

Water Dowsing

WATER DOWSING IN ARID REGIONS:

WATER DOWSING REPORT ON A TEN YEAR GERMAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT [\(1\)](#)

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In an article published in the current issue of the peer-reviewed Journal of Scientific Exploration, a science journal with the editorial offices at Stanford University, **Professor Hans-Dieter Betz**, a physicist at the **University of Munich**, presents the results of a German government sponsored program to test and apply dowsing methods to locate water sources in arid regions. *This ten year project involved over 2000 drillings in Sri Lanka, Zaire, Kenya, Namibia, Yemen and other countries and is thus the most ambitious experiment with water dowsing ever carried out.*

While an adequate water supply is not a major problem in most industrialized nations, it is estimated that water pollution is responsible for some 80% of all diseases in Third World countries. Lack of high quality drinking water affects approximately two billion people on a worldwide scale and is a problem that is growing, according to the United Nations.

The enormity of this problem led the German government to initiate a long range program via the GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit or German Association for Technical Cooperation) to explore innovative water detection methods in arid regions. *Motivated by both the high cost and modest success rate of purely conventional hydrogeological methods*, the GTZ project teamed geological experts, experienced dowsers and a scientific group led by Professor Betz to monitor and evaluate the results.

The outcome was striking. An overall success rate of 96% (by dowsers) was achieved in 691 drillings in Sri Lanka. Based on geological experience in that area, a success rate of 30-50% would be expected from conventional techniques alone.

But the overall success rate is not the only indication that the dowsing phenomenon is of considerable practical use. According to Betz, what is both puzzling but enormously useful, is that in hundreds of cases the dowsers were able to predict the depth of the water source and the yield of the well to within 10 to 20 percent. We carefully considered the statistics of these correlations, and they far exceeded lucky guesses.

Numerous conventional explanations for the success of dowsing-located drill sites were carefully examined by Betz in a series of reports summarized in the article. *Virtually all of the drill sites were in regions where the odds of finding water by random drilling were extremely low, thus eliminating the success by chance hypothesis.*

Another argument sometimes advanced is that dowsers get subtle clues from the landscape and geology, perhaps without even being consciously aware of their highly developed detective skills. This too was ruled out in various ways, the most impressive being the ability of dowsers to locate underground sources, often 100 feet down, whose streams are so narrow that misplacing the drill site by a few feet would yield a dry hole. Such precision is far beyond any known geological indicators.

The scientists also carried out laboratory tests, placing water pipes underground or in a test room one story below where dowsing subjects were asked to walk around and find the artificial sources of flowing water. Such idealized tests were not successful enough to account for the real-life drilling results. This led Betz to hypothesize that it is not some unknown biological sensitivity to water that underlies the phenomenon.

Betz conjectures that there may be subtle electromagnetic gradients resulting from the fissures and water flows creating changes in the electrical properties of rock and soil. The dowsers somehow sense these gradients in a hypersensitive state.

Says Betz: I'm a scientist, and those are my best plausible scientific hypotheses at this point. But there are two things that I am certain of after ten years of field research. A combination of dowsing and modern hydrogeophysical techniques can be both more successful and far less expensive than we had thought. And we need to run a lot more tests, because **we have established that dowsing works**, but have no idea how or why.

1. The American Dowser, Fall 1995, Volume 35, No. 4 The American Society of Dowsers

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