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# Grondwater: vaak vergeten maar zo belangrijk

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Grondwaterterminologie wordt besproken en uitgelegd, met talrijke diagrammen die de aanwezigheid, reserves en voorraden van grondwater illustreren. Het concept van waterbalans wordt besproken. De voor- en nadelen van grondwater worden opgesomd, samen met een kort overzicht van de situatie in België. De belangrijkste bedreigingen voor de grondwaterkwaliteit worden toegelicht.

Het hernieuwbare karakter van zoet water kan alleen op lokale of zelfs regionale schaal worden beoordeeld. 'Verbruik' of 'gebruik' van water mag niet worden verward met 'consumptie' van water en met productie of onttrekking. Op wereldschaal wordt ongeveer 30% van het beschikbare en hernieuwbare zoetwater 'gebruikt', terwijl minder dan 15% daadwerkelijk wordt 'verbruikt'. Watertekorten worden veroorzaakt door de ongelijke ruimtelijke en temporele verdeling van zoet water, in combinatie met inadequaat lokaal beheer. Watergerelateerde problemen zijn niet alleen kwantitatief, maar ook kwalitatief. De grondwaterreserves zijn 76 keer groter dan de oppervlaktewaterreserves. Terminologieaspecten worden behandeld door onder andere een LCA van water en een 'watervoetafdruk' te definiëren. Beide beoordelingsmethoden kunnen als complementair worden beschouwd, ook al lijkt de 'watervoetafdruk' grotendeels bevooroordeeld omdat deze geen rekening houdt met het hergebruik van water (d.w.z. al het gebruikte water wordt als verbruikt beschouwd). LCA is gedetailleerder en houdt rekening met lokale milieueffecten, maar kan daarom als minder robuust worden beschouwd omdat er subjectieve beslissingen in worden opgenomen.

Tot slot wordt geothermische energie bij lage temperatuur in open circuit, waarbij hydrogeologisch onderzoek komt in aanmerking, beschreven aan de hand van enkele voorbeelden uit recent werk van het team van de spreker.

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