

**Environmental regulation, enforcement and compliance in Malawi**  
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Despite improvements in some regions, water pollution is on the rise globally, UNESCO (2009). Unless substantial progress is made in regulation and enforcement, pollution is expected to increase as a result of economic development driven by urbanisation, industries and intensive agriculture systems. Malawi, though having a few industries is no exception to pollution. *Prema facie*, the reasons could be lack of laws to curb the practice, ignorance of the laws, deliberate dumping of untreated effluent by industry and lack of monitoring. In November 2009, BOD levels in Mudi river in the city of Blantyre were recorded in excess of 330mg/l against a standard of 20mg/l and COD in the same river was at 554mg/l against a standard of 70mg/l (Report - Regional Water Development Office - South). Malawi has a fair share of legislation in pollution control with a number of institutions responsible for implementation. Regulators are embedded in government ministries, which are also responsible for enforcement, which is done through inspections, sampling and analysis of effluents and receiving streams. The findings show that despite the exhaustive legislative efforts made for pollution control, the level of enforcement is quite poor. Juxtaposition of roles within the government ministries calls for an urgent need for an independent regulator. This study therefore analyses the institutions responsible for pollution control, the laws and policies that are supposed to be enforced and the possible reasons behind non-compliance of a regulated community.