locations for the entire water course catchment up to the point of infiltration (*Figure 2a*).

(b) Infiltration through residual cover (buried karst). The vulnerability of these areas depends essentially on the protective cover permeability and thickness and thus its filtration capacity (**Figure 2b**). It is noteworthy that permeability will vary as a function of water content.

(c) Diffuse infiltration over the whole area (exposed karst). Vulnerability will essentially depend on the travel time for water to reach the karstic network either via epikarst or through low permeability blocks (*Figure 2c*).

# **Epikarst Characteristics**

Epikarst, also known as the "subcutaneous zone" is a high permeability zone found in the top metres of limestone directly below the soil cover. The zone is fractured due to the relaxation of tectonic constraints linked to its emplacement. It therefore favours alteration (Dodge 1982) and karstification processes. Epikarst generally has a thickness of between 0.5 and 2 metres (Bonacci 1987), but can be up to between 5 and 10 metres thick (Figure 3 and Doerfliger 1996a). The epikarst may contain a temporary perched



Figure 3. Epikarst (lower limit not visible) in the Portlandian limestone; Breuleux Quarry. (photo: Natalie Doerfliger)

aquifer at its base (Mangin 1975) where its hydraulic conductivity is significantly greater than the underlying strata. This allows stored water to percolate along fissures or to drain rapidly through vertical conduits (Ford & Williams 1989; Klimchouck 1995). Water flowing in the epikarst zone possesses a predominantly horizontal component (water flowing through fractures toward vertical conduits) and a less significant vertical component corresponding to slow seepage in fissures and flow in conduits (*Figure 4*).

Epikarst is found in both buried and exposed karst areas and is not necessarily laterally extensive. According to the doline formation hypotheses, e.g.

the solution doline hypothesis (Williams 1983), epikarst can exist under soil cover without any morphological expression (*Figure 5*).



Figure 4. Schematic representation of epikarstic hydrological processes (Jeannin 1996, after Smart and Frederich 1986).



Figure 5. Subcutaneous storage, lateral flow toward high hydraulic conductivity zones and the resulting development of a solution doline (Williams 1983).

# THE MULTIPARAMETER METHOD - EPIK

# **Principles and Approach**

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The new method proposed to evaluate vulnerability mapping in karstic environments is a multiparameter method called EPIK, which accounts for *four parameters*: Epikarst, Protective cover, Infiltration conditions and the degree of Karstic network development (Doerfliger 1996a). These parameters correspond to specific aspects of the flow regime within a karstic aquifer, as already described. The method allows the sensitivity of a karstic aquifer to natural and human influences to be determined in a general and effective manner.

Once the extent of a groundwater catchment area has been determined, the method is implemented in three stages:

(1) Semiquantitative evaluation and mapping of each of the four parameters  $-epi$ karst, protective cover, infiltration conditions and karstic network development  $-$  for every unit area within the catchment, after discretisation into elemental areas (ideally into a grid containing squares with 20 metre long sides). During this evaluation, each parameter is assigned a range of categories, ranging from one to four. This semiquantitative evaluation of E, P, I and K is carried out with the help of a number of direct and indirect investigation methods, and may be applied globally or locally. These methods include tracer tests, geophysics, geomorphological studies, flow hydrograph analysis, aerial photograph interpretation and drilling/excavation using a hand held soil corer or a mechanical excavator.

(2) Calculation of the  $F$  protection index for every point in the catchment, by assigning a category value to each parameter, weighting the parameter according to its protective role and summing the values obtained. The maps of the four parameters are subsequently superimposed to provide a cartographic representation of the F index for the entire catchment. Depending on the circumstances, this stage can normally be easily carried out using a geographic information system (GIS; the Windows PC version of the IDRISI GIS was applied during the development of the EPIK method).

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(3) Delineation of protection zones: Because of the equivalence relationship between the  $F$  index and the protection zones, the  $F$  protection index map can effectively be transformed into a map of  $SI$ ,  $S2$  and  $S3$  protection zones.

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When the method was being developed, the values, the weighting factors and the equivalence relationship between steps two and three above were adjusted and verified at four different representative sites in various geological settings (the Folded Jura Mountains, the Tabular Jura Mountains, the Median Prealps and the Helvetic Alps).

Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)

#### **Epikarst**  $\mathbf{F}$

Epikarst characterisation is based on the study of karstic landforms. The previous chapter concerning epikarstic processes illustrates the difficulty in characterising epikarstic zones in terms of their development and connection to karstic networks. This is particularly difficult given that there is no specific model available to identify covered epikarst in the field, even with currently available geophysical methods. The E parameter is subdivided into three categories that indicate decreasing vulnerability.



Figure 6. Fracture traversing karren fields (limestone pavement) of the Sieben Hengste Massif, Berne, Switzerland. (photo V. Puech)

- Category  $I(E_i)$  indicates the most vulnerable situation. It is associated with swallow holes and depressions with water intakes, and includes dolines, karren fields, ruine-like relief and fractured intensely outcrops (*Figure 6*). The outcrops may correspond, for example to cuts in the land along lines of communication (roads, railways) or to quarries.
- Category 2  $(E_2)$  incorporates intermediate zones in the doline fields and dry valleys.
- Category 3  $(E<sub>3</sub>)$  incorporates the rest of the catchment lacking the morphological features already mentioned.

The classification (evaluation) of E into three categories,  $E_1$ , through  $E_3$ , is mainly determined by mapping geomorphological features. Most of the information required to make this determination may be derived from topographic maps at scales of

 $1:5,000, 1:10,000$  and even  $1:25,000$ . Aerial photographs can also be used and serve as a source of complementary information. Field verification at the time that the other parameters are being mapped is also recommended.

The term protective cover includes the soil (in a pedological sense) as well as other geological formations which may overlie a karstic aquifer, such as Quaternary deposits (moraine, silt, loess and scree) or pre-Quaternary non-karstic formations (clays, sandstones, marls) (Doerfliger 1996a).

Pedological parameters vary spatially and are not easily ascertained, apart from soils maps where available; moreover the terminology used by soil scientists is not based on parameters which define the protective function of the soil, such as texture, organic matter content or hydraulic conductivity.

For financial reasons, it is not possible to map these parameters individually within the scope of protection zone delineation. Consequently, at the time of intrinsic vulnerability evaluation, only protective cover thickness was considered (Doerfliger & Tâche 1995, Doerfliger 1996a).

Areas of a catchment containing protective cover can be identified and separated from the areas lacking cover using *existing information* (geological maps and regional monographs). Aerial photographs and satellite imagery can also provide data on the presence or absence of soil (depending on image resolution). They may be used to define cover thickness, assuming that there will be field control.

Soil thickness may be measured directly in the field with a soil *corer (Figure 7).* If the catchment doesn't cover a too large area, soil thickness can be determined using a regularly spaced sampling grid. If the catchment covers a large area (e.g. greater than  $15 \text{ km}^2$ ), the grid spacing becomes larger and it is necessary to apply the principle of morphological equivalence: for a particular point, the measured thickness is assigned to all points in a square with sides of 100 m to 200 m, should the areas have identical morphology. Excavations such as drainage ditches can also provide important information concerning cover thickness.

In order to classify  $P$  (*Figure 8*), two cases are considered, according to whether or not low hydraulic conductivity geological formations occur below the soil:



Figure 7. Measurement of soil thickness using a hand auger. (photo N. Doerfliger)

Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)

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- (A) Soil directly overlying calcareous formations or on top of coarse, very permeable detrital formations (e.g. scree or lateral moraine).
- *Category 1 (P<sub>1</sub>)* represents a cover of 0-20 cm of soil.
- Category 2 ( $P_2$ ) represents a cover of 20-100 cm of soil.
- *Category* 3 ( $P_3$ ) represents a cover of more than 100 cm of soil.
- Soil overlying low permeability geological formations (with at least 20 cm of  $(B)$ lacustrine silt, clay or marl)
- Category 1  $(P_1)$  is omitted for low permeability formations that are less than 20cm thick since the units are considered to provide very little protection. In this case, one falls back on Case A.
- *Category*  $2(P, )$  represents a combined soil/low permeability geological formation thickness from 20 to 100 cm. Soil is considered to have a better protective effect than an equivalent thickness of a low permeability geological formation.
- **Category 3 (P<sub>3</sub>)** represents a combined soil/low permeability geological formation protective cover thickness of more than one metre. The soil may be absent; however, a thin layer of soil can provide important protection if underlying low permeability formation cover is comparatively thin.
- *Category 4 (P<sub>4</sub>)* represents a cover of more than 8 metres of low permeability geological formations (very silty or very clayey), or a soil of more than one metre on six or more metres of low permeability geological formations. Formation thickness is determined from point data, for example from boreholes or holes drilled using a power auger.



Figure 8. Illustration of the different protective cover categories.

# Infiltration Conditions

Evaluation of infiltration conditions is based on the identification of zones of *concen*trated infiltration (swallow holes - Figure 9 - or beds of temporary or perennial streams, artificially drained zones) and an assessment of *diffuse infiltration* areas. The later are characterised by their runoff coefficient which depends on the slope of the ground and land use.

Based on a table of runoff coefficients as a function of slope and land use (forest, pasture and arable land) established for Switzerland (Sautier 1984), the limit between low and high runoff coefficients was set at 0.22 for pasture, and at 0.34 for arable fields (the coefficient of 0.34 is representative of cultivated fields with furrows in the slope direction). In order to assign categories (see below), these values were allowed to correspond to slopes of 25% and 10% respectively (Doerfliger 1996a). The I parameter is also differently assessed for the areas inside and outside the *catchment of swallow holes and associated streams;* on the outside of these catchments, the *bases of slopes* act as surface water collectors.

The data necessary for characterising infiltration conditions are obtained by studying surface water catchments of swallow holes and their streams using topographic maps. The delineation of critical slopes and slope bases can be carried out manually using topographic maps. However, if an altitude numerical model (ANM) is available for the study area, it is easier to determine these zones using a GIS. This also represents a significant time saving.



Figure 9. Disappearing stream in the Brevine Valley. (photo P.-Y. Jeannin)

Four categories are distinguished in the characterisation of I, ranging from the most vulnerable  $I_i$  to the least vulnerable  $I_i$ . Two cases, A and B, are considered which correspond to the inside and outside of a stream catchment supplying a karstic swallow hole:

#### Inside the catchment of a swallow hole and its water course (Figure 10) A)

- Category 1  $(I_1)$  represents perennial and temporary swallow holes as well as the banks and bed of perennial and temporary streams recharging a swallow hole, sinking streams and artificially drained parts of the catchment.
- **Category 2 (I<sub>2</sub>)** represents parts of the swallow hole catchment or water course referred to in  $I_1$  which are not artificially drained, and with a high runoff coefficient, that is, areas where the ground slope is greater than 10% for arable areas and greater than 25% for meadows and pastures.
- **Category** 3  $(I_3)$  represents parts of the swallow hole catchment or water course referred to in  $I_1$  not artificially drained and with a low runoff coefficient, i.e. those areas where the slope is less than 10% for arable zones and less than 25% for meadows and pastures.

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Figure 10. Infiltration conditions inside the catchment (case A) of a swallow hole and its supplying water course.

- $\boldsymbol{B}$ Outside the swallow hole catchment and water course (Figure 11)
- **Category 3 (I<sub>3</sub>)** represents areas at the bases of slopes which collect surface runoff, as well as slopes recharging these low points (slopes with an elevated runoff coefficient, that is greater than 10% for arable zones and greater than 25% for meadows and pasture).
- Category 4  $(I_4)$  represents the rest of the catchment.



Figure 11. Infiltration conditions outside the catchment (case B) of a swallow hole and its supplying water course (gentle slopes, steep slopes and the bases of slopes).

#### **Karstic Network** К

Vulnerability is evaluated in terms of the presence or absence of a karstic network and the degree to which the network is developed. In order to determine the importance of the network relative to the volume of surrounding low permeability rock (fissured or massive) different indicators are considered.



NE. (photo P.-Y. Jeannin)

The first indicator is direct identification of the components of the network such as caves, potholes (swallow holes), active systems (Figure cave  $12)$  $in$ the catchment being considered.

If no karstic network indicators are apparent, one must resort to *indirect* methods. These are based on flow hydrográph analysis, tracer tests interpretation and examination of water quality variability.

Flow hydrographs (Figure 13) allow the degree of karst aquifer development and aquifer structure to be interpreted. The reaction time of a source to rainfall events, as determined according to a hydrograph, is a significant indicator for characterising the degree

of karst network development. If one observes a rapid recession, a significant flow rate (at least twice that of the base flow) followed by a rapid recession, one can suppose that a karstic network is present. By a rapid response, one means, for example, a response with a 6 to 12 hour time lapse (according to the size of the catchment basin) after a rainfall event with an intensity of greater than 15 mm. This rule cannot always be applied if evapotranspiration is important.



The average travel time, as calculated by *tracer tests*, is an indicator which permits the presence or absence of a karstic network to be established. A velocity of more than 15 m/h during low flow periods in sinking streams and greater than 75 m/h in high flow periods allows the existence of a karstic network to be assumed.

Water quality variation at a spring is a good indicator of the presence or absence of a karstic network. If the water quality is bacteriologically stable after heavy precipitation, the karstic network is inferred to be either poorly developed or protected by a porous medium and the composite system may be regarded as a fissured rock system. Where this is not the case, a karstic network may be assumed.

Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)

A final indicator is provided by the *number of springs* present in a karstic system. A well-developed system will be characterised by the presence of a single discharge outlet, whereas a poorly developed system will very often possess many springs. This concept is based on the hypothesis that there is a karstic network hierarchy (Mangin 1975).

The K parameter is assigned to three categories, ranging from the most vulnerable to the least vulnerable. The categories are

- **Category 1 (K<sub>1</sub>)** for a moderate to well developed karstic network with decimetre to metre wide conduits which have little blockage and that are well interconnected.
- *Category 2 (K,)* for poorly developed karstic networks with blocked or poorly developed drains or conduits with decimetre or smaller diameters.
- *Category 3 (K<sub>3</sub>)* for systems where porous media play a role in filtration (the protective effect can be verified by on-going water quality monitoring) as well as for fissured non-karstified limestone aquifers.

The K parameter is generally applied globally for the entire catchment under study; however, it can be subdivided into areas based on to the degree of karstic development where these can be characterised in more detail.

Without speleological information, the distinction between  $K_1$  and  $K_2$  is not often obvious. If one has at least an annual flow hydrograph available, it is possible to apply Mangins (1975) system for classifying karstic aquifers. This method is based on the aquifers regulating capacity k and an infiltration parameter i. The k parameter is defined as the relationship between the dynamic volume (calculated by integrating between the start of flow recession and infinity) and the total volume flowing in the average hydrological cycle. The i parameter (see Figure 14 for definition) expresses the importance of retardation of infiltrating water arriving at the outflow. Mangin distinguishes five classes. Classes I, II and III can be associated with the  $K_1$  category, class IV with category  $K_2$  and class V with category  $K<sub>3</sub>$ . However, it must be noted that aquifer classification based on recession curves is not always unequivocal; while the k parameter varies little from one discharge to another, the *i* parameter depends strongly on the rainfall which generates the discharge (Grasso and Jeannin 1994). The distinction between  $K_1$  and  $K_2$  according to this method thus does not depend on the aquifer system alone.



Figure 14. Classification of karstic aquifers (after Mangin 1975).

Table 1 summarises the categories of the four EPIK parameters. The evaluation of each parameter is outlined.



\* Examples: Scree, lateral glacial moraine.

\*\* Examples: silts, clays.

Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)

#### $3.2$ **Calculation of the F Protection Index**

The four parameters categorised previously allow a protection index value, F to be calculated for all parts of the catchment. The calculation is carried out as follows:

$$
F = \alpha E_i + \beta P_i + \gamma I_k + \delta K_1 \tag{1}
$$

Where  $F =$  Protection index

 $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ ,  $\delta$  = Weighting coefficients of each parameter

 $E_i$ ,  $P_i$ ,  $I_k$ ,  $K_i$  = Categories of each parameter

# **Assignment of Category Values**

In order to define the category values in equation 1, different aspects have been taken into account, for example:

- A doline with a thick soil cover  $(E_1 + P_2)$  represents a more vulnerable situation than a slab of compact (massive) limestone overlain by a thin soil cover  $(E_3 + P_1)$ .
- A stream flowing to a swallow hole  $(I_1)$  represents a very vulnerable situation, independent of the protective cover.
- A dry valley  $(E_2)$  represents a situation that is as vulnerable as the base of a slope that acts as a collector for surface runoff  $(I_2)$ .

The category values used to calculate the protection index are shown in Table 2.





Note that the lowest value represents the most vulnerable situation.

# **Weighting Coefficients**

The E (epikarst) and I (infiltration conditions) parameters are considered the most important; they make up the main contribution to the F protection index and have an ele-



vated coefficient ( $\alpha$  and  $\gamma$  =3). The P parameter (protective cover) has a lesser influence on the protection index and a lower weighting coefficient  $(6=1)$ . The K parameter (karstic network development) has an intermediate weight ( $\delta$ =2). Table 3 shows the weighting coefficients for E, P, I and K parameters.
# **Protection Index**

The different possible solutions to equation 1 provide values ranging between 9 and 34 for the F protection index. By knowing the protection index F for all parts of the catchment, it is possible to represent this index in map form. A high protection index represents high protection. Table 4 shows the different F values and groups them into three classes as a function of their connection with protection zones S1 through S3 (see the following paragraph). Situations which cannot be encountered in the field are placed into an additional category. They correspond to a combination of  $I_1 + E_1 + P_{3,4}$  (a swallow hole in a doline with a thick soil cover).





Non-existent situation in the field

Protection index values corresponding to S1 protection zone

Protection index values corresponding to S2 protection zone

Protection index values corresponding to S3 protection zone

Conditions that are applicable to the rest of the catchment

Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)

Groupings of  $P_4$  and  $E_1$  are rare or difficult to detect. Those of  $E_1$  and  $I_4$  (karren) fields/cuesta outside the catchment of a swallow hole or small stream) are unusual. Nonetheless they represent 10% of the mapped area in the Lenk case study (Chapter 4.2). The most common groupings are those of  $E<sub>1</sub>$  or  $E<sub>2</sub>$  with  $I<sub>3</sub>$ ,  $I<sub>3</sub>$  or  $I<sub>2</sub>$ . At the Lenk site (Chapter 4.2) combinations of E<sub>3</sub> with P<sub>1</sub> or P<sub>3</sub> and I<sub>2</sub> or I<sub>4</sub> represent 82% of the area mapped. In the case of the St. Imier study area (see Chapter 4.1) the groupings of  $E_2$  or  $E$ , with  $I_3$  or  $I_4$  and  $P_2$  or  $P_3$  represent the vast majority of the area mapped.

#### **Protection Zone Delineation**  $3.3$

The equivalency between the F index and the protection zones was the subject of an intensive study at the time that the method was developed and at the test sites previously mentioned. The issues that have determined the equivalency between the F index and S protection zones are mainly as follows:

- Swallow holes and, where applicable, supplying streams  $(I_1)$  should be classified as SI.
- Dolines, karren fields and cuestas  $(E_1)$  should generally be mapped as SI, but where there is thick soil cover and if they are outside the catchment of a swallow hole, they should be mapped as  $S2$ .
- Areas classified as  $E_2$  and  $I_3$  should be preferentially assigned to the  $S2$  protection zone.
- Dry valleys should, as a rule, be classified in zone  $S2$ .
- Areas with a protection index value that is greater than 25 should be classified in the S3 zone.
- Areas with a protection index value exceeding 25 and that have significant protective cover  $(P_4$ , verified by appropriate investigation methods) should be classified outside the S protection zones (in the "rest of the catchment" category) so long as they represent a significant area.

At the time that the method was being developed, the application and comparison of these parameters to different examples showed that the limits of the F protection index values were around 20 for the  $\mathbf{S1}$  zone (F ranging from 9 to 19 for a well developed karstic network, K,, and 11 to 21 for a poorly developed karstic network,  $K<sub>2</sub>$ ) and around 25 for the S2 zone (F ranging from 20 to 24 for K, and 22 to 26 for K,). The F values for S3 ranged between 26 and 31 and those for the rest of the catchment between 26 and 34 (with the additional presence of  $P_4$  and  $I_{34}$  categories).

For a strict definition of the method, see the fixed relationship shown in Table 5. The table also presents a classification of vulnerability terms (ranging from very high to low).

Table 5. Equivalence relationship between protection index, F and groundwater protection zone, S.



#### 3.4 **Adjustment and Method Verification**

The category values and weighting coefficients, as well as the limiting protection index values, which reflect the equivalence with the protection zones, were established in an experimental manner after a certain number of iterations and sensitivity tests. This was

carried out in the case study areas within the scope of the methods development (Tâche et al. 1996). The study areas (*Figure 15*) are located in the Folded Jura Mountains (St. Imier), the Tabular Jura Mountains (Bure), the Median Prealps (St. Gingolph) and the Helvetic Alps (Lenk).

The results have been checked at the different sites mentioned, partly by means of tracer tests and detailed geophysical investigations of low vulnerability areas to highly vulnerable areas. The objective of these checks was to



verify that the chosen category values and the weighting values are adequately defined as well as the limiting values for the equivalency relationship between the degree of vulnerability and the protection zones. The results of these investigations have shown that the proposed values are coherent and accurate. This system is generally applicable to the conditions in the Jura Mountains, Prealps and Calcareous Alps in Switzerland.

In practice, it does not seem necessary to proceed systematically for each site by verifying vulnerability using complementary methods such as geophysics and tracing tests. However, should the protection index value appear inappropriate to a particular geological or hydrogeological situation, the geologist/hydrogeologist may justify verification investigations using, for example, tracing tests during periods of high and low groundwater levels in a given area.

Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)

#### **EXAMPLES OF APPLICATION: 2 CASE STUDIES** 4

The results of vulnerability mapping using the EPIK method at two sites, one in the Folded Jura Mountains (St. Imier, BE) and the other in the Helvetic zone of the Alps (Lenk, BE) are presented in the following sections as case studies of the methods application.

These examples have shown the feasibility of such a method for delineating groundwater protection zones in karstic environments. They give an idea of the spatial distribution of different category values of the EPIK parameters, of groundwater vulnerability zones and of the resulting protection zones. The case studies equally illustrate the characterisation methods used as well as the problems that may be encountered. The investment in work time in the office and in the field is also discussed at the end of the section.

#### 4.1 **Example of the St. Imier Springs Catchment**

### **Introduction**

The sources of La Raissette, La Grande Dou, La Petite Dou and Le Torrent are located in the St. Imier valley (Bernese Jura Mountains), in an area owned by the Cormonet commune. La Grand Dou spring is not exploited as a water source. The other three sources are exploited for different water supply networks in the St. Imier commune.

The catchment of the four springs is located in the cantons of Berne and Neuchâtel and covers an area of approximately 120 km<sup>2</sup>. Only the 70 km<sup>2</sup> within the canton of Berne were investigated in this study.

Geologically, the catchment is part of the Folded Jura Mountains (Figure 16). The aquifer, with a thickness of 200 to 400 metres, consists of fissured and karstified Malm limestones (from the Sequanian to the Portlandian). The Argovian marl (Lower Malm) formation forms the aquifer base. Structurally, the springs catchment consists of the northern limb of the Gurnigel - Chasseral anticline and the southern limb of the Montagne Du Droit - Mont Soleil - Mont Crosin anticline. These two anticlines generally trend northeast-southwest.

The La Raissette, La Grande Dou, La Petit Dou and Le Torrent sources are springs situated at an altitude of 720 to 750 metres above mean sea level (Jäckli AG & OEHE 1981). Subartesian water upwells at low points where the Malm limestones are outcropping.

Protection zones developed in the 1980s for the northern part of the catchment (Schindler 1988) were delineated using the practical guidelines in use at the time (OFPE 1982). The S3 zone established using this method covers almost all of the area. Only two areas of approximately 0.04 km<sup>2</sup> around the springs correspond to the S1 and S2 zones. Despite the establishment of these protection zones, agricultural pollution problems (from liquid manure spreading) have appeared on average four times a year, at the time of snow melt or shortly after intense summer storms.

In order to attempt to remedy this situation, the EPIK method was applied to this site. The method needed to effectively delineate realistically sized protection zones that were compatible with application regulations in force.



Figure 16. Location and geological cross sections across the St. Imier Springs catch $ment$  ( $BE$ ).

The catchment boundaries were delineated in cooperation with Geotest AG (Zollikofen) based on relevant tracer test information, as well as existing hydrogeological reports and protection zone delineation (Jäckli AG & OEHE 1981, Schindler 1988). The bottom of the valley (Figure 17) consists mainly of Tertiary and Quaternary deposits and does not form part of the catchment.



Figure 17. North easterly view of the upstream part of the St. Imier Valley. The wooded anticlines of Montagne du Droit and Gurnigel stand out on either side of the valley. (photo F. Pasquier)

In the case of St. Imier, it was decided at the start to classify all forest areas in the S2 zone in order to avoid the effects of permanent woodpiles and concentrated pesticide use. Thus the forested areas were not investigated during the vulnerability mapping. The areas were subsequently reclassified from S2 to S3 since the forest owners showed that they didn't have permanent woodpiles and the risk of groundwater contamination from pesticides was thus minimal.

### Evaluation of the E. P. I and K Parameters

# $E$  - Epikarst (Appendix 1)

For the St. Imier Springs catchment, the evaluation of the presence of epikarst and its degree of development was carried out without much cost or detailed investigation, mainly by using field observations (karstic landforms and outcrop mapping), geomorphological studies and examining aerial photographs. The manually produced map was scanned and discretised to a resolution of 10 metres. The same scale was used for the discretisation of the P and I parameters.

# P - Protective Cover (Appendix 2)

Protective cover in the study area mainly consists of soil. Only a few detrital Quaternary deposits were noted. Evaluation of the P protective cover parameter is based mainly on soil thickness determined using a manual soil corer (approximately 100 holes cored). Although the EPIK method recommends that the limit between  $P_2$  and  $P_3$  be set at a thickness of one metre, the limit was set at 0.5 m for this example since the method was in the process of being developed.

# **I** - Infiltration Conditions *(Appendix 3)*

This parameter was evaluated with the help of an altitude numerical model (ANM) and topographic maps. The entire catchment basin, apart from the forests, was simulated as meadows and pasture, which largely reflected the actual situation. Consequently, a slope limit of 25% was used to characterise the I parameter.

The topographic catchment of swallow holes and their feeder streams were determined using a GIS and an ANM with a grid of 50 m. A too high precision of the resulting maps

should not be expected, even though they were elaborated at a resolution of 10 m, due to practical reasons relating to handling GIS files. The results were compared to topographic maps, notably where the bases of slopes were concerned and certain anomalous points deleted. One can conclude that it is dangerous to automatically create infiltration maps using an ANM without verification in the field.

### K - Karstic Network Development

Because of the lack of detailed information concerning flows and precipitation measurements, it was impossible to carry out an accurate study of the correlation between rainfall and flow for the springs under consideration. Consequently, Mangins method of karst aquifer classification could not be applied. Direct signs of a karstic network such as caves and chasms were not observed. Furthermore, neither geophysical studies nor drilling data were available. No long-term records of the physical and chemical characteristics of the water discharging from Le Torrent or La Raissette springs were available.

The K parameter was therefore evaluated globally for the entire catchment and was not mapped. Hydrographs and tracer test analyses provided evidence for the karstic character of groundwater flow.

A flow hydrograph study was carried out for La Raissette spring. It showed that its reaction to rainfall resulted in very pointed flow peaks that did not last longer than 24 hours. The recession can exceed 24 hours. This spring thus clearly has a karstic flow regime.

Insufficient *chemical and bacteriological water quality analyses* were available for the La Raissette spring to reach conclusions concerning the development of a karstic network (monthly samples collected independently of hydrological conditions).

In the case of Le Torrent, La Grande Dou and La Petite Dou springs, the only factors providing information on the karstic character and the degree of karstic network development are tracer tests, along with flow and water quality analyses.

Some 18 *tracer tests* were carried out in the catchment of the St. Imier Springs between 1967 and 1994. Besides allowing the catchment to be delineated, certain tests provided important data on the characteristics of the karstic flow regime. Given that the hydrological conditions at the time of the tests were sometimes unknown or partially known, the following remarks can be made:

The maximum tracer velocity is high; it ranges between 17 and 76 m/hour in low to medium water levels.

The sharp peak in the breakthrough curves (not always fully present in the reports) shows that the main part of the flow is probably along karstic drains. This is particularly well illustrated in the breakthrough curves for the tests carried out at Les Combes (Convers region) on 23.7.1985 (Gretillat 1986).

Tracer test result analyses of the Dou and Torrent springs and flow hydrograph analysis (from La Raissette spring) confirm the karstic nature of groundwater flow toward the St. Imier springs. Consequently, the entire catchment of these springs has been classified into category  $K_i$ .

#### **Protection Index**

The protection index obtained using the method described in Paragraph 3.2 is shown on the vulnerability map in *Figure 18*. For improved legibility, an enlarged inset is presented in *Figure 19*. It emerges from these figures that the swallow holes are the most vulnerable with an F protection index of 9 out of a maximum of 29. The karren fields located in the forest (remembering that only forested areas crossed by a cantonal road were surveyed) also showed very high vulnerability ( $F = 15$ ). The dolines have a vulnerability which is high to very high  $(F = 16$  to 20). The dry valleys are of high to moderate vulnerability ( $F = 21$  to 26), and were placed in the same category as zones at the bases of slopes. Dry valleys and the bases of slopes are always less vulnerable than dolines and karren fields. The high protection index values ( $F = 26$  to 29) represent areas with moderate vulnerability (in the absence of a  $P_4$  category, one cannot talk of low vulnerability).

# **Protection Zones**

Based on the vulnerability maps (Figure 18 and 19), protection zones were defined using the equivalence relationship provided in Table 5. They are presented in *Figure 21* and *Figure 20* (in detail). The figures show that swallow holes and supplying water courses (with protection index values between 9 and 18), as well as dolines, karren fields and cuestas (F ranging between 13 and 19) are mostly classified as S1. Dolines with thick soil cover  $(P_1)$  outside the zone of contribution of a swallow hole or stream  $(I_4)$  occur in the S2 zone. Areas classified in  $E<sub>2</sub>$  and /or I, categories mainly correspond to the S2 protection zone. With regard to low vulnerability areas, these generally have a good protective cover, are located outside of concentrated infiltration zones or areas of marked karstic morphology, and are logically found in the S3 zone. Due to the absence of a  $P_4$ category (more than 8m of low permeability formations) in the catchment, the S3 zone extends to the catchment boundaries.

The S1 zone represents 1% of the mapped surface of the catchment (Bernese part, 67  $km<sup>2</sup>$ ). The S2 zone, except for the forested areas (32%, not mapped by the EPIK method, see page 34) occupies some 18% and the S3 zone, 49%.

### **Conclusions**

Mapping the four categories has allowed the *groundwater vulnerability map* shown in Figure 18 to be produced. The F protection index varies between 9 and 29. Based on the equivalence relationship provided in Table 5, a new *delineation of the S1*, S2 and S3 zones could be established. It is shown in Figure 21. Compared to the existing protection zones, the S1 and S2 protection zones obtained using the EPIK method are clearly more numerous and distributed across the whole catchment. They are however limited to sensitive locations. They ought to allow the implementation of effective restrictions for groundwater protection, which take hydrogeological conditions into account in a manner that does not unnecessarily restrict land use.



Figure 18. Vulnerability map of the St. Imier Springs catchment (BE). Part of the catchment in the canton of Berne. The shading is black to very dark grey for  $F<20$ , dark grey to medium grey for  $F=20-25$  and light grey to white for  $F>25$ .

### ST. IMIER SITE

Detail of the vulnerability map



A more detailed map of part of the St. Imier Springs catchment (BE). The Figure 19. shading is black to very dark grey for  $F<20$ , dark grey to medium grey for  $F=20-25$ and light grey to white for  $F > 25$ .



Figure 20. Detail of the St. Imier Springs catchment (BE) protection zone map.

Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)





#### $4.2$ **Example of the Blatti Springs - Lenk Catchment**

# **Introduction**

The Blatti Springs (old and new, coordinates 599'935/141'240) provide water to the commune of Lenk (canton of Berne). The old source (a natural spring) was used up until 1963, when a new source 10 metres deeper was exploited to ensure sufficient flow. The catchment for both sources is situated in the Helvetic Alps at an altitude of 1200 to 3200 metres above sea level. A typical part of this basin was analysed and is presented here as an example. It is a high area situated between the northern slope of the Mittaghorn and the Niesenhorn on both sides of Lake Iffigen (Figure 22 and Figure 23).

Geologically, the catchment contains formations from the Wildhorn Helvetic Nappe which form a series of ENE-WSW oriented folds (Wildberger 1981). The frontal part of the helvetic nappe is enclosed in ultra-helvetic secondary folds giving rise to tectonic windows such as that at Schwand. Formations extend from the Malm (Quinten Limestones) to the Paleocene (Globigerine Schists) and make up the Wildhorn Nappe in the region studied.

Karstic flow occurs mainly in the Schrattenkalk Limestones (Urgonian), along the synclinal axes. The Neocomian (Valanginian-Hauterivian) and Paleocene Limestones (Hohgant Series sandstones and nummulitic limestones) as well as marl-rich Drusberg Beds limestones are also karstified but to a lesser degree. The Globigerine Schists and Ultrahelvetic rocks (flysch) are not or only very locally karstified (Wildberger 1984).



Figure 22. Iffigbach Valley, view of Iffigläger looking southwest: the Schnidehorn can be seen at the base between the slopes of the Mittagshorn and the Hohberg. (photo A. Wildberger)

Wildbergers thesis on the karstic hydrogeology of the Rawil region as well as excavation data for the Blatti Springs protection zones delineation (Kellerhals and Haefeli AG 1988) in the Schwand tectonic window (anticline) provided very useful information for the characterisation of the different vulnerability factors.

Within the scope of the  $E$ ,  $P$ , I and K parameters, the different geological formations were not differentiated. All outcropping formations in the Wildhorn Nappe (from the Hauterivian to the Hohgant Series) were considered in a global sense.

The 1:25,000 Lenk sheet of the Swiss Geological Atlas (Badoux et al. 1962) and the corresponding explanation (Badoux & Lombard 1962) as well as the hydrogeological map of the Rawil region (Wildberger 1981) served as the basic documents for this study. The field survey for the evaluation of the E, P and I parameters was carried out on a 1:10,000 base.



Figure 23. Location and geological cross section of the Blatti Springs catchment, Lenk- $(BE)$ .

# **Evaluation of the E. P. I and K Parameters**

# E - Epikarst (Appendix 4)

The Epikarst parameter was evaluated for the Blatti Springs - Lenk using aerial photographs, a topographic map of the study area at a scale of 1:10,000 and field checking.

Limestone outcrops show signs of karstification (karren and enlarged fractures) and were classified along with Lake Iffigen (*Figure 24*) as  $E_1$ . The  $E_2$  category was assigned only to a small depression with subcropping fractured rock, east of Lake Iffigen. The rest of the study area was classified as category  $E<sub>3</sub>$ , which represents an absence of well defined karstic morphology. The E<sub>3</sub> category zone covers the largest area.



Figure 24. Lake Iffigen, looking northwest. The karstic network and epikarst are considered to be poorly developed. The protective cover is thin except to the left on the terrace  $(P<sub>y</sub>)$  and on the lakeshore  $(P<sub>z</sub>)$ . (photo A. Wildberger)

#### **P** – Protective Cover (Appendix 5)

The protective cover consists of a pedological soil (with a thickness of between 0 and 30 to 40 cm) and Quaternary deposits (moraine, scree), which can reach a thickness of more than 2.5 m. This parameter was initially determined using aerial photographic observations, along with a geological map in conjunction with verification in the field and coring. However, the corer was of little use in this type of cover where the soil rarely exceeded 20 cm and heterogeneous morainic formations are difficult to penetrate.

The study region (Mittaghorn – Niesenhorn) is characterised over a large area by a thin cover  $(P_1$  and  $P_2$ ). The scree (talus) zones, which are considered here as slightly permeable were classified as category  $P_3$  with a thickness easily exceeding one metre. The Sandboden area, consisting of Quaternary sediments several metres thick and with a low hydraulic conductivity and frequently giving rise to temporary flooding, were assigned to  $P_4$ .

### I – Infiltration Conditions (Appendix 6)

Infiltration conditions were evaluated using a topographic map and some field checking. Areas with slopes greater than 25%, as well as the bases of slopes outside of swallow hole catchments and their feeder streams were mapped manually using a 1:10,000 scale base map. The areas covered by the bases of slopes occupied 50 metres on both sides of the slope delineation line which were greater than 10% and 25% depending on the vegetation (see Figure 11). An altitude based numerical model was not available for the region. For a moderately sized area such as this, it is entirely feasible to do this work manually and determine slopes and slope bases. Delineation of the bases of slopes using a geographical information system is admittedly quick and places results directly on the screen but also requires that the validity of results be checked in some areas.

The largest part of the study area was classified as category  $I_4$ . Three swallow holes as well as the Lake Iffigen swallow holes are classified as  $I_1$ . The areas characterised as  $I_2$ and I<sub>3</sub> were those containing temporary and permanent flowing water upstream and downstream of Lake Iffigen.

# $K -$ Karstic Network Development (Appendix 7)

The Blatti Springs are located just downstream of the Schwand tectonic window. They upwell from the Schrattenkalk through the Hohgant Series. The old source (in a small cave set in well karstified nummulitic limestones) was used by the Lenk commune up until 1963. Following some drought periods, an improvement in discharge rate was necessary and a new source 10 metres below the natural discharge level of the old source was developed. The mean annual flow rate varies between 6,000 l/min and 9,000 l/min.

The Blatti Springs form a discharge zone at the base of a complex karstic system in the Iffigbach catchment (Wildhorn Nappe), the Felsen and Iffigläger Springs being overflow springs from the upstream system. Two main parts of the system can be distinguished; the downstream part with the Blatti Springs discharge zone, and the Hohberg anticlinal recharge zone to the north of the fault with the same name, and the upstream part comprising of the Felsen subcatchment and the Iffigläger Springs. This upstream part, consisting of the Niesenhorn and Hahnenschritthorn, lies mainly to the west and south west of Lake Iffigen.

The Blatti Springs hydrographs (Nabholz and Häberli 1972-1979) show that the two sources react in a similar manner. The new source, located at a lower level, provides a base flow with lower amplitude fluctuations. The old source emerges from a natural cave that shows the presence of a well-developed karstic network. The groundwater velocities noted in tracer tests carried out in swallow holes of Lake Iffigen reach approximately 100 metres per hour. These velocities reflect the presence of a well-developed karstic network.

The upstream part of the catchment is drained by the Felsen and Iffigen overflow springs that show characteristics typical of karstic springs draining a well-developed karstified area. However, a portion of the infiltrating water in the upstream part (in the Hauterivian and Urgonian limestones) flows directly toward the Blatti Springs (a hydraulic connection was identified using tracers tests, Wildberger 1981). In order to reach these springs, flow must preferentially occur along tectonic thrusts and across low permeability formations such as the Drusberg Beds (marl-rich limestones) and the Hauterivian siliceous limestones. These formations, having lower conductivities than those of the karstified Urgonian limestones, can be assigned the  $K_2$  category for the upstream part of the catchment and the  $K_1$  category for the downstream parts, including the Hohberg anticline located to the north of the fault of the same name (Doerfliger 1996b).

# **Protection Index**

The vulnerability map (*Figure 25*) shows that the protection index varies from 11 to 32. Apart from swallow holes, the largest areas with very high vulnerability (protection index ranging from 14 to 18) are the karren fields located to the north and east of Lake Iffigen. The large high vulnerability areas (protection index of 20) represent outcrops showing karstified features, accentuated fissuring and subject to diffuse infiltration conditions (between Sandboden and Niesenhorn). The Hohberg fault sector is characterised by a protection index of between 21 and 23 and represents a high vulnerability area.

The best-protected area is Sandboden, characterised by the  $P_4$  category and a protection index of 32. Some areas located in the south and south west of the mapped zone are also well protected  $(F=31)$ .

### **Protection Zones**

From the vulnerability map and the equivalence relationship of Table 5, the following protection zones are obtained (*Figure 26*).

The S1 protection zones are concentrated in the northeastern part of the mapped area. They consist of Lake Iffigen with its swallow holes and karren field areas, the outcrops located directly to the east and northeast of the lake as well as karren field areas on the Hohberg anticline to the north of the fault of the same name. It is notable the  $K<sub>1</sub>$  category is assigned to this last section as it represents, due to the position of the anticlinal limestone beds, a preferential recharge zone to the aquifer that supplies the Blatti Springs.

The S2 protection zone essentially comprises of the catchment of the stream which flows in the Hohbergtäli, a ravine flanked by scree on the southern limb of the east-west oriented Hohberg and located approximately 300 m to the north of the lake. This stream flows over Quaternary deposits, into which it infiltrates. Re-emergences occur approximately 2 km downstream, which recharge the Iffigbach at the level of the Iffigenalp (about 1 km downstream of the area mapped). The Iffigbach in turn infiltrates in the area of the Blatti Springs and contributes less than 1% to the sources discharge. Because of the heavy dilution of the Iffigbach waters with groundwater feeding the Blatti springs, and considering the good bacteriological quality of the latter, it is perhaps overstating it to wish to classify the Hohbergtäli catchment in the S2 zone as proposed here. In such a situation, the decision should be taken by a consensus between the authorities concerned and the responsible geologist.

In the area assigned as category  $K_2$  (southern part of the upper sub-catchment) the S2 zone occupies various small regions to the west of Lake Iffigen, characterised by categories  $E_1$ ,  $P_1$  and  $I_1$  or  $I_4$ .



Figure 25. Vulnerability map of the upper part of the Blatti Springs catchment, Lenk (BE). The shading is black to very dark grey for  $F<20$ , dark grey to medium grey for  $F=20-25$  and light grey to white for  $F>25$ .



Figure 26. Protection zone map of the upper part of the Blatti Springs catchment, Lenk  $(BE).$ 

The S3 zone extends to the limits of the catchment. Though characterised by the  $P_4$  category and a minimal vulnerability, the Sandboden area has been included in the S3 zone due to its small extent and its situation in the centre of the catchment.

#### Conclusions

The Blatti Springs catchment is an alpine karstic basin (*Figure 27*). It possesses a complex structure because of its complex tectonic setting; because of this, it was appropriate to evaluate the K parameter in a different manner for the upper and lower parts of the catchment.

In this alpine setting, the Quaternary formations act as a protective cover. The soils themselves are thin and their protective role is not very important.

The surface water drainage network and the presence of porous aquifers overlying the karst are characteristic of this basin. The water in these aquifers seeps out diffusely in the Lake Iffigen area, which itself possesses sinkholes in the karstic aquifer as well as in the Iffigbach which infiltrates into the karstic aquifer close to the Blatti Springs.

The S1 protection zones are of relatively limited extent; they are related to morphologi-

cal features and can be easily protected by fencing. The S2 zones occupy around 20% of the mapped area. They correspond to karren field areas, cuestas and areas of non-existent cover or are characterised by I, infiltration conditions (stream catchments with steep slopes).



Figure 27. Lake Iffigen as seen from the buttresses of the Niesenhorn. Mittaghorn in the centre. The head of the Iffigbach valley at the base, at left. (photo A. Wildberger)

#### $4.3$ **Financial Aspects**

The two examples of the application of the EPIK method presented here have contributed to the development of the feasibility of the method for source protection delineation in karstified areas. They also showed that it is possible in practice to delineate in a discriminatory way, on the basis of scientifically credible factors, groundwater protection zones which are more or less sensitive to groundwater contamination.

Table 6 provides an estimate of the number of hours which were necessary to evaluate the different parameters. Regional methods (desk studies of synoptic documents) are distinguished from records of local procedures (detailed studies, particularly in the field). It is apparent that the larger the basin, the less number of hours will be required per  $km<sup>2</sup>$ for the study (2.1 hours for St. Imier and 5.5 hours for Lenk). The data in Table 6 do not account for time spent in digitising and data processing with the help of GIS. In the case of St. Imier  $(70 \text{ km}^2)$ , this work (data processing, digitisation, assignment of weighting coefficients, map production) required a further 6 days or 0.7 hours per  $km<sup>2</sup>$ . The Lenk example  $(8 \text{ km}^2)$  required a minimum of 4 days or 4.2 hours per km<sup>2</sup>. It must be noted that regardless of the area mapped, some days will be necessary for data and graphical processing.

Table 6. Number of hours required per km<sup>2</sup> to evaluate the four EPIK parameters.



The number of hours indicated in Table 6 for carrying out protection zone delineation in a catchment are representative if minimal geological and hydrogeological data are available. For the two examples dealt with here, protection zone delineation had already been carried out. The delineation of the catchment boundary was carried out based on existing geological and hydrogeological (tracer test) information, without which it would have been necessary to carry out additional tracer tests. In both cases hydrographs of the springs to be protected were available. On the other hand, neither soils maps nor drilling/excavation data were available for either site.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES** 5

The use of parameters accounting for the hydrogeological characteristics of karst, such as epikarst, protective cover, infiltration conditions and the development of a karstic network allows vulnerability maps of water sources in karstic areas to be produced.

These vulnerability maps provide a new base for developing protection zones in karstic terrain. Examples of using the method for several test areas, two of which are presented in this publication, clearly indicate the feasibility of this new approach. The test sites were chosen in various karstic environments such as the Tabular Jura Mountains, Folded Jura Mountains, the Prealps and the Alps. Results obtained to date indicate that the proposed method is considered suitable for Swiss conditions. For the sake of transparency, it is recommended that the data used to calculate the  $E$ ,  $P$ ,  $I$  and  $K$  parameters should be contained in any groundwater protection zone report. The report has to be established by a specialist (hydrogeologists).

The use of geographical information systems (GIS) in studying different test areas, such as St. Imier, has allowed different quantitative aspects of the method to be refined, and the necessary sensitivity tests to be carried out. This tool has greatly simplified the groundwater protection index map (vulnerability map) production. Even if the use of GIS is not essential, it can nonetheless make work considerably easier, depending on the size of the basin.

Karstic aquifer contamination can be avoided. Adequately determined protection zones, with consideration given to karst hydrogeological functions, together with respective protection measures can considerably reduce pollution risks in karstic aquifers. In view of the often local nature of contamination risks in a catchment (e.g. automobile or train traffic, quarries, spreading of manure, discharges from manure pits or silos, or from garages), the EPIK method based on specific hydrogeological factors can enable in the future better protection of catchment installations in karstic areas.



Sibe Brünne Springs near Lenk, BE. (photo A. Wildberger)

Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)

#### **APPENDICES** 6

- Appendix 1 Epikarst map -- karstic morphology of the St. Imier Springs catchment part of the catchment in the canton of Berne.
- Appendix 2 Protective cover map of the St. Imier Springs catchment part of the catchment in the canton of Berne.
- Appendix 3 Infiltration conditions map of the St. Imier Springs catchment part of the catchment in the canton of Berne.
- Appendix 4 Epikarst map karstic morphology of the upper part of the Blatti Springs catchment, Lenk, BE.
- Appendix 5 Protective cover map of the upper part of the Blatti Springs catchment, Lenk, BE.
- Appendix 6 Infiltration conditions map of the upper part of the Blatti Springs catchment, Lenk, BE.
- Appendix 7 Karstic network development map of the upper part of the Blatti Springs catchment, Lenk, BE.









# Appendix 5. Protective cover map of the upper part of the Blatti Springs catchment, Lenk, BE.



# Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)



Appendix 7. Karstic network development map of the upper part of the Blatti Springs catchment, Lenk, BE.



Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping in Karstic Regions (EPIK)

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# **Annex 3: Inventory Sheet of Potentially Contaminating Sites – Mapping of Hazards to Groundwater**

The sheet is to be filled for each hazard to groundwater in the groundwater protection zone



#### **Annex 4: Input Form of ACCESS Database Hazards to Groundwater** Nicrosoft Access - [Groundwater Hazards]  $-10^{1}$  X Ell Elle Edit View Insert Format Becords Tools Window Help  $-10x$ K-RANXBOY - 8 NN VB7 A + K P D - 0. - MS Sans Serif  $\bullet \quad 0 \quad \bullet \quad B \quad I \quad U \quad \mathbb{B} \quad \mathbb{B} \quad \mathbb{B} \quad \mathbb{B} \quad \Delta \cdot \Delta \cdot \mathcal{L} \cdot \quad \cdot \quad \bullet \cdot \bullet.$ Sites Hazardous to Groundwater Jordanian-German Technical Cooperation Project Groundwater Resources Management General Data chemical substances ID number 1348903 effluents [w/n] п used in process 1 contamination observed (w/n) п district. Muang × chemical substances S associati ni beau waste disposed at type: pig fam (PF) chenical substances internal severage trunk line (y/n) used in process 3 location 228/4Muthi 4 tambon Makhan Tia chemical substances visited by Prapol used in process 4 E-coordinate 539565 date 01.05.2001 chemical substances N-coordinate 1010401 monitoring of pollution [y/n] п used in process 5 year of construction pollution risk [1-4] sewage treatment<br>plant [p/n] г used until (year) remark capacity (t) type of sewage water<br>treatment cevrier: private  $\mathbf{r}$ Mt Snith Khuandee owner name: lecord Navigation  $\mathbb{N}$ E+ est application first previous next Last month of all the committed school at an

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# **Annex 5: Index of Potential Sources of Drinking Water Contamination**

(Potential Source and Possibly Associated Contaminant)









### Jordanian-German Technical Cooperation Project Groundwater Resources Management Criteria for the Preparation of Groundwater Vulnerability Maps



### Jordanian-German Technical Cooperation Project Groundwater Resources Management Criteria for the Preparation of Groundwater Vulnerability Maps



Source: US Environmental Protection Agency (http://www.epa.gov/safewater/swp/sources1.html)
# **Annex 6: Potential Drinking Water Contaminant Index**

# (Contaminants, Maximum Allowable Contents and Potential Sources)



























Notes:

1MCL - Maximum Contaminant Level; the maximum permissable level of a contaminant in water which is delivered to any user of a public water system. MCLs are enforceable standards. Listed in Milligrams per Liter (Mg/L) unless otherwise noted.

<sup>2</sup>MCLG – Maximum Contaminant Level Goal; the maximum level of a contaminant in drinking water at which no known or anticipated adverse effect on the health of persons would occur, and which allows for an adequate margin of safety. MCLGs are non-enforceable public health goals. Listed in Milligrams per Liter (Mg/L) unless otherwise noted.

<sup>3</sup>TT- Treatment Technique

4 No more than 5.0% of samples should detect total coliforms in one month. Every system that detects total coliform must be analyzed for fecal coliforms.

Source: US Environmental Protection Agency (http://www.epa.gov/safewater/swp/sources1.html)