Water-conservation policies in perspective: insights from a Q-method study in Salta, Argentina

Appendix

Complete set of 68 statements used in our Q study. Themes and statement numbers per theme are indicated between brackets at the end of each statement. SP: Service Provider; WR: Water Rights; PP: Public Participation; WA: Water Availability.

(1) It is one of the main responsibilities of states to ensure inhabitants the right to water as a fundamental condition to guarantee the right to life and an adequate standard of living (SP-01).
(2) The problem of water management lies in the inefficient provision of services by oversized and inefficient state companies (SP-02).
(3) Water management in urban areas must be co-managed by both public institutions (municipalities, state companies, or other government agencies) and private companies (SP-03).
(4) Fair management of water resources cannot be achieved without a public policy of subsidies for vulnerable sectors (SP-04).
(5) Lack of transparency and low efficiency are major problems when states attempt to manage common resources like water (SP-05).
(6) Water management heavily depends on political aspects, and not only on technical and economic issues (SP-06).
(7) The best way to ensure the right to water is keeping the supply of drinking water and sewerage services in the public sector (SP-07).
(8) A private management of water and sanitation services is one way to ensure efficiency and transparency (SP-08).
(9) Private companies should always play an active role in the management of water and sanitation services (SP-09).
(10) The problem of water management lies in the inefficient provision of services by profit-oriented private companies that do not pay enough attention to the problems of the poor (SP-10).
(11) Provision of water and sanitation services requires the implementation of dynamic, integrated and adaptive management systems (SP-11).
In Salta there is no water scarcity. Instead, there is lack of management capacity by the water company and inadequate control by the state (WA-01).

Adoption of water-saving practices is necessary and desirable even when water is abundant (WA-02).

Water management and sanitation in Salta is adequate and tariffs paid by end users are affordable (WA-03).

A good pricing policy is sufficient to minimize water wastage as long as those who consume more pay more (WA-04).

Good management of water and sanitation services should include the protection of watersheds and related ecosystems (WR-01).

Partnerships between public and private actors lead to greater efficiency in the management of water and sanitation services (SP-12).

Everybody in the world has the right to an adequate supply of drinking water and appropriate sanitation systems (WR-02).

Differences in access to water in terms of quantity and quality are violations of the principle of equal opportunities to all (WR-03).

Access to water and sanitation is one of the main ways to guarantee public health and economic development (WR-04).

Any restriction on water consumption can be seen as a violation of the human rights of end users and consumers (WR-05).

Access to safe water and adequate sanitation are independent human rights and they should be recognized as such (WR-06).

Cooperation between public and private sectors is important to adequately manage water resources (SP-13).

Unequal access to the benefits of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation is not only an economic problem, but also a social and political issue (WR-07).

The best way to protect water resources is to leave water in its natural environment and minimize its consumption by human beings (WR-08).

Decisions on water consumption should always consider the impact that its use may have on ecosystems (WR-09).

All water contaminated by human activities must be recovered and reused by using adequate techniques and behaviors (WR-10).

Local governments should take urgent steps to declare that water is a public good within their territories and should implement strong regulatory structures to protect it (WR-11).

Water scarcity affects millions of people in the world, especially in poor countries, and it is the source of many diseases (WA-05).

Local citizens, as the main stakeholders, should decide on issues such as the privatization of water services, water catchment, and pollution control, among others (PP-01).

People have the right to consume as much water as they can afford, since water tariffs are efficient economic instruments that induce a rational use of water (WA-06).

Water cannot be used in a sustainable manner under prevailing economic globalization policies (WR-12).

Governments should ban large-scale water trade projects because they are not adequate water management initiatives (WR-13).
(34) It is necessary that water could be traded under market rules to ensure its rational and equitable management (WR-14).
(35) Water resources must be included in economic markets because this is important for a good water management (WR-15).
(36) Water is an economic good and, as such, it should be readily available for all sectors that can pay for it (WR-16).
(37) Water is more valuable than gold. This is a metaphor to indicate that it is not really possible to assign a market price to water resources (WR-17).
(38) Access to a safe source of drinking water is a critical need for the integral development of human populations (WR-18).
(39) Citizens are the ultimate responsible party for the protection of water resources, not states or private companies (PP-02).
(40) Measurement of water consumption in institutions, companies, and households is an essential tool for the rational management of water resources (WA-07).
(41) Citizens must be treated as partners in decision-making processes related to the establishment of water policies (PP-03).
(42) Decisions on the water infrastructure and maintenance activities needed in a particular place should not be left in the hands of water institutions only (PP-04).
(43) It is important for the fairness and efficiency of the water management system that ordinary citizens take part in all related decision-making processes (PP-05).
(44) A crucial aspect of responsible citizenship is the participation in water governance and related services (PP-06).
(45) Citizen participation in decision-making processes contributes to better water management and is considered a strategy for achieving local sustainable development (PP-07).
(46) The excessive use of water can only be controlled by installing water meters at the consumption point and charging different tariffs to different consumption patterns (WA-08).
(47) It is not necessary that citizens are consulted and invited to participate with governments in the formulation of water policies (PP-08).
(48) The best way to protecting water is to assign an economic value to it because a resource that has no price cannot be adequately preserved and tends to be wasted (WA-09).
(49) The state and formal institutions (such as private companies and regulatory bodies) are the only responsible parties for water management (PP-09).
(50) Water users should not worry about planning the adequate use of water resources and other water management activities (PP-10).
(51) The need to involve users in water planning and management is a sign of weakness on the part of the state and water institutions (PP-11).
(52) Water is no longer abundant and easily available in adequate quantity and quality and therefore it needs to be carefully managed and its use be restricted (WA-10).
(53) It is necessary to establish efficient policies to use and distribute water in an equitable manner (WA-11).
(54) The key to saving water and protecting water resources is a rational and responsible consumption by end users (WA-12).
(55) Education is essential for people to value water and learn to care about it. Without education, you cannot achieve a good water and sanitation management system (PP-12).
Access to an adequate amount of drinking water is a human right, but that right must be linked to the obligation to use the resource responsibly (WR-19).

Improvements in water infrastructure must be a priority for the government, in order to reduce leakages and optimize water savings (WA-13).

The use of drinking water for activities such as watering gardens and filling swimming pools should be banned (WA-14).

Water users are not responsible for the wastage of drinking water since saving water is basically a responsibility of the state and other water managers (WA-15).

The use of water for watering gardens or filling swimming pools is as important as the use of water for personal consumption (WA-16).

Pricing policies are an important means to guarantee the human right to water and help preserve water resources (WR-20).

When water losses in the distribution system are significant, water savings at home become irrelevant (WA-17).

More privileged sectors of society always use more water than needed when water consumption is not restricted (WA-18).

Water is always abundant. The idea of water scarcity is a strategy of public or private companies to discharge themselves from their responsibilities (WA-19).

The tendency to waste drinking water in daily activities does not depend on income or educational level (WA-20).

Water governance, understood as the interactions of actors and processes involved in water management, is the key to environmental sustainability (PP-13).

Water management should include mechanisms, processes, and places where citizens can participate and express their views, exercise their rights, and solve their differences (PP-14).

The best protectors of water resources are local authorities (such as municipalities) and the public or private companies that provide water and sanitation services (PP-15).