

## **IMP Collaboration between UniNe- NCGRT Australia: MOU signed on the 13. September**

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On the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 2012, a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Neuchâtel and the National Center of Groundwater Research and Training (NCGRT) in Australia was signed. With a total funding of 60 million Australian Dollars, 43 postdocs and 60 PhD students, NCGRT is one of the largest groundwater research centers worldwide. An active and extremely productive collaboration between NCGRT and the Centre for Hydrogeology and Geothermics in Neuchâtel, Switzerland (CHYN) has been maintained since the founding of NCGRT in 2009. The exceptionally stimulating scientific environment of NCGRT resulted in a large amount of scientific discussions and exchanges. The common areas of research are on reactive transport modeling, mathematical geology and surface water groundwater interaction. The productivity of the collaboration is reflected by 16 common publications in the top ranking journals of hydrogeology. 5 additional papers are currently under review. At the moment, NCGRT is a project partner of 3 ongoing Swiss National Science Foundation projects. We jointly supervise PhD students, have organized 2 very successful conference sessions, given over 20 talks in international conferences, and organized two technical courses. Numerous scientific exchanges have already taken place and more are planned for the near future.

The purpose of the MOU is to formalize the existing scientific ties and further develop co-operation in areas of mutual interest. These may include:

- common academic fields involving students and staff
- exchange of students, staff and faculty
- research projects of mutual interest
- professional development
- exchange of materials, information and publications as jointly agreed

A first student exchange within the context of this MOU will already take place in October: A master student at the CHYN will visit Flinders University for 2 months to participate in a joint project between NCGRT and the University of Neuchatel.

*On the picture :Signature ceremony in Neuchatel: Prof. Rahier, the Rector of the University of Neuchatel, Prof. Craig Simmons (director NCGRT), and the dean of the faculty of science (Prof. Kropf) after signing the MOU.*