

# Non-statutory barriers and incentives to stakeholder participation in reducing water pollution: A South African case study

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## **Abstract**

A study was conducted in the Baynespruit, a small, highly-polluted, urban catchment in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa with 2 objectives: firstly, to develop an understanding of the views of stakeholders regarding the pollution problem and the relative importance of components of the problem; secondly, to identify and investigate non-statutory barriers and incentives to participation in multi-stakeholder processes aimed at integrated catchment management to create a healthy Baynespruit. The research methods embraced a number of different qualitative techniques, including a review of print media coverage, semi-structured interviews conducted with a cross-section of stakeholders, as well as participant and direct observation. The study identified the stakeholder groupings along with a number of non-statutory barriers and incentives to their participation in integrated activities to reduce pollution. These barriers and incentives were classed as economic, situational, developmental and socio-cultural in nature. For local residents, building a network of contacts and partnerships could address many of the economic, developmental and socio-cultural barriers they were found to face. Barriers to industry participation in pollution reduction were found to include problems such as a lack of consequences for polluting, and the feeling that it was 'not their problem'. Powerful economic and situational incentives, such as pressure from corporate customers and the public, seem to remain largely unexploited by stakeholders opposing pollution. A lack of resources in the form of time, staff and equipment, as well as unsuccessful past experiences which have created a reluctance to prosecute or release information, were found to be the major impediments preventing staff at government agencies and parastatals from motivating other stakeholders to participate.

**Keywords:** stakeholder, participation, water, management, incentives, barriers