

Jeffrey A. Thornton

PhD in Tropical Resource Ecology
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Education & Experience

Dr Jeff Thornton was born and raised in central Massachusetts, receiving a BS degree in Marine Transportation from the United States Merchant Marine Academy in 1974. In 1976, he received an MS in Earth Sciences from the University of New Hampshire, before traveling to southern Africa to take up a research fellowship with the (then) University of Rhodesia. After completing the field work for a PhD in 1979, while completing his dissertation, he took up a position with the Zimbabwe Government as Government Hydrobiologist, with responsibility for water quality and pollution control in natural waters throughout the country. In 1981, Jeff was recruited by the South African National Institute for Water Research to manage the data gathering program for the Hartbeespoort Dam Ecosystem Study then getting underway. He received his doctorate in 1982, completing both an MBA and Associate Degree in Theology in the following seven years. In 1987, he joined the Cape Town City Council, first, as Water Management Planning Specialist, and, later, as Head: Environmental Planning for this City of 2.5 million. Returning to the United States in 1990, Dr Thornton took up a new position as a Lake Management Specialist with the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, before returning to environmental planning in 1992 as a Principal Planner with the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. He retired from that position in 2013 and is devoting his efforts to working as Managing Director of International Environmental Management Services Limited, a nonprofit environmental education corporation focusing on the developing world. Concurrently, he holds an appointment as a visiting researcher in the Graduate School of Human

Development and Environment at Kobe University, Japan. He has contributed to over 100 articles and books on the subjects of water quality, policy and resource management, and serves on a number of national and international committees dealing with water resource issues, including the editorial boards of the African Journal of Aquatic Sciences and International Journal of Ecohydrology and Hydrobiology.

Five Representative Publications

Breffe, W., M. Eiswerth, D. Muralidharan & **J. A. Thornton** (2015) Understanding how income influences willingness to pay for joint programs: A more equitable value measure for the less wealthy. *Ecological Economics*, 109:17-25.

Thornton, J. A., P. H. Mcmillan & P. Romanovsky (1989) Perceptions of water pollution in South Africa: Case studies from two waterbodies (Hartbeespoort Dam and Zandvlei). *S. Afr. J. Psychol.*, 19:197-204.

Thornton, J. A. & P. H. Mcmillan (1989) Reconciling public opinion and water quality criteria in South Africa. *Water SA*, 15:221-226.

Thornton, J. A. (Ed.) (1982) Lake Mcllwaine: The eutrophication and recovery of a tropical African man-made lake. Monogr. Biol., 49, 251 pp. Junk, The Hague. ISBN 90-6193-102-9.

Thornton, J. A. (1986) Nutrients in African lake ecosystems: Do we know all? *J. Limnol. Soc. sth. Afr.*, 12:6-21.

Candidate's Statement

Jeff Thornton started his career in the marine environment, training to become a ship's officer at the US Merchant Marine Academy, where he found a life-long interest in water resources management. Moving from marine chemistry, through estuarine chemistry, to the freshwater systems of tropical Africa, Jeff learned much about the commonalities between aquatic systems, applying his knowledge of marine systems to lakes and reservoirs. His experiences in Zimbabwe and South Africa demonstrated a flair for connecting science with public policy and civil society. These experiences led Jeff to complete an MBA, believing that the ability to provide leadership in "the business of the environment" would be advantageous to his personal mission of "making a difference in this world." Being able to apply business principles to the conduct of environmental management means communicating sound science to citizens, politicians, decision-makers and regulators as well as to scientific colleagues if one is to be successful in creating the conditions for change and making a difference. Jeff has devoted his first career to such communications and he is now setting out to continue this legacy by working with the International Society for Salt Lake Research to be a vital and viable "agent of change" for the protection and preservation of saline lakes as unique and often-overlooked water resources.