



South African
National Implementing Entity
of the Adaptation Fund

LIVING IN A CHANGING CLIMATE:

An adaptation approach

SANBI
Biodiversity for Life
South African National Biodiversity Institute



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The world's climate is changing after decades of burning carbon-heavy fossil fuels. Temperatures are climbing, rainfall is changing and weather patterns are becoming more extreme and less predictable.

The threat of these changes will be felt differently, in different communities, but the poor and disadvantaged will be hardest hit and are not able to adapt as easily to life in a more turbulent climate. These communities have the greatest need for funding to help them meet these challenges, but often don't have the means to access funding. Society can respond to climate change in two ways. The first is to find ways to cut the carbon emissions which are behind the rising temperatures and shifting weather patterns (so-called 'mitigation'). This is geared towards slowing climate change in the future. The second approach is to look for ways to live with the consequences of a more turbulent climate (so-called 'adaptation'), which are already happening or will happen in future. Investing in adaptation approaches can help vulnerable communities to cope with the effects of changing weather patterns. These can include:

- Climate-smart agriculture: these are methods that help farmers to maintain production and food security in spite of changes in temperature and rainfall.
- Restoring and protecting natural landscapes: healthy ecosystems give poor communities many 'free' services like clean water, they help put the brakes on flood water, and give grazing for livestock. Investing in restoring ecosystems is an investment in poor communities.
- Early warning systems: these can help warn communities about imminent floods, storms and droughts, and advise on how to protect their assets and livelihoods.
- Climate-proofing the built environment: reinforcing roads, houses and buildings such as schools and clinics against storm damage improves community health and maintains access to vital services.

Climate change has the potential to undermine development efforts and reverse development gains if society doesn't respond appropriately. Investing in climate change adaptation actions is essential if we are to safeguard development, take advantage of opportunities that the new weather patterns present, and manage climate-related risk.

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