12 Megaconferences: View from Southern Africa

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12.1 Introduction

As part of a global survey to evaluate the impacts of megaconferences in the water sector conducted by the Third World Centre for Water Management in Mexico, the African Water Issues Research Unit was commissioned to undertake a regional survey of the Southern African region.[1] The overarching objective of this study is to evaluate whether or not global megaconferences, often highly criticized and expensive by their nature, do have a marked effect upon local realities within the Water Sector, how they are perceived by the regional water community and what we can do to improve their impact and standing globally. This report highlights the most interesting things that came out of the questionnaires, and does therefore not treat all the subjects asked about in the actual study. It is to be seen as a contribution to the debate about the nature and future of megaconferences based on empirical research. As such it is intended to spark further discussion, rather than provide conclusive answers.

12.2 Methodology

The Southern African leg of the global survey was conducted through the sending out of a questionnaire. This was an adapted version of the original which was deemed to better fit the task at hand in an African context (see Appendix A). This was sent to approximately 200 individuals from the region as well as a number of organizations. A number of reminders were sent to try and encourage maximum cooperation and effort. Of these, 30 persons responded, putting the response rate at 15%. The highest response rates/sent questionnaires came from Botswana (31%) and South Africa (28%) which together accounts for nearly half of the responses received. The questionnaire incorporated both strictly quantitative as well as open-ended qualitative questions to ensure maximum output. Respondents that

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[1] In this chapter the concept of megaconferences refers specifically to the following events: United Nations Water Conference in Mar del Plata (1977), Dublin Conference (1992), United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro (1992), Bonn Consultation (2001), Johannesburg Summit (2002), and the three World Water Forums (Marrakech 1977; the Hague 2000; and Japan 2003).

have not specifically indicated that their comments could be attributed to them are quoted as "Anonymous".

12.2.1 Limitations Specific to the Southern African Survey

Logistical constraints and ill-developed IT communications in many parts of the region poses a severe constraint to the amount of data that can be collected using the given approach. Poor connections, long download times, or limited time on the internet within the region make people less prepared to answer this type of questionnaire. The small sample size makes it impossible to draw any statistical conclusions of value. This chapter should be seen to have solicited Southern African views on the megaconferences, as they happened in the past as well as which path they should take into the future. With this objective in mind the following presentation will be presented qualitatively, letting the voices of the respondents speak for themselves as much as possible.

12.3 Findings

12.3.1 Attendance and Overall View

The number of informants that have attended each conference is fairly low (Figure 12.1), with the prime exception of the World Summit in Johannesburg in 2002. Two other conferences which stand out are the Second World Water Forum, the Hague, in 2000 and the recent Third World Water Forum, held in Japan in 2003. As is shown in Figure 12.2 most of the respondents have only visited one or none of the conferences and only 3 have attended 3 or more. Subsequently, most conferences score rather high, with only the Third World Water Forum scoring less than 3 (indicated as moderate). However, the values indicated for the less attended conferences are thus only partly based upon inputs from the very few respondents that were there. Their high value is boosted by the opinions of people who know of these conferences from their documentation, their impact on the water sector or through other second-hand information. The only conference that had a high attendance by regional water professionals was the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, and the overall value of this is primarily based on first-hand experience.
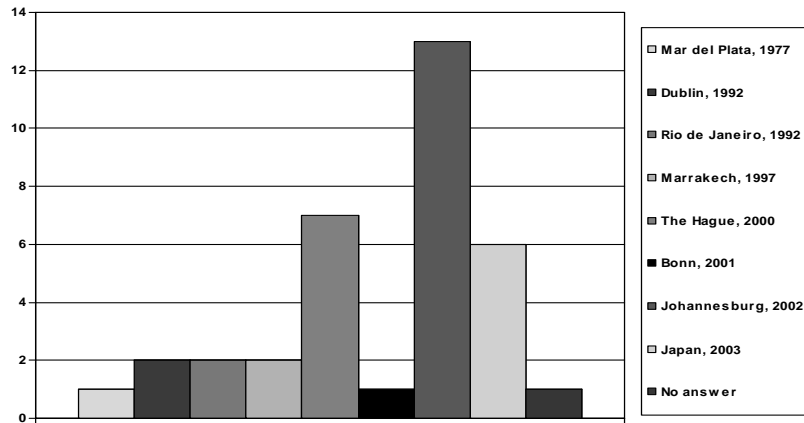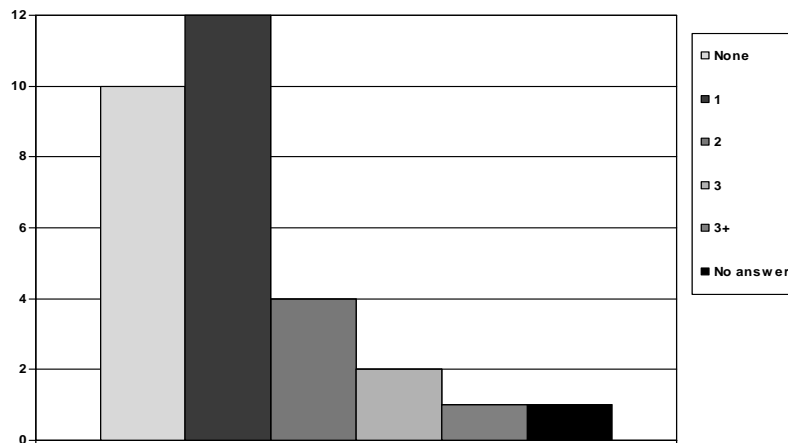
Fig. 12.1. Number of respondents attending each conference

Fig. 12.1. Number of conferences attended by respondents

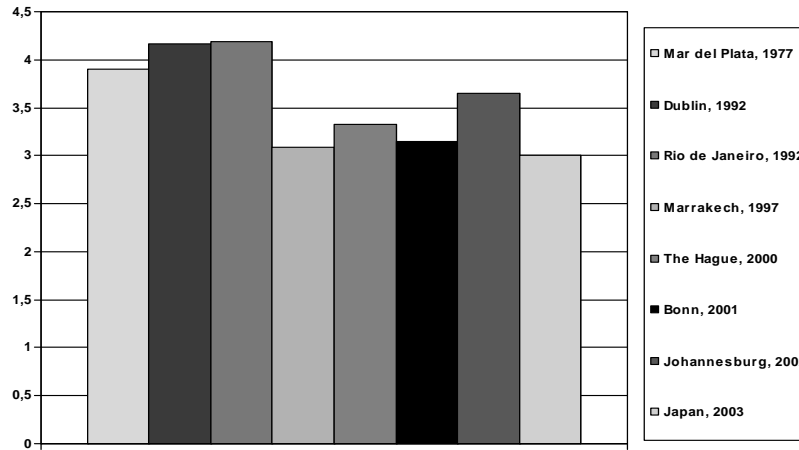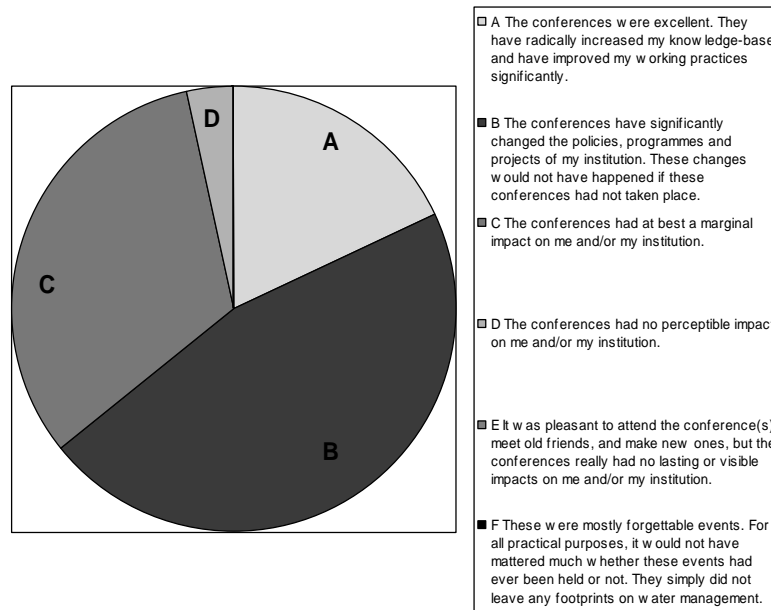**Fig. 12.2.** Overall views of each megaconference

Fig. 12.3. Overall impact of conferences

When it comes to the perceived overall impact of megaconferences (Figure 12.4), the largest portion of respondents seemed to agree with Statement B; that a significant impact on programmes, policies and projects of the respondents' institutions had been made; followed by C; a marginal impact only. However, broken

down according to number of conferences attended we see that the category that only attended one is also the most sceptical towards the impact that megaconferences have had on their own institutions. Given the small sample size these trends can be said to be indicative at best.

Table 12.1. Breakdown of overall impact according to number of conferences attended (Percentage)

Overall impact of conferences according to number of conferences attended[2]							
Conferences attended	A	B	C	D	E	F	N/A
0	20	20	10	-	-	-	50
1	-	40	50	-	-	-	10
2	16.5	33	33	16.5	-	-	-
2+	25	50	25	-	-	-	-

12.3.2 Strengths and Weaknesses

The megaconference endorses ideas and thoughts and is a powerful catalyst for changing company focus and influencing policy. (Lyn Archer, Umgeni Water, South Africa)

The most important strengths of megaconferences, according to the respondents, are definitely the force they can muster to bring about global research agendas and policies and their power to foster new paradigms. As such ideas that get a wide spread stay in circulation to influence policy all over the globe for a long time. From the answers gathered it seems like there is a perception that political commitment is more easily brought about in the spotlight of the world, which can then be used to hold politicians and decision-makers accountable in a local context. One example:

Important politicians from the countries we work in make statements to improve e.g. sanitation in their countries, which we can later use in advocacy work, holding them accountable to the content of their speeches. (Dorcas Pratt, Water Aid, Madagascar)

Although these are reportedly the most important strengths, other opinions stress the opportunity to network, the exposure to new ideas, the development of "contextual overlaps … [getting] different world views to connect" (Dirk Roux, CSIR, South Africa) which provides "almost a 'spiritual boost' in allowing cross cultural networking" (Lyn Archer, Umgeni Water, South Africa). There is no doubt that the respondents see the *ideal* conferences as opportunities to increase the knowledge base, raise the profile of the water sector or raise public awareness of the critical issues at hand. Such strengths are often the ideal perceptions of what a megaconference should be, mean or address.

In all practicality as the following section will show this is not always the case, given the views of the Southern African region. One commentator expressed the major practical benefit in the following way:

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[2] Some respondents marked two statements as relevant to their case.

I guess the local conference and hospitality industry in any country which hosts one of these mega-talk shops is likely to get a fairly substantial injection of cash, and that may continue to make these ghastly events attractive. (Anonymous)

In fact comments about the weaknesses of such big conferences frequently mention problems that can best be classified as logistical. Maybe the most common view is that these events have grown way out of proportion and are too ambitious to the extent where it is no longer meaningful attending. Specifically mentioned by several respondents are the parallel sessions, often spread over different venues in a large geographical area, that sometimes make it impossible to attend the sessions called for.

Other logistical constraints mentioned in the responses were language barriers and the cost of attending the conferences.

Regarding outputs, there is a strong opinion that these tend to be watered down and generalized as "one size fits all thinking" (Maria Amakali, Department of Water Affairs, Namibia), in an attempt to find a common denominator. Furthermore, resolutions taken or decisions made seldom take into account the lack of capacity and subsequent implementation problems that poorer countries wrestle with. In fact, there was some concern expressed that the attendees from developing countries were mostly politicians and very few sector specialist which at the bottom end would have to implement the resolutions agreed upon on the ground. One commentator felt that civil society and communities had little more than a spectator role.

There is also a strong feeling that the conferences are being used as proxies for furthering the agendas of various interest groups or countries. The credibility of the events is seriously damaged by practices such as described in the following example:

[Weaknesses include] countries pushing [their] own agendas –in fact I have heard that typically the outcome of a megaconference is lobbied and decided before the conference is held. (Anonymous)

There is a feeling that conferences constitute little more than a "tradeshow for richer countries" where the developing countries have relatively little say. A common view in general proved to be that the mega events are very much a "talk-shop", which boasts few tangible results.

12.3.3 Cost Effectiveness

Unfortunately the sample size is too small to say anything conclusive about the perceived cost-effectiveness of large scale events. It is clear however that the direct costs for organising a megaconference, and the related costs incurred on the participants, are two totally different issues.

Direct costs for organizing are unavoidable but cost for participation is not easily justifiable compared to outcomes of the conferences. (Anonymous)

Similarly another commentator expresses her feelings about the costs involved attending a major event:

They make it impossible for the people we are talking about to bring reasonable representation. (Anonymous)

It has to be recognized that the allocation of scarce resources in the Southern Africa region for the attendance of a conference that might not deliver anything concrete is not justifiable. While Southern Africa and other developing regions need to expand their influence and attendance at these conferences, the high costs of participating makes it a hard objective to achieve. To address this issue, several respondents call for a better focus, which would allow for more concrete outputs and better value for the individual attendee.

12.3.4 Practical Results, New Initiatives, and Policy Changes due to Megaconferences

One of the serious questions we must ask ourselves is to what degree the mainly theoretical outputs of megaconferences can be implemented. To what degree do they inform policy and what are the new initiatives coming out of them? In the Southern African context, one of the biggest criticisms relates to the relatively small practical implications major events are perceived to have. When asked about such impacts of megaconferences *in general,* respondents answered in the following way.

Table 12.1. Breakdown of respondents that answered favourably to the impacts of megaconferences on respective areas according to number of conferences attended (percentages)

	Practical results	New initiatives	Policy change
Overall	69	71	61.5
0	71	71	57
1-2	53	59	65
2+	100	66	33

However, it is very hard to take such a general stance, and more discrimination is needed.

Positive results do come. After the Rio de Janeiro and the Dublin conferences there is more environmental awareness within many countries and various countries have modelled their water laws in accordance with IWRM principles. (Anonymous)

Some of the conferences stand out as revolutionary, while others quickly slipped into oblivion. Notably the Dublin, Rio and Johannesburg conferences stand out as examples of events that have had an impact locally, either on actual results, policy, or thinking. Of the World Water Forums the Hague meeting was the most recognized, while Marrakech received no mentioning. Tokyo got few favourable comments.

I would argue that the period between 1977–1997 (including United Nations convention on non-nav uses of inland waters) radically altered the way water as a resource has been conceived. The law of diminishing returns, however, seems to have set in at the moment. Perhaps the problem is that many perceive the World Water Forums as state/business oriented meetings that have little to do with the real needs of real people. (Anonymous)

Shifts in direction are however not always due to megaconferences. An example:

The results vary very much from conference to conference. (…) Rio Conference consolidated the views that were for decades being debated and as it took place, after the end of the cold war countries discussed the environmental issues in a more global level without fears. It is very important to acknowledge the importance that the end of cold war had in the water agenda. (Anonymous)

In the case of South Africa several respondents have stressed that the changing policy in the water sector is less due to the direct impact of ideas promulgated at the megaconferences, and more due to internal dynamics created by the country's transformation process.

Although most respondents seem to agree that megaconferences do create "buzzes", highlight new ideas, and raise the profile of environmental issues in general, there is greater hesitation and frustration with the question of whether or not the ideas trickle down to the ground in Southern Africa. Two examples:

I am aware of several policy changes as a result of the conferences—but whether these policies are/can be implemented is another question. (Anonymous)

I do not have a very high opinion of the usefulness of megaconferences in general, nor do I believe that they affect political decision-making very significantly in most countries (there are a few exceptions, where the citizens are interested and informed and push their leaders to follow through on statements and commitments made at some megaconference or other platform). Their impact on actual operations on the ground is minimal in my experience. (Anonymous)

12.3.5 Ministerial Declarations

The Ministerial Declarations are most definitely known to the majority of respondents (71%), with the Johannesburg declaration not surprisingly being selected as the best. This is not to say that it actually was the best. Rather it points to the fact that this is the Ministerial Declaration that respondents are most likely to be very familiar with, many from first-hand experience. Rio was identified as a distant second, again pointing to the fact that the Rio Conference is probably the most famous and publicized event of the eight that featured in the survey. Although half the persons polled declined to put a number on the relevance of such declarations, here are some voices:

They could be ok if they are followed. The delegations should involve other key players in the water sector and not only bureaucrats; some of them are just there by luck or political connections. (Anonymous)

Relevance is measured in the eye of the beholder and by what criteria observers use to judge them. The above quote is taken from a professional and reflects the concern of the people who have to carry through with implementation. Clearly in such a view the declarations become very unimportant if they have no perceivable effect on changing people's lives. As such, a few respondents made the connection between the declarations and subsequent local action. Two examples mentioned were the "Water for All and IDWSSD activities following the Mar del Plata Conservation of Environment policy" (Anonymous) in Zambia, and the Madagascar "national WASH campaign which came out of the World Summit" that stressed "the place of sanitation and hygiene promotion in water supply programmes" (Dorcas Pratt, Water Aid, Madagascar).

Now, consider the next statement that is made by a more political player:

The whole continent of Africa is now talking and working hard to implement the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). (Anonymous)

This quote represents a very different view; one that focuses on articulating will and expressing ideas. Implementation comes second; and if not happening yet this is another issue. The question is therefore wrongly directed, and we should rather be asking: What realistic value do *we want* Ministerial Declarations to deliver?

12.3.6 Impact on the World of Water

Yes, megaconferences have had a marked effect on the water sector, at least if this is judged by the Southern African respondents. Table 8.3 shows that 72% thought the water sector would be different if these conferences had not been held, while 28% thought it would not have mattered. Broken down by number of conferences attended, there is an indication that those who have attended more conferences generally think they have also had an effect on the water sector. Hypothetically, attending more conferences makes it easier to make the link between subsequent impacts and a specific conference, of which attendees generally would have good knowledge. Conversely, non-attendance might make later changes hard to trace down to a specific event or conference.

Table 12.2. The impact of megaconferences on the water sector according to number of conferences attended (percentage)

	Had impact	No impact
All	72	28
None	56	44
1-2	81	19
2+	100	0

These changes are connected to the specific strengths and weaknesses mentioned in a previous section, as well as to the original purposes of these conferences. Here are some comments:

The world of water has changed in that the political will for development and management of water resources in an integrated manner is taking off in most parts of the world. (Balisi Bernard Khupe, OKACOM, Botswana)

There is more awareness on the challenges at hand. Policy focus on the problems and needs has increased. (Patrick Okuni, Directorate of Water, Uganda)

Indeed the changes that have been perceived range from an increased political will, awareness, and commitment globally, to providing specific targets, focus and funding for projects on "hot" topics.

We now have a target and focus for water related initiatives, but the primary change seems to be the flow of donor funds to specific projects. (Anonymous)

The conferences are also perceived to have brought new kinds of thinking into the water sector. Accurately or not several respondents associate the introduction of sustainable development and IWRM with specific conferences, changes that in their eyes would hardly have gained the kind of momentum they have without being aired at the global level.

12.3.7 Some Lessons Experience Has Taught Us

So what have we learned from the megaconferences that have been held? What messages can we bring to future events?

More than half the respondents thought the following statement best described their opinion:

C: The concept of such global conferences is good, but the present framework for organization needs to be changed radically. The events should be more focused and output-oriented. The main criteria for success should not be the number of people who attended the conference, but rather the quality of the results and their impacts.

And more than 25% though the following was a fitting suggestion:

D: Instead of the global megaconferences it would be desirable to organize regional meetings, dealing with regional problems and issues, and which could be focused and impact-oriented.

Megaconferences in their present form certainly have their strengths, but also their weaknesses. Their sheer size and scale makes them useful tools for setting a global agenda, a feature that is maybe also their worst flaw. There is a strong sense in Southern Africa that they are "driven by developed countries' agendas" and "tend to be dominated by some groups" (Anonymous). Bluntly put:

They entrench the positions of the gate-keeping countries, institutions and elites. They are about recycling donor money back to donor countries. They are about a new form of chequebook diplomacy with specific objectives to be reached by the more powerful countries. (Anthony Turton, Gibb-SERA, South Africa)

That conferences are less about forging a common front against the global water crisis, and more about hidden agendas and financial interests, is a great blow to

the future credibility and attractiveness of the events, as in the following quote regarding the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg 2002:

> The exhibitions were totally dominated by business corporations and were quite frankly sterile. The Water Dome at the Jo'burg Summit was a deathly dull place! (Chris Dickens, Institute of Natural Resources, South Africa)

Many commentators feel that, with the exception of a few conferences, the major events create a buzz while they are happening, to then fade out over time. Issues discussed often end up in the same old debate, and several respondents feel that little new is produced when politics dominate the day.

The information that is generated is poorly distributed and often ends up on the bookshelves of those few who were there. Still, with the increasing use of the internet and other knowledge sharing tools, this is probably better than before – for those who have access to it. If well organized the conferences provide powerful channels for knowledge sharing, networking and alignment of different world views. If conferences have taken a turn for the worse, there is a need for a debate on how to improve the situation. The current research is therefore timely and relevant.

12.4 Conclusion

From the answers gathered it can be deduced that some conferences are better than others. The quality, impact and usefulness, in the eyes of the respondents, seem to range from very poor to excellent or "revolutionary", with Rio as the most well-known and appreciated.

Megaconferences in their present form are partly suffering from a lack of credibility. They are sometimes seen as being increasingly favouring some groups or countries, with the polarization of developed and developing countries at the fore-front. Developing country representation, especially at the professional level, is also seen to be insufficient, partly due to the great costs associated with partaking in a major event. Such costs can often be ill-afforded by countries with strained resources.

While many see megaconferences as useful for aligning global efforts, raising awareness and sharing knowledge, the direct connection between the theoretical dimension and what is actually happening on the ground is less visible. The respondents to this survey do perceive that such practical results are lacking, but not totally absent. Quite a number of people said they knew of at least some outcomes of the mega events that eventually had a local and practical effect. Many questioned the link between related costs and apparent practical output however, as well as the local relevance of such events. There is no doubt that the functions respondents would like to see megaconferences perform are indeed driven by a specific need. We must ask ourselves if these global events really fulfil our needs in the best way possible, or if it would not be better to replace some of them with more regional forums—something that several people called for in their responses.

12.4.1 Voices from Southern Africa

What do people in Southern Africa in the water sector have to say about the impact of megaconferences on the water sector in general? In this section we let the respondents speak entirely for themselves with their own words. Here are two voices:

   "Megaconferences perhaps have a value in bubbling the issues to the surface, and perhaps in building these issues into policies, targets and approaches. But I believe this has not lead to fundamental changes in the way developing nations function on the ground. If anything the conferences have only served to channel funding in different directions." (Anonymous)
   "Information coming out of global megaconferences is often in hefty tomes. The usefulness of materials and documents needs to be given much more consideration. There is a place for heavy research documents—but there should also be more accessible user-friendly ways of communicating. This includes giving thought to the languages materials are available in as well as the layout." (Dorcas Pratt, Water Aid, Madagascar)

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all of those who have put in valuable time and effort to express their views. Their contributions are greatly appreciated.

Appendix

A. Questionnaire

Impacts of Global Megaconferences on Water

Conducted by the African Water Issues Research Unit (University of Pretoria) on behalf of the Third World Centre for Water Management, Mexico.

This questionnaire can be returned to us anonymously by e-mail (MDrackner@csir.co.za) or by fax: +27(0)866-725962 as soon as possible. We are soliciting views from those who have attended one or more of these megaconferences, as well as from those who have not attended any of these conferences. If acceptable to you, we would prefer to receive your comments formally for possible future interactions. Should you agree to this request, we wish to assure you that we shall NOT attribute any comments to you, without your explicit authorisation. Thank you for your time.
Please be frank in your statements: "politically correct" views are unlikely to be of much use in this assessment.

1. Your Participation - Mark with X. Did you participate in:

Conference

- UN Water Conference, Mar del Plata, 1977
- International Conference on Water and the Environment, Dublin, 1992
- UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 1992
- First World Water Forum, Marrakech, 1997
- Second World Water Forum, the Hague, 2000
- International Conference on Freshwater, Bonn, 2001
- UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002
- Third World Water Forum, Japan, 2003

2. Your overall views on each megaconference - Based on your current knowledge of these megaconferences (whether you participated or not), please state your overall views on each of the event(s) in a scale of 0 (very poor) - 5 (absolutely excellent), based on your own perception of their outputs and impacts. Use 3 for average. If you have no specific knowledge on a conference, please say N/A.

Conference

- UN Water Conference, Mar del Plata, 1977
- International Conference on Water and the Environment, Dublin, 1992
- UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 1992
- First World Water Forum, Marrakech, 1997
- Second World Water Forum, the Hague, 2000
- International Conference on Freshwater, Bonn, 2001
- UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002
- Third World Water Forum, Japan, 2003

3. Impacts of megaconferences – Irrespective of whether you participated or not in these megaconferences, please select which one of the following comments most closely reflects your overall views on all the megaconferences as a whole.

A. The conferences were excellent. They have radically increased my knowledge-base, and have improved my working practices significantly.

B. The conferences have significantly changed the policies, programmes and projects of my institution. These changes would not have happened if these conferences had not taken place.

C. The conferences had at best a marginal impact on me and/or my institution.

D. The conferences had no perceptible impact on me and/or my institution.

E. It was pleasant to attend the conference(s), meet old friends, and make new ones, but the conferences really had no lasting or visible impacts on me and/or my institution.

F. These were mostly forgettable events. For all practical purposes, it would not have mattered much whether these events had ever been held or not. They simply did not leave any footprints on water management.

4. Strengths of megaconferences – What in your view are the most important strengths of these megaconferences? (List maximum three strengths).

5. Weaknesses of megaconferences – What in your view are the most important weaknesses of these megaconferences? (List maximum three weaknesses).

6. Cost-effectiveness of megaconferences. The mega conferences are often expensive to organise, and the costs seem to have increased significantly in recent years. For example, the costs of organising the UN Water conference in Mar del Plata, or the First World Water Forum in Marrakech were modest. The cost of organising the Second World Water Forum was much higher. The cost of the Third World Water Forum was significantly higher than the Hague Forum. The cost of the Secretariat alone for the Japan Forum is estimated at US $28 million.
Based on your perception of their outputs and impacts, what is your view of the cost-effectiveness of these events (0–5)?

5 Extremely high
4 High
3 Moderate
2 Low
1 Extremely low
0 None

7a. Documentation and information dissemination – Do you have adequate documentations (reports, papers, proceedings, etc.) from any of these conferences?

Yes
No

7b. If yes, which ones? How useful have these documentations been (0–5)?

Conference	Type of documentation	Usefulness (0–5)
• UN Water Conference, Mar del Plata, 1977		
• International Conference on Water and the Environment, Dublin, 1992		
• UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 1992		
• First World Water Forum, Marrakech, 1997		
• Second World Water Forum, the Hague, 2000		
• International Conference on Freshwater, Bonn, 2001		
• UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002		
• Third World Water Forum, Japan, 2003		

7c. Overall, How do you rate the quality of documents you have seen of these megaconferences (0–5)?

5 Extremely high
4 High
3 Moderate
2 Low
1 Extremely low
0 None

8a. Practical results from the megaconferences – In your view, did any of these megaconferences yield positive, implementable, and lasting results?

Yes
No

8b. In your view, did any new initiatives (including water sector reform) originate from these events, which otherwise would not have occurred?

Yes
No

8c. Are you aware of any policy change in your country which would not have occurred without one or more of these megaconferences?

Yes
No

8d. If yes on any of questions 8a-c, please give examples from the specific megaconferences at regional, national and/or global events (practical results, new initiatives, policy changes).

Conference	Examples
• UN Water Conference, Mar del Plata, 1977	
• International Conference on Water and the Environment, Dublin, 1992	
• UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 1992	
• First World Water Forum, Marrakech, 1997	
• Second World Water Forum, the Hague, 2000	
• International Conference on Freshwater, Bonn, 2001	
• UN Conference on Sustainable - Development, Johannesburg 2002	
• Third World Water Forum, Japan, 2003	

9. Changes in investment due to megaconferences – Has the investments availability for the water sector in your country increased or decreased due to these conferences, in a way that would not have occurred unless these conferences had taken place? If it has changed, please give the direction and a rough estimate of these changes

	It has increased	It has decreased	No change
Direction			
Estimate of change			

10. Key Lessons – What in your view are the key lessons (positive and negative) that we can learn from these megaconferences?

	Positive	Negative
Key Lesson 1		
Key Lesson 2		
Key Lesson 3		

11a. Changes in the world of water due to megaconferences – In your view, would the world of water have been any different if these conferences had not taken place?

Yes	
No	

11b. If yes, in what ways has it changed?

Changes

12. Your overall view on the megaconferences – What is your overall view of these megaconferences? Choose the statement that is closest to your view.

A. The global megaconferences are useful and cost-effective. We should continue with them with few changes
B. The conferences have now become one big "water fair", with a lot of activities but without much thought as to their relevance, appropriateness, outputs, or impacts. There is no coordination between events, no clear focus, and their cost-effectiveness leaves much to be desired.
C. The concept of such global conferences is good, but the present framework for organisation needs to be changed radically. The events should be more focused and output-oriented. The main criteria for success should not be the number of people who attended the conference, but rather the quality of the results and their impacts.
D. Instead of the global megaconferences it would be desirable to organise regional meetings, dealing with regional problems and issues, and which could be focused and impact-oriented.

13. Ministerial Declarations – At many of these conferences, there were Ministerial Declarations which had relevance to the water sector. Please give your opinions on the following questions.

13a. Are you and your colleagues aware of these Ministerial Declarations?

Yes
No

13b. If yes, please identify the conference whose declaration you consider had the most impact and was best

Conference
• UN Water Conference, Mar del Plata, 1977
• International Conference on Water and the Environment, Dublin, 1992
• UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 1992
• First World Water Forum, Marrakech, 1997
• Second World Water Forum, the Hague, 2000
• International Conference on Freshwater, Bonn, 2001
• UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002
• Third World Water Forum, Japan, 2003

13c. What, in your view, is the relevance, appropriateness and usefulness of such declarations (0–5)?

5 Extremely high
4 High
3 Moderate
2 Low
1 Extremely low
0 None

13d. Has the water policy and/or priorities of water programmes of your country been affected by these Ministerial Declarations?

Yes
No

13e. If yes, please briefly provide examples:

14. Additional- Please give your views on any other aspect(s) and issue(s) of global megaconferences not mentioned above. This could be as long as you like:

15. Details – the completion of this section is optional - we shall not use any one's name in the evaluation report without explicit authorization from the individual concerned:

Name:	Organisation:	
E-mail:	Tel:	
I agree to the formal use of my comments:	Yes	No

B. Spatial Distribution of Responses

Country	Number of persons directly polled[3]	Number of responses	Response rate (%)
South Africa	53	15	28
Zimbabwe	25	2	8
Namibia	18	3	17
Mozambique	8	1	12,5
Madagascar	4	1	25
Angola	0	0	-
Uganda	9	1	11
Kenya	10	0	0
Tanzania	13	0	0
Botswana	13	4	31
Swaziland	4	1	25
Lesotho	6	1	17
Zambia	20	1	5
Malawi	8	0	0
Seychelles	1	0	0
Mauritius	1	0	0
DRC	1	0	0

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[3] This number signifies individuals on the original contact list. Included are also people whose e-mail addresses failed during the original send-out or during one of the subsequent reminders.