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Adaptation Futures opens with a message “from the ground”

By Noel Oettlé

In the course of the opening session of the Adaptation Futures Conference in Cape Town on 19th June 2018 Yohan Santosa from Indonesia and Lena Kotze from the Northern Cape of South Africa addressed delegates and shared some of their insights and concerns.



(Image: Bettina Koelle)

Lena is Vice Chairperson of the Heiveld Cooperative, which produces organic and fair trade rooibos tea. She reminded delegates that “climate change will affect us all, with the worst impact on those who are most vulnerable.” She appealed to delegates to “work together with us on the basis of our knowledge and our vision in our efforts to use our resources sustainably and to create a better life for our communities”.

As I noted in my introduction to the speakers, all too often we forget that adaptation is primarily about people and society, and not technologies. If we persist in thinking and acting in silos, we might find ourselves sitting on the roofs of those very silos as the oceans envelop them.

Adaptation Futures a huge success!

By Leslie Ashburner

Adaptation Futures 2018, the fifth in the Adaptation Futures international conference series on global adaptation, was recently held in CT from 18 to 21 June. The conference attracted over 1300 participants, including over 160 sponsored delegates from lower income countries and over 100 volunteers from locally based organisations who contributed time and effort in order to attend the conference. Over 160 innovative and participatory sessions were held. Delegates were able to view the responses of local artists to the realities of climate change, as well as join in the Community Kraal, which focused on the lived experiences of climate change. The Adaptation Expo showcased the work of 24 organisations actively involved in responding to climate change.



Delegates were able to hold meetings and engage with one another and donors at the Adaptation Futures expo (Image: Jarad Humphry)



Delegates packed into sessions – some sessions were so full that delegates were turned away (Image: Kai Eisenhardt)

Some feedback from delegates:

"...A great event that allows us, African delegates, through your various support to take part and effectively participate and present perspectives of the continent."

Kouassigan Tovivo

Climate Policy Analyst and Adaptation Expert, Climate Analytics

"I really enjoyed the conference and the learning experience."

Rebecca Sarku,

PhD Researcher, Wageningen University and Research

For some more images from the conference, see our Facebook album [here](https://www.facebook.com/adaptationnetwork/photos/?tab=album&album_id=208103767863567):

https://www.facebook.com/adaptationnetwork/photos/?tab=album&album_id=208103767863567

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A climate change *talanoa* in the land of the *chambo*

By Christopher Mabeza and Mxolisi Nyuswa

"Welcome to the land of the *chambo*", said a jovial immigration officer at Kamuzu International Airport in Lilongwe, Malawi, as we arrived for the 12th Community-based Adaptation Conference (CBA 12). *Chambo* is a local word in Malawi for a type of freshwater fish known as tilapia. Ours was not a culinary journey, but the temptation to sample the *chambo* got the better of us. A friend took us to a nearby restaurant where we met two other conferees who also wanted to taste local cuisine. We were not

disappointed by the taste of the *chambo*. We said our goodbyes to the restaurant staff and went back to our hotel to prepare for the conference.

The CBA 12 conference was held in the lavishly chandeliered auditorium at the Crossroads Hotel in Lilongwe from 11 – 14 June 2018. More than 200 people from 45 countries and more than 100 organisations and various other institutions, attended the conference to share experience and new perspectives for locally-driven climate action.



Conference participants during a panel discussion at CBA12 (Image: Mxolisi Nyuswa)

CBA 12 was built around three workstreams as follows:

Workstream 1: Transforming local experience into evidence for policy

The workstream covered ways to collate and analyse experiences of local climate adaptation and to generate and promote policy relevant evidence.

Conferees got the opportunity to explore new methods and shared learning on the topic.

Workstream 2: Building a shared understanding of effective devolved climate finance (DCF)

This workstream sought to build a shared understanding of DCF, drawing on learning from a range of experiences. DCF approaches build financial, planning, and project management capabilities at local government and community level. They establish inclusive structures within existing governance frameworks so as to ensure that investments in public goods for climate adaptation are identified and prioritised by local communities.

Workstream 3: Innovating in applying adaptation technology

This workstream explored how ‘technology’ can be used to increase investment in and implementation of adaptation. It built on the fact that, “rightly or wrongly, ‘technology’ tends to grab the interest of policy-makers, the private sector, donors, even communities and households themselves”. Chris Henderson from Practical Action had this to say about the role of technology, “If technologies are to meet the needs of these farming communities, they need to build on smallholders’ assets, be affordable, reliable (low risk), and work in the long term. Such technologies are most likely to be adopted and lead to adaptation at scale”. Below we document some of the presentations we found interesting.

The 'Dragon's Den' was key for us. The dragon's den was about DCF and pitching to secure adaptation funding from investors. Different organisations pitched their funding proposals to potential funders who in turn gave a constructive feedback on all the six proposals. That was a learning opportunity to see what donors look for and how to make your pitch. What emerged from the dragon's den discussions was that DCF aims at poverty reduction and that DCF programmes should be truly transformative.

The conference was graced by Mrs. Mary Robinson, the former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Mrs. Robinson highlighted the importance of valuing 'lived experience' in climate discussions. Mrs. Robinson called on gender responsive community-based adaptation policies based on the concept of *talanoa*. *Talanoa* is a traditional word used in Fiji that reflects inclusivity. A *talanoa* is an inclusive, participatory conversation. A *talanoa* breaks barriers and extends boundaries, added Mrs. Robinson. Similarly, CBA 12 was a *talanoa* as it included climate negotiators, policy makers, private sector representatives, practitioners and grassroots representatives.

Hot on the heels of Mrs. Robinson was a touching presentation by Constance Okolette Achom from Uganda. She said that she was not even aware that the work she was doing with other village women in Uganda was about community-based adaptation to climate change. Her realisation came when she began working with some non-governmental organisations. She now speaks at international platforms sharing local and lived experiences of community-based adaptation in Uganda. Hers is a good news story of how grassroots women's voices can be heard and included in decisions on climate change at local, national and global levels.

Elizabeth English, the founder and director of an American organisation known as Buoyant Foundation, discussed innovative floating residences known as amphibious houses. Amphibious houses are designed to adapt to floods. They float when the water levels rise. The Spate Irrigation Network Foundation made a presentation on using floods as an asset for communities. Floodplains can be utilised for agricultural activities. Southern Voices articulated the need for national policies and plans to meet the needs and rights of the marginalised people in climate change adaptation.



Adaptation Network sponsored delegates at CBA12.

From left to right, Christopher Mabeza (Climate Change Consultant, Zimbabwe), Mxolisi Nyuswa (KwaZulu Regional Christian Council, South Africa), and Joseph Kenson Sakala (Youth for Environment and Sustainable Development, Malawi), with Simon Anderson from International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) (United Kingdom) (Image: Mxolisi Nyuswa).

Simon Anderson from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) made a presentation on how integrated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems can help states address

climate change. He argued that successful adaptation demands an improved approach to monitoring and evaluation. According to Anderson, “a holistic approach to adaptation M&E will address: (i) how institutions and governments are managing risks, (ii) how the actions of institutions and governments are influencing the vulnerability, resilience and adaptive capacity of people and systems on the ground and, (iii) how the evolution of vulnerability, resilience and adaptive capacity is affecting longer-term development outcomes and well-being in the context of evolving climate hazards”.

That said, our main reflections are:

- CBA is participatory. In Mary Robinson’s words, “CBA is about challenging power at all levels, challenging norms and embracing inclusiveness” so as to defang the adverse effects of poverty.
- Poverty is multidimensional - therefore it is essential that when dealing with it, we use a holistic approach. Hence, when addressing climate change and poverty, an integrated approach is not an option, but a requirement.
- DCF should aim at reducing poverty.
- Marginalised voices ought to be heard. Women like Constance from a village in Uganda fought all the way to get her voice heard. She ended up documenting her village experiences on gender and climate change and shared her experiences globally.
- A gender climate talanoa is imperative if CBA is to succeed.

As the climate change *talanoa* drew to an end on 14 June, we reflected on the four days of the conference. We agreed that CBA has its finger on the pulse of the people for as long as it is locally driven. We looked around the auditorium and what did we see? Beaming faces of hope, determined to make a difference as we grapple with the unknown unknowns of the future. At 5 pm, the conference was officially closed, and it was time to tuck into a delicious dish of *chambo* served with Malawi rice.

Insight into finance and the drylands from Adaptation Futures 2018

By Annie Sugrue

Scientists, technology developers, government, civil society, donors and development practitioners descended on Cape Town at the CTICC between the 18-21st of June for the 5th Adaptation Futures International conference 2018 with the theme “Dialogues for Solutions”. It was a packed program with three plenary sessions and over 40 sessions on each day, as well as seven immersive ‘learning journeys’ (field trips) on the first day and an extension of the conference via several masterclasses for young development practitioners on the 22nd June 2018.

The variety of the talks spanned across every development sector, with strong emphasis on urban and rural resilience and conservation management in the face of climate change. There was a balance between talks on finance and financial mechanisms and development approaches, technologies and science available to tackle the impacts of climate change. Early on in the conference delegates heard that climate adaptation projects have received significantly less finance than mitigation responses despite the pledge by the GCF to have a 50:50 split of mitigation: adaptation projects. Speakers noted the difficulties of making a business case for adaptation, particularly for loans.

There were questions about why adaptation seemed to be taking more of a back seat than mitigation. In discussions, various participants agreed that mitigation was seen as a sector that generated income from the delivery of large technological solutions, but that adaptation was mistakenly seen by many as a drain on resources through the need to climate proof development. Throughout the 4 days of the conference, it became clear that climate adaption needs at least as much effort as mitigation and that there was a strong business case to place more emphasis on adaptation. The conference delegates were loud and clear in their calls for more emphasis to be placed on adaptation, as this is the only solution many vulnerable communities have to deal with climate change. We heard that 19 million people have already been displaced as a result of climate change, 33 people/minute and that this figure is set to rise

as the impacts become more severe. Many of the displaced are poor people who live on the margins of society, in areas subjected to severe floods and droughts. Government and development agencies have a key role to play in rolling out climate adaptive responses. A figure of \$500 billion was given as being required to deal with climate adaptation, whereas about \$30 billion is available. Senior officials from banks and development agencies were vocal in their calls to address this shortfall to avoid many more people being displaced.

Given the plethora of sessions and topics, and a very short time frame, it was necessary to try to focus on specific areas of interest. I concentrated on two main areas within the conference, climate finance and sessions that involved dry and arid regions as I am working closely at present with extensive rangeland management both within conservation and agricultural areas. The European Investment Bank (EIB), early on in the conference, revealed that they are the largest financier of climate projects having financed € 19,4 billion of which only €0,8 billion was taken up for financing adaptation projects. The EIB has been developing a climate risk management screen (ISO 1490), which will be used in the screening of all projects by 2020.

Officials from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) were active participants in the conference, noting that more funds were needed especially for adaptation. Jerry Velasquez, the Director of the GCF, noted the need to balance resources 50:50 for mitigation and adaptation but noted that far more resources were going to mitigation than adaptation (30%), mostly in the form of loans for mitigation and grants. Questions were raised about the business case for adaptation, as it is important to get the private sector fully on board so that development is climate resilient. Steve Nicholls from the National Business Initiative assured the conference that there is a business case for the private sector to include adaptation in its plans and pointed particularly to the issue of water, noting how critical this resource was for industry and how 12 catchments in South Africa provide 50% of all the water. He urged delegates, government and finance agencies to move faster with making change and finance available. It was noted that if the banking sector takes on the challenge, it could spur on change far faster than any other sector. The World Bank, GEF and other financing mechanisms were challenged to channel their funds in the right direction. Many participants said that the banks and the development sector needed to ensure that they were asking the right questions, in order for solutions to be relevant and climate proof. Delegates were concerned that the involvement of the private sector at the conference was low and noted that this needs to be addressed in future adaptation conferences.

A wide spectrum of partnerships were presented at the sessions in the conference, and many were delivering significant benefits to development projects. At the same time, science and research is an important factor in any partnerships, to ensure that impacts are monitored accurately in order that scaling up and mainstreaming can take place as rapidly as possible. Participatory planning processes were being utilized extensively within vulnerable communities to ensure that projects addressed the needs of the beneficiaries to make them more resilient to climate shocks.

Arid and semi-arid lands are coming under severe constraint as a result of climate change. Many of these regions are home to livestock and poor rural communities. As the grip of climate change tightens, these areas become more marginal. In many of these areas, reserves and/or conservancies can be found. Speakers from the Adaptation to Scale Program (ASSAR- a project within the START think tank) presented interesting approaches to dealing with the impacts of climate change in various parts of the world. IIED presented on their Nature-Based Solutions Platform, which provides information about climate change adaptation all over the globe. The Climate Resilience Infrastructure Facility (CRIDF), funded by DFID is mobilising £55 of Finance from the private sector, governments and development finance institutions, and catalysing and influencing the use of a further £465 million from a variety of sources with a particular emphasis on securing water for rural poor communities. WWF shared their work on conservation management, which has a focus both on nature and people, recognising the strong interlinkages between planet, people and nature.

The Adaptation Futures Conference was a rich experience, bringing together people from all over the world to share their experiences with each other and learn about what approaches have worked and what lessons can be learnt. There were strong calls to continue sharing and learning, that communication will be important in our global fight against the impacts of climate change. South-south peer learning was also seen as a critical to ensure that solutions reach the intended targets.

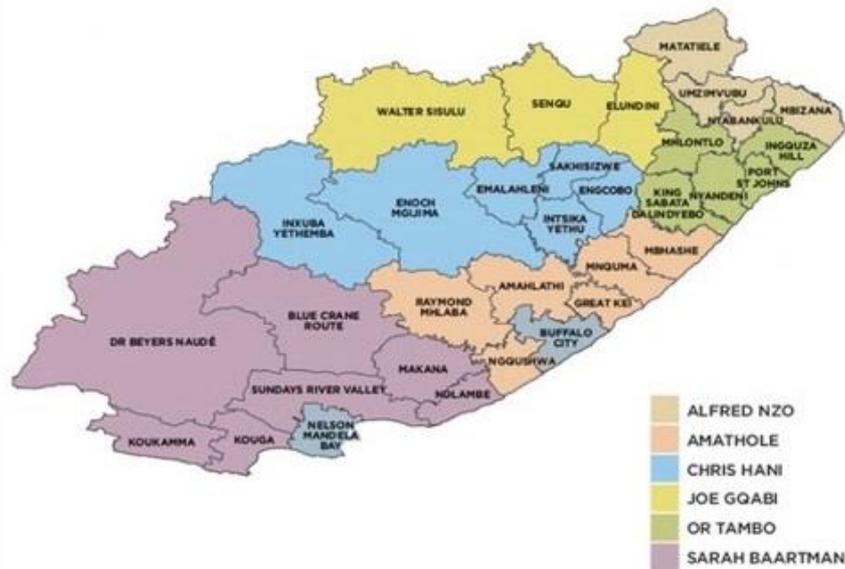
Mainstreaming sustainable adaptation to climate change into municipal planning: An analysis from the Eastern Cape, South Africa

By Darika Santhia, Sheona Shackleton & Taryn Pereira

Municipalities are well positioned to support adaptation of vulnerable people to climate change; however, they seldom integrate climate change into their planning for social development. The building of adaptive capacity for sustainable adaptation requires that municipalities understand and mainstream climate change into their plans and develop context-specific adaptation strategies that address existing social development issues. A desktop analysis was conducted to compare the planning landscape in six District Municipalities in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, focusing on Municipal Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). A scoring system was developed for comparing the IDPs of the municipalities, based on levels of context-specific information about climate change, mainstreaming of climate change with other development concerns, and vertical integration across district and local municipalities, amongst other themes. Overall, the mainstreaming of climate change in municipal IDPs in the Eastern Cape remains weak, and requires critical attention if sustainable adaptation is to be achieved.

Climate change cannot be viewed in isolation from social development issues. While all regions of the world are affected by climate change, it is the poorest regions and poorest people who will bear the brunt of the impacts (Reid et al., 2009; Harris, 2010; Roberts 2013; Spires & Shackleton, 2018). The rural poor are particularly vulnerable, as they are heavily dependent on the sectors most directly affected by climate change, such as agriculture, ecosystems and water (DEA, 2016 DEA). Subnational actors, such as municipalities, are arguably best suited to implement climate change adaptation plans and practices (Roberts, 2008; Measham et al., 2011; Picketts et al., 2014).

This is because municipalities have direct interface with communities and their needs. Furthermore, local municipal officials in partnership with communities can ideally develop context-specific adaptation strategies that address the main impacts of climate change in their locality and should provide tangible benefits directly to the affected local communities (Measham et al., 2011; Picketts et al., 2014). However, climate change policy and planning documents at the level of municipal governance rarely recognise the key underlying structural drivers of vulnerability, or consider the influence of other stressors poor communities are faced with (Picketts et al., 2014). At the same time, municipalities often struggle to integrate climate change perspectives into existing social development planning and functions (Aylett, 2014). This is of particular concern in South Africa which remains plagued by the past injustices caused by Apartheid, high levels of poverty and inequality, gender-based violence, and health concerns such as HIV/Aids (NDP, 2011). These challenges are intensified in the Eastern Cape, due to it being South Africa's poorest, and fourth most highly populated province (StatsSA 2017a, 2017b).



Map of the local municipalities in the Eastern Cape. (Source: www.municipalities.co.za)

Thus, adaptive responses that reduce vulnerability to current, as well as future, climate change are particularly crucial in the Eastern Cape (Ziervogel et al., 2014).

Municipal Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) are the core municipal documents in South Africa which provide context-specific solutions to key challenges, in order to achieve long-term sustainable development. However, a critical weakness is that municipal IDPs often have reactive, sector-based, technical approaches to climate change adaptation (Roberts, 2008). This reduces the potential to produce more pro-active, long-term climate change adaptation strategies (Measham et al., 2011), or to better integrate climate change adaptation into social development policy (Glaas et al., 2010). In this context, climate change is seen as competing with, rather than in synergy with, other priorities such as health, nutrition, housing, sanitation and economic growth (Aylett, 2014).

Other challenges facing local government when it comes to planned adaptation include a lack of coordination between government departments and tiers of government; challenges with ‘up-scaling’ and fundraising for adaptation projects that cannot be measured for success in the present, especially within the target-driven discourse of municipalities; and lastly institutional resistance to change (Spire et al., 2014). South African municipalities are characterised by high levels of dysfunction and corruption, and struggle to respond to the pressing service delivery needs within their mandates (Monkam, 2014), even without the added pressure of responding to climate change. Within this challenging context, researchers and policy-makers must seek innovative ways to integrate climate change adaptation within municipal plans (Picketts et al., 2014; DEA, 2016).

To do this, it is necessary to understand what municipalities have been doing (or not) with respect to planning for climate change, whether such planning mainstreams climate vulnerability and adaptation options across sectors, and where the gaps and obstacles are.

Given the focus on planning, this research, as a first step, aimed to analyse and compare the IDPs of six district municipalities (DMs) in the Eastern Cape in terms of whether they support sustainable adaptation to climate change. The IDPs of the local municipalities (LMs) falling within the analysed DMs were also reviewed to establish if vertical linkages exist between the DMs and LMs.

The concepts of mainstreaming and sustainable adaptation provided useful lenses through which to do this, as both recognise the links between development and adaptation. Mainstreaming involves incorporating climate change adaptation across all spheres of policies and strategies which aim to alleviate vulnerability, in order to create an enabling policy environment for adaptation to climate change (Kok & De Coninck, 2007). Sustainable adaptation recognises issues of social justice, i.e. the structural deficits that shape vulnerability, and the impacts of multiple stressors on poor people, as well as the need for environmental integrity (Eriksen et al., 2011; Eriksen & Brown, 2011). Eriksen et al. (2011:7) argue that ‘fundamental societal transformations are required’ to achieve sustainable adaptation. This

highlights the importance of considering climate change actions in relation to social development concerns, especially in vulnerable regions such as the Eastern Cape.

Complementary to this, Lemos et al. (2013) introduce the idea of generic and specific adaptive capacity and envision these as essential components in formulating climate change adaptation responses that are sustainable in the long term. Generic adaptive capacity is defined as the assets and entitlements that build the ability to cope with a range of stressors, and often involves addressing long-standing social development and inequality issues such as the lack of income, health, power and voice, access to land and resources, and education (Lemos et al., 2013). Specific adaptive capacity refers to the conditions that prepare people to cope and recover from specific climatic threats and is essentially about improving risk management (Eakin et al., 2014).

Building adaptive capacity to decrease vulnerability entails designing and implementing policies and plans that address both generic and specific adaptive capacity. Given this framing, the assumption behind this research is that, if IDPs reflect a nuanced, well integrated, socially just and mainstreamed understanding of climate change, then this will create an enabling environment for the improvement of the generic and specific adaptive capacity of vulnerable people and build their capacity to cope with and adapt to climate change.

Want to read more? For the full article:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/FeJpXWEWisTgMC4RnguP/full>

The Adaptation Network is on social media

By Dania Petrik

The Network has been increasingly active on social media, and the Adaptation Futures Conference saw a spike in communications between members, as well as coverage in the press of Network perspectives. For example, see <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2018-06-19-cape-town-conference-hears-nearly-19-million-people-displaced-by-climate-change-in-2017/>

Find us, follow us, tag us in your projects and keep us abreast of developments in your projects. Let us help you spread the good word on the work that is being done across South Africa by climate change experts, practitioners, policy makers, civil society, communities and businesses involved in adaptation!



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Credits

This newsletter is produced by the Adaptation Network Secretariat,
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Contributors to this edition:

Leslie Ashburner – Conference Producer: Adaptation Futures, African Climate and Development Initiative (ACDI), University of Cape Town

Kouassigan Tovivo - Climate Policy Analyst and Adaptation Expert, Climate Analytics

Rebecca Sarku - PhD Researcher, Wageningen University and Research

Annie Sugrue – Director, EcoSasa Developments

Marius Masoga, Intern (Financial and Operational Management), SouthSouthNorth

Christopher Mabeza - Climate Change Department, Ministry of Environment, Water & Climate, Zimbabwe

Mxolisi Nyuswa - KwaZulu Regional Christian Council, South Africa

Joseph Kenson Sakala - Youth for Environment and Sustainable Development, Malawi

Darika Santhia - Department of Environmental Science, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa

Sheona Shackleton - Department of Environmental Science, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa

Taryn Pereira - Department of Environmental Science, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa

Noel Oettlé - Adaptation Network, Environmental Monitoring Group (editor)

Dania Petrik - Network Coordinator, Adaptation Network, Environmental Monitoring Group

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

To contribute please email Dania Petrik: danial@emg.org.za

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www.adaptationnetwork.org.za

info@adaptationnetwork.org.za

Tel: +27 27 218 1117 Neethling Street, Nieuwoudtville, 8180, South Africa