

DEA and SANBI hosted a Strategic Framework & Implementation Plan workshop for Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA) in South Africa

The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) co-hosted a workshop to develop a Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan for Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA) in South Africa, at the Pretoria National Botanical Gardens.

The EbA workshop was the first of its kind in bringing together different national partners and stakeholders from the private sector, NGO's, academia, parastatals and government departments to develop a practical and effective strategic implementation programme of work for South Africa.

There are numerous response mechanisms to the adverse effects of climate change through either mitigation or adaptation. Defining EbA in the midst of cross-sectoral climate change responses and adaptation measures can thus be challenging. EbA encompasses socio-economic, climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation benefits. In the light of all these benefits, Ecosystem based Adaptation is defined as the use of biodiversity and ecosystem services as part of an overall adaptation strategy to help people to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.

With the EbA scope of work still in planning stages, the Department of Environmental Affairs indicated that it must be aligned with government's key strategic priorities like the National Development Plan (NDP), Vision 2030 and the Climate Change Response Policy (NCCRP). Invited speakers also described opportunities and challenges of EbA in South Africa under international policies and agreements like the Paris Agreement at COP21.

The workshop explored strategic ideas using group discussions and interactive break-away sessions. The discussions were aimed at building a conceptual framework for EbA, developing pilot projects to test the ability of EbA in delivering multiple benefits, academic research paths, mainstreaming EbA and effective coordination to mobilise capacity and resources.

A draft Ecosystem based Adaptation Strategy is currently being put together. It will be distributed for comments to the workshop participants on the 2nd of March 2016.



Please email Mpfunzeni Tshindane to join the Ecosystem based Adaptation stakeholder list at M.Tshindane@sanbi.org.za if you want future updates