

Desequilibrium of Groundwater in Argentina

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Buenos Aires City and nineteen (19) districts of Greater Buenos Aires conform one of the most numerous and most densely populated areas in the world, currently reaching a population of 11.500.000 inhabitants in 3.880 km².

Groundwater in this area is of major importance since it has been main source for supplying water for all uses (except for Buenos Aires City and some others areas). The access to the aquifer is made through domiciliary connections, by manual or electric pumping, and wells batteries about 70%. Sewage is eliminated by means of shallow wells or blind drains.

This region has been characterized by the existence of huge depression cones, due to over-exploitation of groundwater.

From 1993 on, the public drinking water network has been observing and active increment in extension in several districts.

For example, in Lomas de Zamora district until 1980 had been about 9 million of groundwater cubic meter of deficit in the balance. In 1991 zero balance and in 1998-1999 a recharge of 32 millions of m³/year.

At present there are a lot of hydric problems, with the phreatic level very near of the ground surface, overflowing of the septic tanks, soakaway and pits latrines, causing harm to health and economical prejudice.

This is a clear example of the absence of the state for the knowledge and planning the use of water resources and its consequences, and the lack of basic information and monitoring of groundwater.