

News From the Field
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Giant Aquifer Discovered in Kenya

Enough drinking water to last 70 years

By: Scott Rosenfield



Victims of the 2011 drought Photo: Wikimedia/Oxfam East Africa

Scientists in Kenya have discovered an aquifer capable of meeting the country's water needs for up to 70 years. The aquifer is thought to hold more than 200 billion cubic meters of fresh water, and is roughly the size of Rhode Island. UNESCO and the Kenyan government announced the discovery on Wednesday.

The search for water was funded by the Japanese government and spearheaded by Alain Gachet, President and CEO of Radar Technologies International, a French company specializing in

natural resource exploration. The team used a combination of radar and satellite imagery, climate maps, and seismic data to find the aquifer.

Kenya has faced several droughts in recent years, including one in 2011 that affected 9.5 million people, leaving many dead or malnourished. The region's inhabitants often walk up to 10 miles to find water.

"This is literally a jump from the neolithic to the modern age," Gachet told The Verge. "They want to be able to fertilize and grow their own food — to stop the survival economy and move to something more sustainable."