

Contents

1 The Arabian Plate: Geology and Hydrogeologic Characteristics	1
1.1 Geology and Main Orographic Units	1
1.1.1 Geologic and Structural Features	1
1.1.2 Orographic Sub-division of the Arabian Plate	7
1.2 Occurrence of Aquifers	8
1.2.1 Paleogeographic Environment and the Formation of Aquifers	8
1.2.2 Stratigraphic Distribution of Main Aquifers	14
1.2.3 Major Aquifer Complexes	20
1.3 Main Groundwater Flow Systems	21
1.3.1 Types of Hydrogeologic Basins	22
1.3.2 Major Hydrologic Basins and Groundwater Flow Systems	26
1.3.3 Hydrogeologic Provinces and Sub-regions	28
1.4 Groundwater Regimes: Quantitative Aspects	28
1.4.1 General Features of Groundwater Regimes on the Arabian Plate	28
1.4.2 Hydraulic Characteristics	29
1.4.3 Groundwater Recharge	31
1.4.4 Groundwater Discharge and Flow Volumes	37
1.5 Groundwater Salinity and Major Hydrochemical Processes	39
1.5.1 General Distribution of Groundwater Salinity	39
1.5.2 Dissolved Substances in Precipitation and in the Unsaturated Zone	40
1.5.3 Hydrochemical Composition of Runoff Water and Shallow Groundwater	45
1.5.4 Hydrochemistry of Main Aquifers	48
1.5.5 Main Hydrochemical Types of Groundwater	50
1.6 Recent and Fossil Groundwater: Aspects of Isotope Hydrology	52

1.6.1 Isotope Investigations of Groundwater in the Arab Middle East	52
1.6.2 ^3H and ^{14}C Data	53
1.6.3 Stable Isotopes of Oxygen and Hydrogen	54
2 Northwestern Mountain and Rift Zone of the Northern Arabian Platform	63
2.1 Geographic and Hydrologic Features	63
2.1.1 Morphology, Climate, Vegetation and Water Supply	63
2.1.2 Main Hydrologic Basins and River Flow	69
2.2 Geology	73
2.2.1 Stratigraphic Sequence in the Mountain Areas	73
2.2.2 Geologic Structure of the Mountain Massifs	79
2.2.3 Geologic Set-Up of the Rift Valleys	84
2.3 Main Aquifers	87
2.3.1 Stratigraphic Distribution of Main Aquifers	87
2.3.2 Highlands of Judea and Jordan	89
2.3.3 Jordan–Dead Sea–Wadi Araba Rift Valley	93
2.3.4 Lebanon and Antilebanon Mountains and Bekaa	94
2.3.5 Ansariye Mountains and Middle Orontes Area	97
2.4 Groundwater Regimes	99
2.4.1 Hydraulic Parameters	99
2.4.2 Groundwater Recharge	100
2.4.3 Groundwater Flow Systems and Flow Volumes	102
2.5 Groundwater Salinity and Hydrochemistry	114
2.5.1 Mesozoic Karst Aquifers	114
2.5.2 Nummulitic Limestone Aquifers	122
2.5.3 Aquifers in Intermountain and Foreland Depressions	123
2.6 Isotopic Composition of the Groundwater	128
2.6.1 Groundwater Age	128
2.6.2 Stable Isotopes of Oxygen and Hydrogen	130
3 Eastern Part of the Northern Arabian Platform	139
3.1 Al Badiye, Hamad and the Transitional Zone	139
3.1.1 Morphology, Hydrography, Climate and Land Use	139
3.2 Geology	145
3.2.1 General Geologic Structure	145
3.2.2 Litho-Stratigraphic Sequence	147
3.2.3 Lithologic Features of the Upper Cretaceous - Paleogene Sequence	152
3.2.4 Tectonic Structure of the Geologic Sub-units	153

3.3 Aquifers and Groundwater Regimes	156
3.3.1 Main Aquifers	156
3.3.2 Groundwater Regimes	163
3.4 Groundwater Salinity and Hydrochemistry	168
3.4.1 Groundwater Salinity Distribution	168
3.4.2 Hydrochemistry of Paleogene Chalk Aquifers	169
3.4.3 Hydrochemical Features of Cretaceous and Neogene - Quaternary Aquifers in Northern Syria	173
3.4.4 Hydrochemical Features of Aquifers in the Palmyrean Zone and the Southeast of the Northern Arabian Plate	176
3.5 Groundwater Age, Information from Isotope Data	179
3.5.1 ^{14}C and ^3H Data	179
3.5.2 Stable Isotopes of Oxygen and Hydrogen	181
3.5.3 Pleistocene and Holocene Groundwater	188
4 North Arabian Volcanic Province: Jebel el Arab–Golan–Al Harra	189
4.1 Geographic and Geologic Set-Up	189
4.1.1 Landscape and Climate	189
4.1.2 Geologic Structure	192
4.2 Aquifer Systems and General Groundwater Regime	195
4.2.1 Aquiferous Zones and Hydraulic Conditions	195
4.2.2 Recharge Conditions	198
4.3 Hydrogeologic Sub-Basins and Groundwater Flow Systems	200
4.3.1 Hydrogeologic Sub-Areas	200
4.3.2 Jebel el Arab Mountain Massif	200
4.3.3 Yarmouk Sub-Basin	202
4.3.4 Azraq Sub-Basin	205
4.3.5 Wadi Dhuleil	207
4.3.6 Hamad	207
4.4 Groundwater Salinity and Hydrochemistry	208
4.4.1 Salinity Distribution and Hydrochemical Environment	208
4.4.2 Hydrochemical Features in Different Hydrogeologic Areas	210
4.5 Hydrogeologic Information from Isotope Data	216
4.5.1 ^3H and ^{14}C Data	216
4.5.2 Stable Isotopes of Oxygen and Hydrogen	217
4.5.3 Impact of Irrigation Return Flow	220
4.5.4 Isotope Data and Groundwater Regime	221
5 Interior Shelf	223
5.1 Geologic and Geographic Set-Up	223
5.1.1 General Geologic Structure	223

5.1.2 Climate and Landscape	224
5.1.3 Stratigraphic Sequence	227
5.2 Main Aquifers	231
5.2.1 Cambro-Ordovician Sandstone Aquifers	231
5.2.2 Permian-Jurassic Aquifers of the Tuwayq Segments	234
5.2.3 Cretaceous Sandstone Aquifers	235
5.3 Groundwater Regimes	237
5.3.1 Hydraulic Parameters	237
5.3.2 Groundwater Recharge	238
5.3.3 Groundwater Flow Systems and Flow Volumes	239
5.4 Groundwater Salinity and Hydrochemistry	241
5.4.1 Sandstone Aquifers	241
5.4.2 Carbonate Aquifers	245
5.5 Recent and Pleistocene Groundwater: Information from Isotope Data	246
5.5.1 Groundwater Age	246
5.5.2 Stable Isotopes of Oxygen and Hydrogen	247
 6 Eastern Arabian Platform	 251
6.1 Geologic and Geographic Set-Up	251
6.1.1 General Geologic Structure	251
6.1.2 Climate, Morphology and Hydrography	253
6.1.3 Sedimentary Cover of the Eastern Arabian Platform	260
6.2 Multi-Aquifer System of the Euphrates–Gulf–Rub al Khali Basin	265
6.2.1 General Hydrogeologic System	265
6.2.2 Hydro-Stratigraphic Sequence	266
6.2.3 Cretaceous–Tertiary Aquifers	267
6.2.4 Gravel Plain Aquifers	273
6.3 Groundwater Regimes	275
6.3.1 Hydraulic Parameters	275
6.3.2 Groundwater Recharge	278
6.3.3 Groundwater Flow Systems and Flow Volumes	281
6.4 Groundwater Salinity and Hydrochemistry	287
6.4.1 Groundwater Salinity in Multi-Aquifer Systems of the Euphrates–Gulf–Rub al Khali Basin	287
6.4.2 Paleogene Aquifers	289
6.4.3 Neogene and Quaternary Aquifers	296
6.4.4 Groundwater Discharge Zones	297
6.5 Shallow Groundwater Lenses Above the Brackish Main Aquifer System	300
6.5.1 Bahrain	300
6.5.2 Qatar	301

6.5.3 Northern Kuwait	303
6.5.4 Al Wusta Area in Oman	304
6.6 Groundwater Age and Paleohydrology: Information from Isotope Data	305
6.6.1 Groundwater Age	305
6.6.2 Stable Isotopes of Oxygen and Hydrogen	307
6.7 Gypsum, Sabkhas, Sand Dunes: Particular Hydrogeologic Features of the Shelf Area of the Arabian Peninsula	315
6.7.1 Influence of Evaporite Formations on the Hydrogeologic Conditions	315
6.7.2 Hydrogeologic Features of Sabkhas	316
6.7.3 Recharge in Sand Dunes	318
7 Arabian Shield	321
7.1 Geology, Morphology and Climate	321
7.1.1 Geology	321
7.1.2 Morphology	324
7.1.3 Climate and Vegetation	328
7.2 Aquifers on the Crystalline Shield	329
7.2.1 Aquifers in Wadis and Morphologic Depressions	329
7.2.2 Groundwater Regimes	333
7.2.3 Groundwater Salinity and Hydrochemistry	335
7.3 Sedimentary and Volcanic Aquifers Within the Arabian Shield in Yemen	340
7.3.1 Main Aquifers	340
7.3.2 Groundwater Regimes	346
7.3.3 Groundwater Salinity and Hydrochemistry	348
7.4 Information from Isotope Data	350
7.4.1 Groundwater Age	350
7.4.2 Stable Isotopes of Oxygen and Hydrogen	350
8 Oman Mountains	353
8.1 Geographic and Geologic Setup	353
8.1.1 Morphology and Climate	353
8.1.2 Geology	356
8.2 Hydrogeologic Conditions in the Hajar Limestone Areas	359
8.2.1 The Aquifer	359
8.2.2 Groundwater Regimes	361
8.2.3 Groundwater Salinity and Hydrochemistry	362
8.3 Groundwater in the Ophiolite Mountains	364
8.3.1 Aquiferous Zones	364

8.3.2 Groundwater Regimes	365
8.3.3 Groundwater Salinity and Hydrochemistry	368
8.4 Information from Isotope Data	371
8.4.1 Groundwater Age	371
8.4.2 Stable Isotopes of Oxygen and Hydrogen	372
9 Aquifers in Coastal Plains of the Arabian Plate	377
9.1 General Features of the Coastal Plains	377
9.1.1 Distribution of Coastal Aquifers	377
9.1.2 Groundwater Regimes	377
9.1.3 Hydrochemical Aspects	378
9.2 Mediterranean Sea Coast	380
9.2.1 Coast Along the Ansariye and Lebanon Mountains	380
9.2.2 Gaza Strip	381
9.3 Red Sea Coast	383
9.3.1 Main Geographic and Geologic Features	383
9.3.2 Coastal Plains Between Aqaba and Jeddah	384
9.3.3 Tihama Plain in Saudi Arabia and Yemen	385
9.4 Coast of the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea	389
9.4.1 Geologic and Morphologic Structure	389
9.4.2 Hydrogeologic Features	392
9.5 Batina Coastal Plain in the United Arab Emirates and Oman	394
9.5.1 Geographic and Geologic Set-Up	394
9.5.2 Aquiferous Zones and Groundwater Regimes	395
9.5.3 Groundwater Salinity and Hydrochemistry	400
9.6 Information from Isotope Data	405
9.6.1 Indications of Recent Recharge	405
9.6.2 Stable Isotopes of Oxygen and Hydrogen	406
References	413
Index	431