



Improving Water Quality Security Through Benefit Sharing Towards A New Paradigm

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Purpose of Presentation

- **Water quality security situation of Southern Africa**
- **Reframe the problem of water quality insecurity**
- **Address water quality security as benefit sharing**
- **DEFINITION: Capacity of social actors to safeguard access to desirable quality of water for society and ecosystems (adapted from UN broad definition)**

Water Quality Security in Southern Africa

- **Many water challenges but deterioration of water quality is taking centre stage**
- **Poor quality of water in river basins, lakes and wetlands**
- **Concept of water quality security emerging as vital approach**
- **Often expressed in technical concepts and two conventional governance paradigms**



Deteriorating water quality



Water Quality Security in Southern Africa

- **Technical concepts/conventional paradigms do not encourage systemic understanding and interventions**
- **It hinders the potential reframing of the problem**
- **Need to develop robust as opposed to symptomatic solutions**
- **Need to evolve from rationality to public capability to adapt moral norms**

Reframing the Problem

- **Using a different lens, a different problem of water quality insecurity emerges**
- **Problem cannot be explored in isolation, but within a broader context of governance**
- **A good example of strong links between ‘governance’ and ‘security’**
- **The ‘insecurity’ dilemma of water quality has more to do with the problem of ‘inequitable access’**

Socio-political and institutional realities



Water Quality Security as Benefit Sharing

- **An alternative framework of benefit sharing**
- **Framework that highlights how the benefits and risks are apportioned among participants**
- **The term ‘safeguard’ denotes the capacity to manage benefits and risks**
- **Water quality security shows a strong dependence on socio-political and institutional development**

Concluding reflections

- **Need multiple voices and perspectives on water security; no best approach**
- **Policies on water quality security are context dependent and involve political processes**
- **Research challenge is to improve policy analysis and deepen understanding of governance**

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Acknowledgement

The International Water Security Network is funded by Lloyd's Register Foundation, a charitable foundation helping to protect life and property by supporting engineering-related education, public engagement and the application of research.

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