

# EBA-SA

## ECOSYSTEM-BASED ADAPTATION SOUTH AFRICA

Welcome to the first issue of the Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) South Africa (EBA-SA) network newsletter. This issue reflects the formation of the Ecosystem-based Adaptation concept in South Africa; it also highlights the implementation of the EbA approach, the events and projects to date.

In the year 2016 the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), in partnership with the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) developed the Strategic Framework and Overarching Implementation Plan for EbA in South Africa, referred to as the South African EbA Strategy, which is framed for the period 2016–2021. The EbA Strategy is guided by a vision that states that ‘Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) is implemented as part of South Africa’s overall climate change adaptation strategy in support of a long-term, just transition to a climate-resilient economy and society’. The EbA Strategy calls for effective coordination, learning and communication, to mobilise capacity and resources for the implementation of EbA (DEA, SANBI 2016, 34). In this regard, the EBA-SA newsletter was established, as a bulletin that is issued periodically, to communicate information about the recent activities of EbA in South Africa.

In this newsletter we give you the highlights of EbA in South Africa; the establishment of the team, the coordinating steering committee; the project to develop the action plan for climate change adaptation plans for South African biomes and map priority areas; as well as recent publications that could be informative for the EBA-SA readers.



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**environmental affairs**

Department:  
Environmental Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**SANBI**   
Biodiversity for Life  
South African National Biodiversity Institute



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## MEET THE TEAM

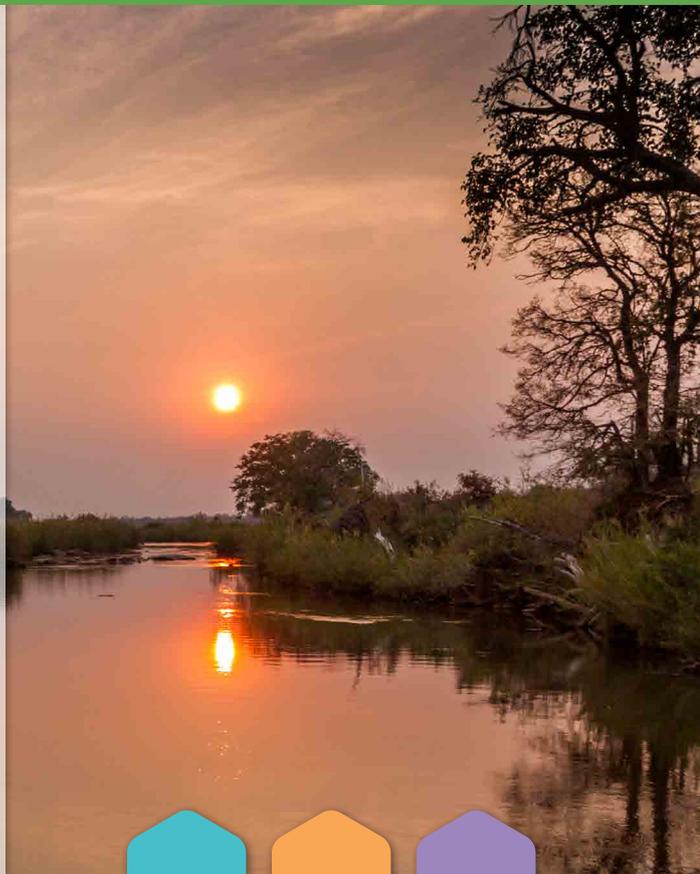
The Department of Environmental Affairs, under the Branch: Biodiversity and Conservation, has a team of officials, whose focus is on the regulation and management of all biodiversity and conservation matters. The branch ensures sustainable use, conservation, management and socio-economic development; hence we are working on Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) implementation. Even though the DEA is the forefront of this programme, extensive support is received from the South African National Biodiversity Institute's (SANBI's) Ecological Infrastructure team, and both teams have collaborated to upscale the implementation of EbA in the country. This collaboration has stimulated the establishment of the EbA Strategy document, which aims to put forward EbA as a central component of South Africa's programme of work on biodiversity and climate change.

The DEA team consists of four members. Mr. Barney Kgope is the Director for the Biodiversity Risk Management directorate, thus leading the Biodiversity and Climate Change sub-directorate, which consists of three officials: Mr. Ntando Mkhize, Ms. Tshifhiwa Munyai and Ms. Nozipho Sibiya.

The SANBI team is led by Mr. Mahlodi Tau, who is the Director of the Ecological Infrastructure Directorate. He is assisted by Mr. Kennedy Nmutamvuni, whose role is to provide content and technical support to the ecological infrastructure work programme focusing on a range of sectors, including water, environment, agriculture, disaster risk reduction, municipal infrastructure and climate change adaptation.

Forging ahead, we look forward to achieving all the EbA Strategy's four areas of work also called the four outcomes, which overall will contribute towards achieving the national EbA vision. Our mission is to provide effective coordination, learning and communication; undertake research, monitoring and evaluation to provide evidence for EbA's contribution to a climate-resilient economy and society; integrate EbA into policies, plans and decision-making; and implement projects that demonstrate that EbA has the ability to deliver a wide range of co-benefits.

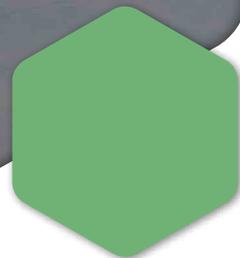
# THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EBA COORDINATING STEERING COMMITTEE



In the year 2017 the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), in collaboration with the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), established a Coordinating Steering Committee (CSC) for EbA in South Africa. The committee's role is to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the EbA Strategy, by providing advice (and sometimes making decisions) on national EbA work. The CSC provides support, guidance and oversight on the progress of the main activities on the EbA Strategy.

Ecosystem-based Adaption requires a multisectoral and multidisciplinary approach to adaptation planning. Thus, identifying and including various sectors that are keen on working on ecosystem use and management is important. The CSC therefore includes representatives from a wide variety of sectors, such as: government departments (national, provincial and local), public entities, private sector entities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and academic institutions or researchers that are focused on building the resilience of communities that are most vulnerable to climate change.

The Coordinating Steering Committee meets twice every financial year, and the next meeting is set for September 2019. The committee will continue to share and advise on best practices, methods, tools and innovations to improve EbA in South Africa. The role of coordination is therefore vital to ensuring a relevant, results-oriented strategy that is implemented through partnerships with the key actors for the success of EbA in South Africa.



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Stakeholders at the National Stakeholder Workshop Action Plan for the Climate Change Adaptation Plans for South African Biomes and Map Priority Areas Workshop  
Photo by: Philip Desmet

## SOUTH AFRICA SET TO INTRODUCE ECOSYSTEM-BASED ADAPTATION PRIORITY MAP

South Africa will be introducing an interactive map of priority areas for implementing Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) projects. This is a strategic map undertaken at biome level across the country. The commissioning of this map follows the culmination of an extensive consultation process with relevant stakeholders in order to arrive at a map that would service the primary objective of selecting important areas for biodiversity climate change adaptation and implementation of EbA projects. The selection of the biodiversity climate change adaptation areas is already provided for by South Africa's Critical Biodiversity Areas map meaning there was no need to repeat the process but rather to work on the existing spatial product. However, an improved process was needed to develop spatial priorities for implementing EbA projects built on the understanding of the correlation between ecological infrastructure and ecosystems services and their social complement.

The development of this map was driven by a methodology that focused on the extent, condition and social demand for ecological infrastructure as key drivers of identifying priority areas for implementation of EbA projects. This was then followed by an understanding of the risk of loss of ecological infrastructure, consideration of important biodiversity and the existing EbA projects' particular landscapes. The

stakeholder consultation helped this process by providing additional information about existing or ongoing EbA projects in South Africa, collation of national datasets and extracts from the Google Earth Engine.

It is important to note that the development of an EbA priority map is not completely new to South Africa having been successfully piloted previously by Dr Stephen Holness at a more focused scale. The approach that Dr Holness adopted has modified South Africa's EbA baseline conceptual model which requires that interventions be informed by the biodiversity and ecosystems services which benefit people and help with building resilience and adaptation to climate change within the context of sustainable development. Dr Holness then took a step further by working on four input areas namely ecological infrastructure, biodiversity priorities, climate change resilience and social demand all within the context of EbA priorities.

The Department of Environmental Affairs will host the map and it will be published at a 1:50 000 scale for ease of application.



Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Community of Practice South Africa members  
Photo by: Benedict Mlaba

## SOUTH AFRICA LAUNCHES ECOSYSTEM-BASED ADAPTION COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

It's official! South Africa has a formal Community of Practice on Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) to Climate Change. This momentous development took place at the inaugural National Workshop on EbA held at Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden in Cape Town on 16–17 April 2019. The primary purpose of the workshop was to draw lessons and stories from the current EbA practice around South Africa as well as sharing tools and successful approaches. The outcomes of the workshop were necessary in improving the EbA planning and implementation beyond scales of projects, participating institutions and set political boundaries. South Africa has already made significant advances in guiding the practice of Ecosystem-based Adaptation by developing 'the Strategic Framework and Overarching Implementation Plan for Ecosystem-based Adaptation' accompanied by implementation guidelines, amongst other things. This strategy remains an important aspect of South Africa's comprehensive response to climate change adaptation including the transition to a resilient society and economy.

The first day of the workshop saw participants receiving high-level endorsements and existing support of the EbA programme of work from the national government, state entities and the international partners in South Africa. This was then followed by three breakaway group sessions with the first one focusing on EbA mainstreaming into various sectors through policy, planning and institutional support, and another group focusing on unlocking financial resources and mobilisation of human and monetary resources from across the country and globally. The last group focused on research, monitoring and evaluation of EbA as well as developing key indicators for this programme of work. The day was concluded with feedbacks from each group and a vote for the formal establishment of a community of practice to take the EbA programme of work forward.

Continue 

The EbA Community of Practice will be supported by the existing central Coordinating Steering Committee for EbA which is currently coordinated by the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA). In agreeing to becoming members of the community of practice, participants called for more focused reference groups or small task teams to address specific matters related to EbA. The suggestions also included the need to meet once annually (in the form of a meeting, workshop or conference) for all parties to reflect on their progress in implementing EbA projects.

The second day brought the workshop participants closer to the implementation of EbA projects on the ground through a field trip to the Dwars River and the Berg River Dam. The Dwars River is the main tributary of the Berg River and the project was focusing on clearing alien invasive plant species along the riparian zone while the Berg River Dam

project is focused on high altitude intervention. Both these projects were supported by the DEA's Natural Resource Management Programme.

The workshop was convened by the DEA, South African National Biodiversity Institute and Conservation South Africa. The event was attended by more than 45 participants representing government, non-government organisations and academic institutions. For more information on becoming a member of the EbA Community of Practice, please contact Nozipho Sibiyi at [NSibiyi@environment.gov.za](mailto:NSibiyi@environment.gov.za) and/or Tshifhiwa Munyai at [TMunyai@environment.gov.za](mailto:TMunyai@environment.gov.za). Otherwise, for more information about EbA in South Africa, please contact Ntando Mkhize at [NCMkhize@environment.gov.za](mailto:NCMkhize@environment.gov.za).

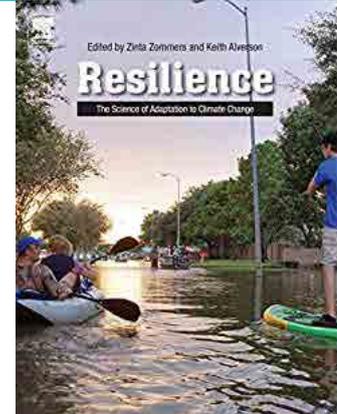
Photo: Discussions at the Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Community of Practice Workshop  
Photo by: Bennedit Mlaba



## Chapter 16: A Framework for Assessing the Effectiveness of Ecosystem-Based Approaches to Adaptation

**Reid H, Bourne A, Muller H, Podvin K, Scorgie S and Orindi V 2018**

This chapter outlines a recently developed question-based framework developed to qualitatively assess EbA effectiveness. It describes some early observations from framework application in five countries and outlines potential and emerging institutional and political challenges and opportunities for realising the benefits of EbA on the ground in these five countries.



## Community-Based Mapping Methodology for Climate Change Adaptation: A Case Study of Quarry Road West Informal Settlement, Durban, South Africa

**Mazeka, B., Sutherland, C., Buthelezi, S. and Khumalo, D., 2019**

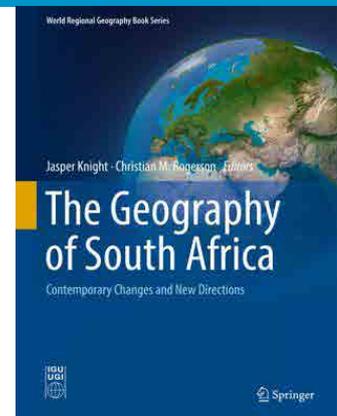
This chapter presents a participatory community-based mapping (PCBM) process undertaken in Quarry Road West informal settlement, Durban South Africa, to build research capacity and co-produce knowledge to address climate risks. It reflects on the methodology developed to produce an inclusionary risk map, which included building the research capacity of local residents to identify new pathways for climate adaptation.



## Ecosystem Services in South Africa

**Sutherland C and Mazeka B, 2019**

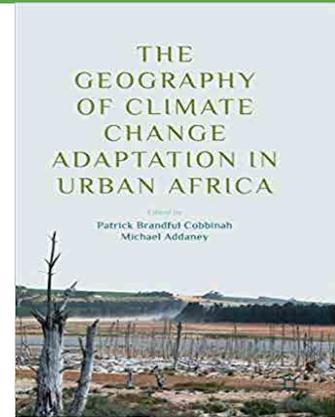
This chapter defines the concept of ecosystem services and presents different approaches that have been adopted in valuing ecosystem services in South Africa. Ecosystem services can be considered in terms of their value to social and environmental wellbeing, particularly in addressing poverty; their economic value; their benefits for climate change adaptation; their inclusion in planning and development; and their social construction, which in some cases, results in an 'ethics of care'.



## The Role of Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge in Ecosystem-Based Adaptation: A Review of the Literature and Case Studies from the Pacific Islands

*Nalau J, Becken S, Schliephack J, Parsons M, Brown C and Mackey B, 2018*

This paper critically reviews EbA literature and provides empirical examples from Vanuatu and Samoa to demonstrate the different ways indigenous and traditional knowledge relates to EbA projects.



### Acknowledgements

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