
GLOBALIZATION AND WATER MANAGEMENT: THE CHANGING VALUE OF WATER

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WATER: A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT – THE DEBATE IS NOT OVER

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ABSTRACT: The challenge faced by South Africa is the provision of clean water and adequate sanitation services to all our people, regardless of race, gender, culture, ethnic origin, class, disability or HIV/AIDS status. Notwithstanding that challenge, certain lenders and reformers are quick to declare that the debate surrounding the appropriate characterisation of water is over. South Africa is at the cutting edge of considering water both as a right and as an economic good. South Africa's Constitution contradicts the "marginal- cost- plus/profit" pricing of the private sector. This fundamental contradiction cannot be resolved through traditional regulatory techniques. This paper seeks to demonstrate that the earlier consensus of neo-liberal policymakers is now threatened. The crisis in inadequate water access is indicated in worsening public health, degraded water ecologies, gender inequity and the desegregation of communities on class lines due to inadequate access to water for basic human needs.

KEY TERMS: Water rights, water supply, water crisis.

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