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Key National Meetings on Adaptation

By Rehana Dada

At the end of March, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) hosted the Technical Working Group on Adaptation and the Inception Workshop for the National Adaptation Strategy. Three key processes were discussed, firstly provincial adaptation strategies, secondly the adaptation chapter in South Africa's Third National Communication to the UNFCCC, and finally the National Adaptation Strategy that is in development. A fourth key presentation was about the development of Desired Adaptation Outcomes, and updates were provided on adaptation in the Paris Agreement, adaptation in cities and local government, and the National Framework for Climate Services. Tlou Ramaru of DEA acted as programme coordinator for both days.

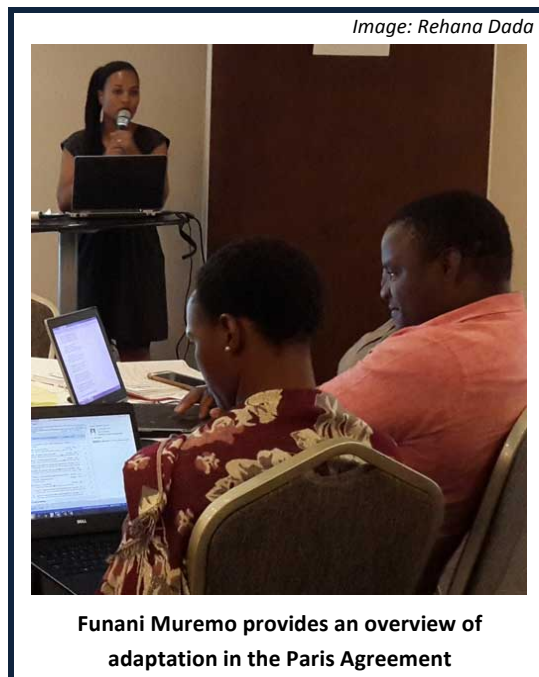
Image: Rehana Dada



Participants at National Adaptation Strategy Inception workshop

Vhali Khavaghali of DEA opened discussions at the Technical Working Group on Adaptation saying that “the adaptation family is growing” and he would like to see an even bigger and more interactive family. The three pillars of adaptation identified by DEA are: 1. Reduce vulnerability; 2. Improve resilience; and 3. Improve adaptive capacity. Its focus areas are climate change science (impacts, vulnerabilities, risks and adaptation measures), policy planning and governance, international adaptation, climate services (e.g. drought and extreme events), and a community of practice (implementation, awareness, advocacy and capacity building).

Khavaghali explained that work is underway to develop the South African response to climate change impacts: “This is a planning issue more than a reactive issue”. He called for participation in the process from sectors that have not traditionally been involved in climate change, such as public works and education, because of their potential role to drive adaptation processes and support adaptation needs. He drew attention to the Paris decision to include adaptation in the global stocktake, and said that it is important to provide an overarching adaptation goal for South Africa.



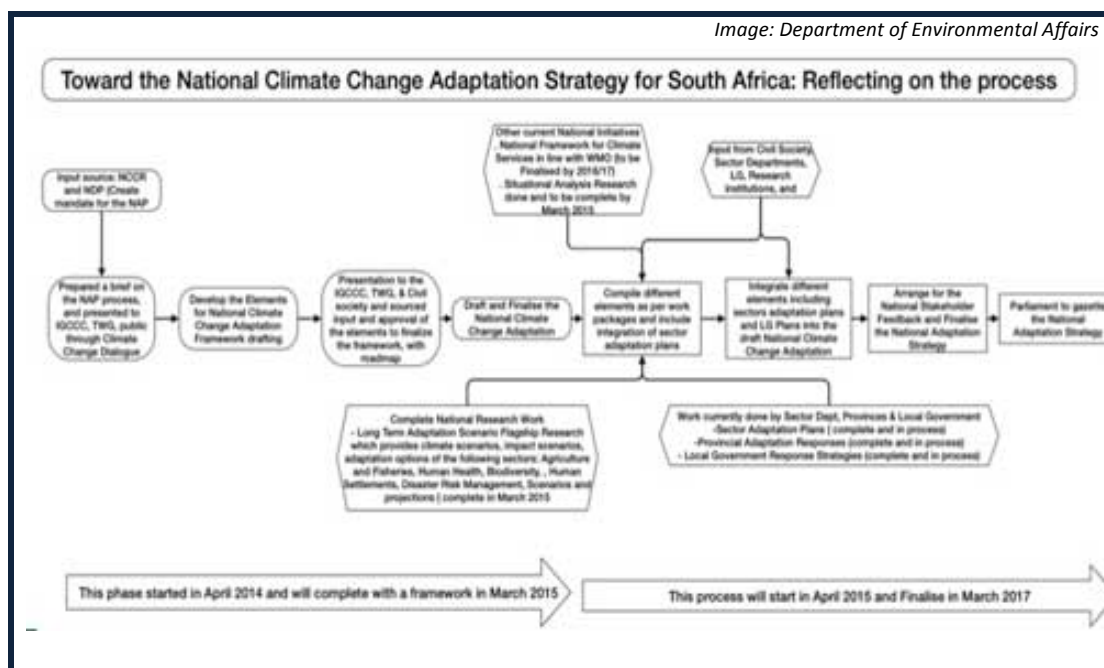
Funani Muremo of DEA’s climate change international directorate provided an overview of how adaptation is addressed in the Paris Agreement. For a start, the Agreement established a global goal on adaptation, and acknowledges loss and damage as a separate mechanism from adaptation. Muremo said there are four thematic areas in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: the Adaptation Committee, which revised its workplan based on the COP21 outcomes; National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), for which there are discussions underway regarding the review process; the Warsaw Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM), which now serves the Paris Agreement; and the Nairobi Work Programme, which focuses on the collection and analysis of data and knowledge to inform adaptation planning and actions.

Muremo said: “The period between now and 2020 is critical - as much as we agreed to the Paris Agreement, we didn’t agree to rules, procedures and modalities on how to implement the Agreement.....and that’s what will be negotiated in the next 5 years”. South Africa is now required to implement its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) and communicate a new Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) every five years, as well as submit adaptation communications periodically.

Alinah Mthembu and Sibonelo Mbanjwa of DEA’s climate change adaptation natural resources sector introduced the process being followed for developing the National Adaptation Strategy (NAS), which uses the UNFCCC guidelines for National Adaptation Plans (NAP). The NAS will be submitted to the UNFCCC as South Africa’s NAP.

They explained that the objectives of the NAS are:

- To reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate, by building adaptive capacity and resilience;
- To facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation, in a coherent manner, into relevant new and existing policies, programmes, and activities, in particular development planning processes and strategies, within all relevant sectors and at different levels; and
- To optimise policy coherence within sectors and across sectors in order to achieve adaptation outcomes that support development aspirations.



Currently, the elements of the strategy are being compiled, with literature review conducted to take stock of the adaptation options and actions that are already in place. Mthembu said: “We are taking cognisance that there is work that is already existing, so this strategy will be based on the work that is already being done”. Tlou Ramaru explained: “We want a strategy that is implementable. This is a national process and we will take input from the provincial processes, but we will clarify those processes as we go along”.

The literature review will be followed by three months of consultation with all stakeholders, government departments and the private sector with the idea of developing a strategy that reflects the needs of the country. Mbanjwa emphasised that this strategy would be a collective national strategy, not a DEA strategy: “Despite the fact that we talk at a sectorial level, mandates are sitting in different departments, and so it’s key to have as a critical element good working relationships across departments. Right now we are at a stage where we are saying the full scale work in terms of developing the NAS is happening. We have appointed service providers, and different elements of work are happening.” The deadline for the NAS is March 2017.

Tsepang Makholela of the DEA’s Monitoring and Evaluation team introduced the work to develop Desired Adaptation Outcomes (DAO), which are intended to “inform and focus the monitoring and evaluation of progress towards a climate resilient South African society”. They were developed from sector specific adaptation priorities that are described in the National Climate Change Response Paper.

Generic Desired Adaptation Outcomes for M&E of Climate Resilience

1. Robust policies, programmes and actions for climate change adaptation
2. Appropriate processes and mechanisms for coordinating climate change adaptation
3. Accurate weather forecasting, reliable seasonal predictions, climate projections & effective early warning systems for extreme weather & other climate-related events provided
4. Capacity development, education and awareness programmes (formal and informal) for climate change adaptation
5. Resources and capacity to deliver climate change adaptation
6. Climate change adaptation fully integrated into development planning
7. New technologies developed for use in climate change adaptation and other cost-effective opportunities optimised
8. Systems, resources, communities and sectors vulnerable to climate change impacts
9. Resilience in non-climate pressures and threats to human and natural systems
10. Secure food, water and energy supplies available for all

Makholela explained that in the first phase, consultations are being held with sectors, provinces, business and NGOs to fine tune the DAO so that they are specific for the different sectors of society. Roundtables will be held, in order to identify information needed to develop the DAO, identify gaps in existing information, and formalise sharing of data and information.

Two roundtable discussions were held in March for the water sector, which included the Department of Water and Sanitation, institutions such as the Water Research Commission and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, academia such as the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Science and Technology, and independent consultants.

In the second phase of the process, Makholela said, there would be more focused analysis. Some stakeholder consultations for the DAO will be held alongside those planned for the NAS.



Participants at the workshops

A number of adaptation relevant processes will be held in the near future, and we will report further in the next newsletter.

Feedback on the National Climate Change Committee meeting

By Happy Khambule

Happy Khambule of Project 90 by 2030 attended the National Climate Change Committee (NCCC) on 3rd March and shares this report.

South Africa has committed to signing and ratifying the Paris Agreement but has not yet communicated its process of ratification. There are some uncertainties about what the instrument of the agreement is and its nature. There are also a number of legal uncertainties that will have to be addressed in the process of domesticating the Paris Agreement, and a need to communicate the impacts of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) which become the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) as well as the implications for domestic implementation of contributions.

With regards to reporting and communication, the NDC related requirements are not yet aligned with domestic processes. South Africa also needs to develop a Low Carbon Development Strategy, although there is already approval for reporting cycles and company carbon budgets. The country is in the process of developing a National Adaptation Strategy according to the UNFCCC guidelines for a National Adaptation Plan.

Ratification of the Paris Agreement will take four to five years. South Africa does not yet know what instrument/s it will use to incorporate the Paris Agreement into domestic law. Questions around legal inconsistencies were not answered at the meeting, and so far there has been no analysis of the possible impacts of the Agreement on enacted provisions. There is still uncertainty about whether there are domestic activities (national projects or initiatives) and legal/policy provisions that contradict the objectives and aims of the Paris Agreement.

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) said that various climate legal tools will be set out in the Climate Change Regulatory Framework Legislation. DEA will update the Mitigation Potential Analysis, refine the Peak, Plateau and Decline (PPD) pledge, and further elaborate greenhouse gas thresholds for carbon budgets.

There was discussion around South Africa's need for a legal instrument (substantive in part and procedural in part) to ensure that climate change governance balances international commitments and obligations with domestic imperatives such as placing climate change policy or consideration in an overarching position. For example, currently energy planning processes and industry planning do not hold the PPD as part of their primary assumptions and considerations. The new instrument will also need to poise prescription with incentivisation.

It would be worth starting a discussion on whether this instrument would be an Act, Bill, various provisions in numerous legislations, or if this objective can be achieved through strengthening current policy. At the end of the day, further regulation is needed.

Limpopo capacity building workshops on environment and climate change

By Mosima Mphidi

Over the course of the last year, the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET) conducted 13 environmental management workshops within the Vhembe district, involving nearly a thousand participants. The workshops were aimed at conscientising communities with regards to management of the environment and the impacts of the climate change time bomb.

Workshops were conducted at Lambani village (46 participants), Tshitavha village (63 participants), Tshilamba (50 participants), Thulamela indoor sports center (97 participants), Tshikhudini (60 participants), Mudzidzi (67 participants), HBE Transport ha Mashamba (48 participants), Rammuda

Baptist church (40 participants), Vele Gogogo village (54 participants), Mphephu Tribal Authority (41 participants), Matangari village (175 participants), Tshikonelo Tribal Council (48 participants), Tswera United Christian church (51 participants), Mutale Municipality Council Chamber (52 participants), Thulamela Local Municipality Mayor / Tihosi Forum Meeting, and Musina Nancefield community hall.

Capacity building on environmental management was also conducted at 14 schools, with 42 educators and 198 learners participating. In addition, World Wetlands Day (February 2nd) was commemorated at Musina municipality to promote better utilisation of our natural resources. Tree planting initiatives were launched at a number of sites in the district, with 100 indigenous trees and 40 fruit trees planted.



A number of different environmental challenges were identified in the various areas during the workshops, some of which environmental officers had not been previously aware of. A particular challenge that participants raised was the impact of the current drought, which reflects the reality of the impacts of climate change in the district.



For more information please write to Mosima Mphidi at mphidimf@ledet.gov.za.

IPCC establishes new work programme

By Rehana Dada

This week the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) held its 43rd session in Nairobi, producing a strategy and timeline for its next cycle, which includes three special reports as well as the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6).

IPCC Chair, Hoesung Lee, said: “We now have a clear roadmap for the production and delivery of AR6”. In addition, the IPCC has agreed to produce a special report on the impacts of global warming of 1,5 degrees Celsius, as requested by the UNFCCC in Paris last year, a report on climate change and the oceans and cryosphere, and one on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems.

With regards to the report on 1,5 degrees Celsius, Lee explained that although AR5 had shown that serious impacts emerge at global warming at that level, not enough had been said because of a limited amount of scientific research available on that matter: “We are not at this moment in a position to say what messages the report will deliver.... It is a very important report...so although there is a lot to find out about the impacts at that level, we are ready to embark on this special report and we hope it will provide guidance for the 2018 UNFCCC conference”. He said that work will begin as soon as possible, with a call for experts for scoping.

AR6 will be released in stages in 2020 and 2021, with a Synthesis Report in 2022, which Lee pointed out is well in time for the global stocktake of the UNFCCC. He said the IPCC also recognises the UNFCCC’s five year cycle, but did not commit to a tighter cycle for the IPCC in the future.



With regards to inclusion of traditional knowledge in AR6 that is not in the formal scientific domain, Lee said that the IPCC has a “desire” to expand its knowledge base and improve its understanding: “We will attempt to be inclusive, not only in terms of the scientists, but also the information base that we need to access... but it’s important to note that we are working with a scientific process, and peer review is important”. During the AR5 cycle, the IPCC organised workshops to access traditional knowledge, and Lee drew attention to work in Australia in particular, as well as workshops held in partnership with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Debra Roberts, Co-Chair of Working Group II (Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability), said: “This is a particular issue that concerns the Co-Chairs and as a result in terms of the various working groups, there has been a tension in the organisation to place emphasis on Co-Chairs that are based in the global south in a meaningful way so that we can reach out more effectively into our regions to find the right

participants and bring those views into this process". She said that early in this cycle, there has already been a commitment to a conference on cities which will draw on a large and varied expertise base.

Youba Sokona, one of the IPCC Vice-Chairs, said that the issue of increasing participation of developing country scientists is one that the IPCC is paying attention to. Lee said that this has been a top priority, but emphasised that it is important for developing country scientists to publish their work in the scientific literature so that it can be accessed by IPCC authors. The IPCC has reached an agreement with the United Nations Environment Programme for lead authors to access journals at no cost. This is particularly important for scientists in developing countries. In addition, the IPCC has held briefings with developing country scientists, and there was a request from participants to hold the briefings annually so that governments can ensure that the right expertise is nominated to the IPCC.

AR6 will pay special attention to the impacts of climate change on cities and the opportunities they provide for adaptation and mitigation, and there is an intention to produce a special report on climate change and cities in the AR7 cycle. The IPCC will also produce an updated methodology for reporting, particularly with regards to greenhouse gas inventories, which it intends to release in 2019.

The organisation's recently updated communications strategy will play a key role in the work of the IPCC going forward. Communications experts are being involved right from the beginning of the AR6 cycle to ensure that the reports are accessible for broader usage. Head of Communications and Media Relations, Jonathan Lynn, said that for AR5, authors have been travelling around the world to present the results to policymakers, scientists, students and journalists, both to share the results and to encourage greater involvement in IPCC reports and assessments.

At the meeting, Abdalah Mokssit formally accepted an offer to become Secretary of the IPCC. He is currently director of the National Meteorological Service of Morocco and has a long relationship with the World Meteorological Organisation and the IPCC.

Next steps: domesticating the Paris Agreement

By Happy Khambule

Although South Africa has announced its intention to sign the Paris Agreement, there is still a long road ahead before it can be domesticated.

The Paris climate change conference (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 21st Conference of the Parties (UNFCCC COP21)) stood out as not only a symbol of global solidarity, but also a beacon of hope for the then flailing international climate change negotiations. It was an opportunity for the international community to show its resolve and further define its role in governing global commons. So it came as no surprise when COP21 ended with a new international climate agreement, the Paris Agreement, with South Africa playing an instrumental role in closing the deal. Although many question its value, the Paris Agreement sets up an international legal framework for countries to shift toward a zero-carbon and climate-resilient world, and signals a turning point in the international community's commitment to address climate change.

In fact, the Paris Agreement is part of the Paris Package, and it was the Paris Package that was adopted by South Africa along with 195 other countries at the end of COP21. The Paris Agreement must be read with the Paris Decisions which sets out what is necessary for the Paris Agreement to enter into force, and must be consulted until the Paris Agreement comes into effect. The Decisions also has implications for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). For countries that submitted their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) prior to COP21, these are automatically considered to be NDCs.

Adoption of the Paris Package is a point in the process where parties to the Convention formally establish the form and content of the agreement. South Africa, like other parties, needs to take certain

steps domestically to give effect to the Paris Agreement internationally. However, before the Agreement can be made relevant at a domestic level, South Africa needs to make a number of administrative and procedural strides. Although there are still various processes that need to be followed at the global level before the Agreement comes into effect, let alone becomes binding, South Africa can and should get its legislative and regulatory house in order in the meantime. For a start, this requires an analysis of South Africa's climate change legal regime, bearing in mind that some domestic legislation and regulations may require supplementation or adjustment in order to be consistent with the procedural requirements of the Paris Agreement.

Very simply, the Paris Agreement is an implementation tool. What this means is that it is a legal instrument that enhances the implementation of the Convention, without prejudicing its objective and aim to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty. The negotiations will probably never again produce anything like it.

South Africa is not yet formally a party to the Paris Agreement. The UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, has invited world leaders to a high level signing ceremony in New York on 22 April 2016, and parties to the UNFCCC are given from then until 21st April 2017 to ratify the Agreement. Some parties may opt to accede to the Paris Agreement after the signature period, but late accession has drawbacks, one being exclusion from placing or including reservations in their instruments of approval or ratification.

The Paris Package states that only after a certain threshold has been reached can the agreement take effect: "only after at least 55 Parties to the UNFCCC representing at least 55 percent of total global greenhouse gases sign on and indicate their consent to be bound will the Agreement "enter into force," meaning it will come into effect and be legally binding." This means that signature is not enough for the Paris Agreement to come into force.

Signature of the agreement serves as a commitment to refrain from acts that would defeat the objective and purpose of the Agreement, but signature does not automatically mean that a country becomes party to the Agreement. As with many other international agreements, becoming party to the Paris Agreement is a two-step process. The first step is for countries to sign the Paris Agreement. The next is to indicate consent to join and be bound by the agreement. This is referred to as ratification. In this case South Africa would need to deposit its instrument of ratification in the UNFCCC depository.

The Paris Agreement is an outcome of the Durban COP; its scope and differentiation, form and tone, and characteristics of the suggested nature are all a result of COP17, at which the Durban Platform was agreed. As the champion of the Durban Platform, which set out the path towards the Paris Agreement, South Africa should be amongst the first countries to sign the Paris Agreement. In being a frontrunner signatory, the country will be able to communicate its legislative peculiarities as well as formally make reservations on aspects of the Paris Agreement that are either contentious or inconsistent with South African law, whilst developing solutions for those challenges. This can be prior to embarking on an arduous constitutional mandated ratification process.

South Africa has a duty and an obligation to see the actual domestic operationalisation of the agreement in a transparent and ambitious manner and needs to sign the agreement even before debating the process of domestication.

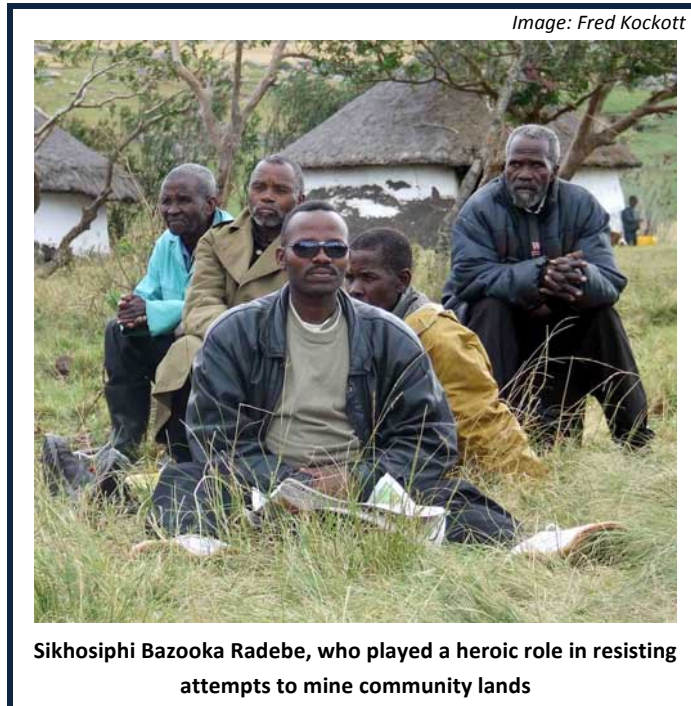
The Durban mandate ends when the agreement comes into effect. What is certain is that COP17 changed the climate negotiations, Paris has changed international climate governance, and it is time for South Africa to embrace the shift to low carbon development, not just in rhetoric but institutionally, legally and politically.

Contact Happy Khambule at happy@90by2030.org.za.

News and Events

Assassination of anti-mining activist on the Wild Coast

On Tuesday, 22nd March 2016, anti-mining activist Sikhosiphi “Bazooka” Radebe was shot and killed at his home in Mdatya Village. He was chairperson of the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC), which was established 10 years ago by AmamPondo people to resist attempts to strip mine along the Pondoland Wild Coast, along the northern coastline of the Eastern Cape province. His assassination follows several years of threats, and suspicions that he was on a hit list.



Nonhle Mbuthuma, Secretary of the ACC and thought to be next on the hit list, reported to police that those resisting the mining fear for their lives. During 2015, there had been several targeted armed attacks on members of the community. Civil society organisations have condemned the assassination, and called for the arrest of the killers, protection of ACC members, a Human Rights Commission investigation, and suspension of all mining license applications.

Adaptation Support Service to all Adaptation Network members

In response to queries raised about adaptation by various members, the Adaptation Network now hosts a Support Desk on the Adaptation Network website. You can contact the Adaptation Support Desk with any specific adaptation related query, and we will assist you by drawing on the expertise of members and associates of the Network. We might provide information and links to relevant information, or put you in touch with resource persons from the spheres of policy, academia and adaptation practice.

Access the support desk at: www.adaptationnetwork.org.za/resources/support-desk

Southern African Adaptation Colloquium

The University of Witwatersrand, African Climate and Development Initiative and Adaptation Network announced that the second Southern African Adaptation Colloquium: *Solution spaces and futures, learning together in a climate challenged world*, will be held in Johannesburg on 07 & 08 July 2016. It will provide a platform for researchers, practitioners, government officials, postgraduate students and members of the public who are working on or interested in climate change, adaptation research, practice and policy to proactively engage on climate change challenges facing southern Africa. It is an

opportunity for people from various industries to share knowledge, learn from each other, debate and interact to find realistic and sustainable adaptation solutions to problems. The programme will feature local and international keynote speakers providing thought-provoking and challenging views on particular topics, information gathering sessions, discussion sessions and interactive working sessions
For more information please email info.gcsri@wits.ac.za.

Dates for Fynbos Forum shifted

The Fynbos Forum Committee announced that the 2016 Fynbos Forum has shifted to the last week of July, starting on Monday the 25th and ending on Thursday the 28th. This change was made to avoid a clash with the local elections scheduled for August 3rd.

More information is available from: fynbosforum2014@gmail.com.

Invitation to participate in ASSAR research work

A series of outputs from the Adaptation at Scale in Semi-Arid Regions project has been made available for public input. ASSAR is a 5-year research project that examines the dynamics and drivers of climate vulnerability across a number of African and Asian drylands, while exploring ways to promote the resilience of people, local organisations and governments. ASSAR's work is centred on governance, ecosystem services, and social differentiation, and aims to promote policies and practices that can lead to effective, widespread and sustained adaptation. The researcher are trying to ensure user-driven content from this project, and request your help in doing this through your participation in the surveys.

Animations on the climate trends and projections for ASSAR's regions ([Survey here](#))

ASSAR's Theory of Change in stop motion! ([Survey here](#))

Infographics about climate change in semi-arid regions ([Survey here](#))

Gender and Climate video ([Survey here](#))

Climate and wellbeing webinar recording ([Survey here](#))

For further information please contact Nicholas Reay at reay.nick@gmail.com.

Least Developed Country Ministers urge all countries to sign Paris Agreement

At a meeting of the Least Developed Country parties to the UNFCCC in Kinshasa in early April, ministers and heads of delegations urged all countries to participate in the high level signature ceremony for the Paris Agreement, convened by the United Nations Secretary General for 22 April 2016, and called for ratification "at the earliest possible date". They also urged all countries that have not already done so to ratify the Doha Amendment, for the IPCC to prepare the requested Special Report on 1.5 degrees Celsius, and for all parties to implement their INDCs and NDCs. It is reported that 130 countries intend to participate in the event.

Further information: www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2016/04/parisagreementsingatures

It costs five dollars per person to save maternal and child lives

A study by John Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health, shows that four million lives can be saved every year through expenditure of less than USD 5 per person on health care services such as contraception, medication for serious illnesses and nutritional supplements. The study, which was published in *The Lancet* this month, analysed three essential packages of care that together comprise 66 proven health care interventions. Those with the highest impact included addressing acute malnutrition, pre-term birth care, provision of contraception, management of labour and delivery, and treatment of infections such as pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria. Increased access to contraception would reduce maternal deaths by 67,000, newborn deaths by 440,000, child deaths by 473,000, and stillbirths by 564,000. Women and children are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and adaptation begins by addressing fundamental developmental shortcomings in order to increase resilience.

How corals protect themselves against bleaching events

Research published in *Science* this month shows that corals of the Great Barrier Reef are likely to lose their protective patterns against bleaching. In the past corals were able to survive bleaching events because waters warmed gradually in the lead up to high heat events. If they are exposed to a “pre-stress” period before the bleaching event, they have lower stress levels and are more tolerant when the bleaching event occurs. The “pre-stress” acts as a type of practice run. However, if warming is not gradual, bleaching events would occur more often and become more severe. The study, conducted by the ARC Centre of Excellence of Coral Reef Studies at James Cook University, the University of Queensland, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration USA, examined 27 years of satellite data for surface temperatures, previous coral bleaching events, and corals’ response to sea water warming. The researchers say that there is still a possibility for reefs that maintain their protection to maintain their coral cover, as long as carbon emissions are reduced in the near future.

IPCC sea level rise projections could be too low

Researchers at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and Pennsylvania State University revised estimates for sea level rise using new processes in a 3-dimensional ice sheet model and testing them against past high sea levels and ice retreat. They show that Antarctic ice shelf melt is driven most by ocean temperatures, but in significantly warmer atmospheric conditions, air temperature becomes the dominant driver of Antarctic ice loss. In addition, they say that if substantial amounts of ice are lost, heat retained in the oceans will inhibit recovery of the ice sheet. The study was published in *Nature*.

Credits

This newsletter is produced by the Adaptation Network Secretariat, which is housed within the Environmental Monitoring Group.

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Articles do not necessarily represent the views of all Adaptation Network members.

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