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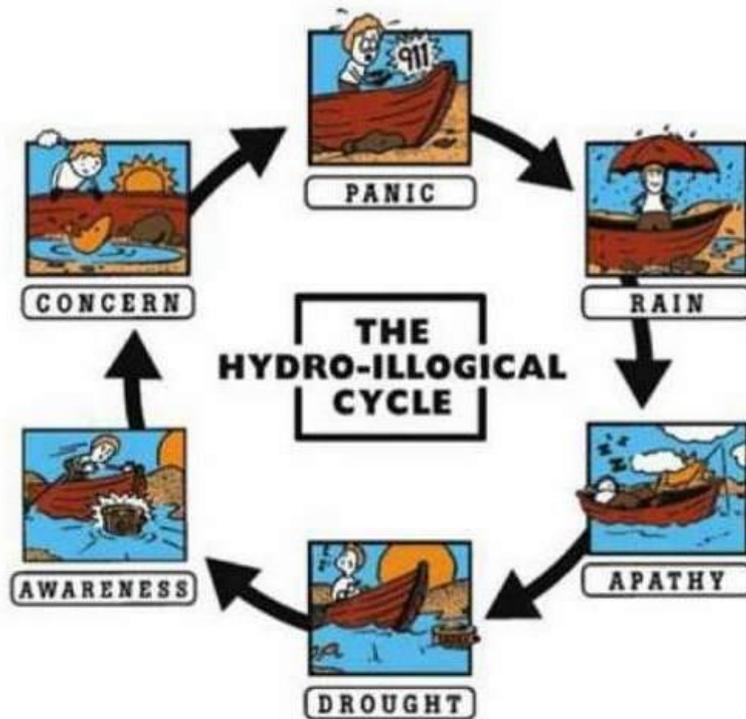
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The Cape Town water crisis – restrictions to remain in place

By Peter Johnston

We have endured the most devastating and consuming drought in the SW Cape over the last few years. Hardly anyone has been left unaffected, and the academic, political and emotional investments in assessing, analysing and solving the problem have been significant. But, now that it has rained, (and the rainfall since January this year is still not up to the normal, or average, levels), and the dams are filling, it seems that we are relaxing, becoming less vigilant and slipping into old habits. Taps run just a little bit longer, showers are warm and oh, so comforting, and do we really still have to carry buckets of water for the toilet?

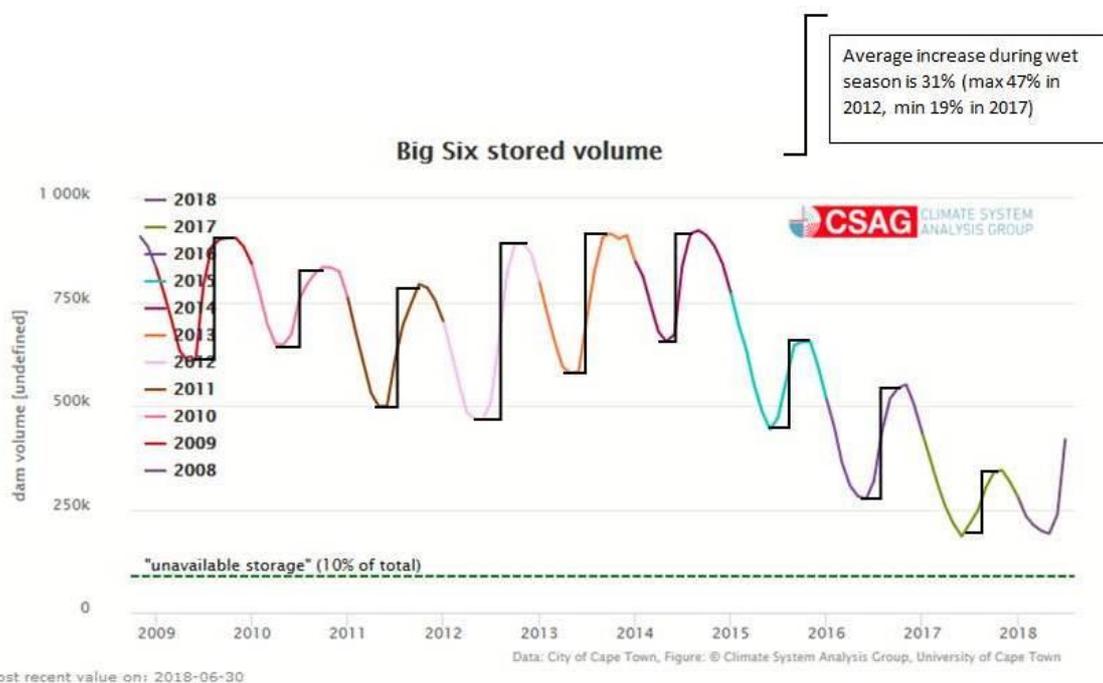
So, the discussion about easing the very austere restrictions has begun. There is no question that the punitive regulations have hampered the economic activity of the city, and had a significant impact on almost everyone's daily life. However, to lift the restrictions means that more water will be used, which surely we can afford...or can we really?



A cartoon illustrating the *hydro-illogical* cycle communicates the sad reality that memory is a fickle instrument [Source: (John Roberts, 2017, [available](#))

Well it's not about Day Zero as such. That possibility still exists but there are too many unknowns. And it is in the face of the unknowns that the Precautionary Principle must apply. We know that the dam levels go up during the rainy season, a factor of both rainfall and use (including losses), but how much recharge can we expect. We must assume that our usage, which is significantly less in 2017/8 than it was in 2014/5, will stay more or less what it is now. According to the city, the drought induced target of 450 million litres a day has never been reached. Consumption has dropped below 500 million litres a day three times: 492 million litres a day on May 7, 481 million litres a day on July 2 and 494 million litres a day on July 16.

From the graph below we can see that the seasonal upswing in dam levels (between 2009 and 2017) adds, on average, approximately 280,000 Megalitres, or 31% (maximum 47%, minimum 19%). Thus if we extrapolate for 2018, assuming a normal rainfall, then a minimum increase of dam levels from the low of 20% in April, to the current level of 57% already surpasses the average increase. Although the rainfall has been slightly below normal, the low usage has contributed to this windfall. And if more rain is received in August and September, then there is every chance that the dams will have risen by up to 50%, putting them at 70%!



The total volume of the main 6 dams around Cape Town (2009-2018) supplying the Western Cape Water Supply System (WCWSS), showing wet season recharge [Source: Peter Johnston, CSAG]

But even this is not enough! Historically, a total dam level of anything below 85% by the end of the rainfall season would negate any reduction in restrictions. So let's keep an eye on those dams, and not just on the perceived rain.

Adapting to the drought has taken a huge effort. And yes, businesses have suffered, and maybe we need to look at some relief there. Generally, water savings measures have been effective and the uptake has been widespread, but the adaptation will become maladaptation if we assume that things are back to normal. We just don't know what the future normal will be like, but we can save water while we still have it. And, as Dr Kevin Winter puts it "Are we capable of conserving water when the cost of water is lowered (again)?" If Cape Town is to be a water resilient city, then sustained wise management of this undervalued resource is required.

Faith Communities and their key role in promoting Adaptation Strategies
By Mncedisi Masuku

Around the world, scientists are assessing climate change and helping us to understand what we need to do in order to mitigate (reduce the impact) and to adapt (build up resilience to the impact) the impacts. This analysis is based on peer reviewed articles - articles published in journals which have been reviewed by other experts in the field – meaning that there is already consensus on and support for the published journal entries. Every five years, this scientific review culminates in the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Assessment Report (AR). The last report, produced in 2014, is known as the AR5 (Fifth Assessment report – available <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/>), and was based on the review of inputs from over 8000 scientists. Scientists are now working on the sixth Assessment Report (AR6), which will be published in 2023 - in time for the first global stock-take by the UNFCCC under the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Often non-profit organisations (NPOs) that combat climate change issues are based in Europe, where the role of religion is weaker and a more secular dialogue dominates. When one looks at the scientific

articles being produced, the role of faith is not often considered, even though faith can play a large role in behaviour change (mitigation) – indeed, belief systems can often drive individual, community, and even corporate change, from a personal to cultural level. In addition, faith communities are usually prevalent in the countries most vulnerable to climate change, and thus can play an important role in aligning with necessary adaptation activities. Positioning religious and traditional leaders as climate change 'champions', changing the framing of climate change to appeal to cultural values and integrating science with traditional knowledge are all ways in which to bring climate change into religious and traditional narratives.

At Adaptation Futures 2018, held in Cape Town, South Africa, the Green Anglicans (the environmental network of the Anglican Church in southern Africa) had a session on “Faith-Based Organisations and Adaptation to Climate Change”, which looked at the role that faith communities can play in confronting climatic issues generally, and more specifically, the work of the Anglican Church in Southern Africa, with a case study in Swaziland.

Indeed, one of the significant contributions to the debate was focused on holding this international conference on African soil, where faith communities are well-established and widespread. The winning poster at the event was granted to Julia Davies of the Adaptation at Scale in Semi-Arid Regions (ASSAR) project. Her poster was based on an upcoming publication, which looks at the role played by tradition and religion in the variable levels of uptake of climate smart agricultural (CSA) practices among some farmers in the semi-arid, north-central region of Namibia. The research argues that, because traditional norms and religious beliefs play such a pivotal role in agricultural decision making for some Namibian farmers, these value systems should be seen as a key platform through which to promote the dissemination and uptake of climate change information in general, and CSA in particular.

"Organisations such as the Green Anglicans, which aims to fulfil God's call to be Earthkeepers and to care for creation, can play a key role in this regard," explains Davies. The research will be published later this year in a book entitled 'The CSA Papers: Investigating the Business of a Productive, Resilient and Low Emission Future'

At the final plenary, innovations from the conference that would be taken forward for further study were presented, one of which was “Chapter 7- Faith communities can help with promoting adaptation strategies”. This means that this very important subject will be studied further and, it is hoped, will end up in the final IPCC AR6.

Acknowledgements: Thank you to Julia Davies for your excellent and timely research, and for bringing international attention to this important topic at Adaptation Futures 2018.

As Green Anglicans, we are hoping for more research to harness the role of faith community in Climate change Adaptation. Please contact Mncedisi Masuku for further information.

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Knowledge for Action: Scoping a climate adaptation knowledge system to enable a socially just transition to a low-carbon adaptive South Africa

By ACDI, CSAG, Wits Researchers (LTAS Collaboration)

A research team from African Climate and Development Initiative (ACDI) and the Climate System Analysis Group (CSAG) at UCT, and the Global Change Institute (GCI) at Wits, has been working with the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) and GIZ to scope the third phase of the Adaptation Research Flagship as outlined in the National Climate Change Response Policy (DEA, 2011). As part of this project, a multi-stakeholder workshop was held in Johannesburg on the 6th June 2018 with the aim of

presenting preliminary findings of the scoping exercise. The workshop was organised around three main blocks of engagement, namely an opening panel discussion, presentation of research findings and finally discussion regarding optimising the adaptation knowledge landscape. A brief workshop report back is provided below.

Over the past few months the research team has explored the South African climate adaptation knowledge landscape through a process of interviews, surveys and document reviews targeting the public and private sectors, academia and civil society. This enquiry surfaced a range of different 'knowledges', an even broader range of knowledge needs, and an equally broad range of knowledge generation activities - and many gaps. In seeking to categorise and present this range in a manner that could inform the future research agenda, the team explored additional avenues of enquiry including some fundamental questions relating to the national priorities that have adaptation relevance; the information required to inform these priorities from an adaptation perspective; who the information is for and whether it is accessible or not; and whether there is sufficient strategic direction and leadership in the generation of adaptation related information as it stands. The preliminary findings of this scoping exercise were presented at the workshop with the aim of enabling a wider input and facilitating discussion on the best approach to take going forward, given the complexity of the South African adaptation knowledge landscape.

Setting the tone for the day, the opening panel discussion - featuring Tlou Ramaru (DEA), Chris Jack (CSAG), Patrick Bond (Wits School of Governance), Dorah Marema (GenderCC) and Steve Nicolls (National Business Initiative (NBI)), spoke to the climate compatibility of South Africa's national development trajectory, thus situating the adaptation research agenda within broader societal goals, context and process. This panel raised issues around the disconnect between South Africa's current economic trajectory and adaptation & mitigation priorities, as well as the need to critically assess the relevance and alignment of national priorities in this regard. It further raised the question as to whether we [South Africans] know what development should or could look like within our national context, and highlighted the need to understand and address issues of power and the country's fundamental inequalities in the context of adaptation. The panel further highlighted the complexity of climate related risk and the challenge of, yet need for, connecting across scales to enable a connection between policy and actions that are taking place at the local level. The need for further focus on implementing adaptation action was also called for, as well as the need for more co-exploratory learning processes and transdisciplinary research processes to support that action.

In the second block of the workshop, the research team shared some insights and provisional findings that had emerged from the research to date. This included sharing an evaluation of the first two phases of the national Adaptation Flagship Research Programme (namely the Long Term Adaptation Scenarios (LTAS) phases I & II), and an initial attempt at outlining key aspects of the South African climate adaptation knowledge landscape. This was complemented with broader survey findings, in terms of perceived climate risks, knowledge gaps and knowledge needs, and the research team's thoughts on the post 2018 adaptation research agenda. The latter included a look at possible knowledge approaches and framings for adaptation processes going forward, including a climate change knowledge system approach and a climate change – political economy approach.

The third and final block of the workshop was a Samoan Round Table Discussion, a process that focuses the entire workshop's attention on a discussion among 3 to 6 people in a panel format. A series of questions, emerging from the research, were posed and workshop participants were asked to provide input by participating in the panel on a rotational basis, taking turns to 'tap out' panellists and replace them. This resulted in a lively and dynamic discussion surfacing a variety of perspectives on the scope and utility of the future national adaptation research agenda. Discussions highlighted the need to support the integration of climate adaptation into development priorities and implementation processes across government, business and civil society domains. Participants identified several challenges to integrating climate adaptation including the difficulty in making the case for adaptation

and effectively communicating climate risks and climate science to policy and decision makers. Inclusive transdisciplinary methods and co-production of knowledge were flagged as key processes to ensure adequate climate adaptation. The need for some kind of knowledge commons to curate and provide access to climate information as a public good was raised, along with discussion of existing initiatives, access to climate information and expertise, the role of climate knowledge brokers and multi-stakeholder research collaborations.

The research team is now engaged in finalising the project through the integration of the workshop inputs into recommendations for the way forward for a third phase of the national Adaptation Flagship Research Programme. These recommendations will hopefully assist the DEA to shape the way forward.

Perspective on the Adaptation Futures 2018 Conference

By Marius Masoga

The Adaptation Futures 2018 Conference was a successful and interesting event. I attended this conference for the first time (it had not been hosted in Africa before), and learned a lot from the conference. It provided a great platform to engage with various international experts who work on different processes and projects that embody a common goal, and most importantly work towards climate adaptation goals. It felt great to hear the project I'm involved in, the Small Grants Facility (SGF) being mentioned at the conference, signifying progress on climate change adaptation activities, particularly in South Africa with the SGF projects the focus of two sessions, Taking Adaptation to the Ground, and Enhanced Direct Access to Adaptation Fund.

The highlights from some of the vibrant sessions that warrant attention include the session on "How to Train for Better Access to Climate Adaptation Finance", which saw interesting points regarding challenges in adaptation finance unfolding. One of the challenges that stood out for me was "*proposals that lack understanding of the meaning of adaptation*". It was also pointed out that countries are competing to access funds from the GCF. Hans Bolscher from Netherlands posited that there are more funds than projects; however, donors and funders want to understand the need to engage in climate adaptation projects. Session 309 on "Agriculture: Knowledge Systems" flagged the importance of investing more in project preparation and knowledge sharing, citing that there are barriers in climate service delivery, and that there is poor flow of information amid farmers and stakeholders. The later stage of session 309 saw Hoang Vo Thi Minh from Wageningen University, Netherlands, present on 'Local Farmers' perception on the role of room for the river in livelihoods: case study in An Giang Province, Vietnam'. This saw Minh in the spotlight following her statement that "Floating rice (otherwise known as 'deepwater rice') benefits from flooding: it has strong ability to adapt to flood", as the rice plants' stalks lengthen to follow the rising water upwards e.g. the plant can be as tall as the level of water.

The third day of the conference (20 June 2018) marked the second conference plenary on 'Resourcing Adaptation'. Stephane Halegatte (Lead Economist at World Bank) gave the keynote address and gave important insight based on his many years of World Bank activities in support of climate resilience and climate adaptation. Amongst the key messages from an economic perspective are, at prima facie, adaptation is all about development. This message reveals the fact that common shocks, such as drought, floods and storms, keep people in poverty, and retard economic/development progress. This is especially because poor people are already more vulnerable to climate change, and as such, the natural hazards expose them to risk – financial, social and economic. Another key message was that adaptation projects do not necessarily require larger and larger amounts of funding – often, adaptation activities are not expensive, and local communities can already be implementing adaptation practices in order to improve their resilience to climate change. That being said, it was said that finances must be redirected towards what people need for improved resilience, especially infrastructure. Most importantly, there should be improved efficiency in adaptation spending, and improved tax collection as well as increasing revenue, as these remains at the forefront of funding. It was said that being a richer country helps, but ultimately it is all about resilience – everyone will feel the impacts of climate change.

Steve Nicholls, Head of Environmental Sustainability, National Business Initiative (NBI) of South Africa posited that knowledge sharing is important to further disseminate effective adaptation solutions. Moreover, D. Mandy Barnett from the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), which acts as the National Implementing Entity (NIE) for the Adaptation Fund, noted that communities are not going to be enabled to adapt if they are not able to engage national actors. Mandy addressed the issues of channelling resources to the ground, especially through the direct access entity, emphasising that national and sub-national institutions must lead the work. Aligned to this is that municipalities must work together to mainstream adaptation action. “We should not wait for the future to adapt, particularly in Africa”, Mandy said.

The first question should be ‘where are the resources?’, and the second ‘where should the resources go?’ The limited resources that we have access to are not enough, and will never be enough to deal with the full spectrum of adaptation issues. Therefore, adaptation funders should be challenged on how they target their investment. As far as session 401 on “Adaptation Finance” is concerned, it was postulated that development banks must invest not only in infrastructure development, but also invest in people.

I have taken home a lot of knowledge from the conference, and of greater personal significance is that I am now tempted to consider my PhD study with something that embodies the issues encountered at the conference of Climate Change Adaptation.

Marius Masoga is involved in the Small Grants Facility (SGF) programme, under SouthSouthNorth’s management, and is a member of the Adaptation Network.

Mandela Day 2018: Action against Poverty through the Food Security Lens

By Felix Donkor

Each year Mandela Day (18 July) is a clarion call on all and sundry to contribute their quota to make our common world a better place. Thus, in making every day a Mandela Day, we celebrate Madiba’s life and legacy in a sustainable way that will bring about enduring change. Poverty, however, is a social canker that compromises efforts at improving household well-being and individual livelihoods and consequently, initiatives at making the world a better place. The ubiquitous impact of poverty and inequality in South African society is a common denominator in issues of malnutrition, stunted growth, poor educational performance, skills shortfall and lack of employment, disease prevalence, the loss of dignity, coupled with anger and violence. The 2018 edition of the Mandela Day therefore sought to mobilise social action against poverty.

Quality education, and for that a matter a stimulating environment for learning, promotes human resources development - which ultimately helps address poverty. Students and staff from the University of Witwatersrand collaborated in addressing the nutrition needs of food insecure students and their immediate families. This involved a charity gardening initiative and donation of food items to shore up reserves of the Wits Food Bank which satisfies the nutritional needs of food insecure students. Students, staff and some members of the general public joined hands early in the morning to develop an entirely new garden to produce fresh vegetables for food insecure students. Students from other universities seeking to replicate the model joined hands with their Wits counterparts.



Image 1: Students work together to create a new food garden on the Wits university campus (Source: Felix Donkor)



Image 2: Students were challenged to complete a huge canvas bearing an image of Madiba's face with non-perishable foods (Source: Felix Donkor)

Ms Maricia Smith and Felix Donkor of the student gardening initiative -Inala Food Sovereignty and Climate Justice Forum- briefed participants on the essence of the day's activities. Dr Malan Naude of the University of Johannesburg and founder of the Izindaba Zokudla (Conversations about Food) shared his expertise, whilst some representatives of other burgeoning campus gardening initiatives drew some lessons from the event. The thriving vegetable gardens supply vegetables to the universities hot meal project and to students in need of nutritional support. This is done in collaboration with the Wits Citizenship and Community Outreach (WCCO), which oversees several initiatives aimed at combating food insecurity on campus. These include the Masidleni Daily Meal Project, which provides a daily hot lunch to approximately 800 students, and nearly 4000 students receive food hampers for provisions after hours and weekends.

In the late morning, Wits staff and the general student population sought to fill a massive canvas imprinted with Madiba's face with non-perishable foods. This brought together Witsies from all five campuses together in overcoming this daunting challenge. A drone then took a picture of the colourful event from mid-air depicting the smiling Mandela produced from food and sanitary items, and encircled by Witsies shouting, "Happy Birthday, Mandela!"



Image 3: Students from across the five Wits' campuses partook in the Madiba Day challenge (Source: Felix Donkor)

“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.” – Nelson Mandela

Join the Global Day of Climate Action Support on 8 September

By Janet Kachinga

On 12-14 September 2018, cities, states, businesses and civil society from around the world are gathering in California for the [Global Climate Action Summit](#). The summit has invited every mayor, governor, and local leader in the world to make a bold climate commitment to help the world reach the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

[Rise for Climate](#), a distributed global mobilisation, will take place the weekend before the summit, **on 8th September**. This day of action in cities and neighborhoods aims to push local leaders to commit to building a fossil free world powered by 100%RE that works for all.

Rise’s key demand is a **fast and fair transition to 100% renewable energy for all and an immediate end to new fossil fuel projects**. Objectives are:

- Set the demands to local leaders for a faster and fairer transition from fossil fuels to a renewable, clean energy economy that protects workers, defends the most vulnerable, and gives people control over their energy system;
- Walk the path of justice for all. We will work alongside and elevate the voices of those on whom the climate crisis and impacts from the fossil fuel industry fall hardest.
- Put pressure on local leaders that are wavering to make adequate climate action commitments;
- Showcase local climate leaders - including local citizens, workers and communities - that are doing it best; and
- Share and unite each others' efforts to show the shift away from fossil fuels to renewable energy is happening everywhere, from the bottom up.

There are over 100 registered events for the mobilization (summary [here](#)) and there's still time to add more, in as many regions as possible.

Rise has already generated great media coverage in [Time](#), [The Ecologist](#), [Climate Home News](#), and huge [social media reach](#) #RiseForClimate.

We would like to encourage you to become part of this mobilization. Actions can be large or small, and there is plenty of material available to help you develop your ideas:

- [An organising guide to help you plan a Rise event](#)
- [An action kit full of great Rise action ideas](#)
- [Global Partner Toolkit](#) that includes instructions on how to register an action for Rise online in our event registration system (Action Network)
- [A promotion page to help you spread the word about Rise](#)
- A [blog post up](#) about Rise news - you can further share this, and you can also send your Rise story to us and we'll include it on the blog

If it's not possible for you to organize an action, there are still many ways to be a part of it by engaging in existing efforts and/or amplifying actions remotely

Please contact Janet (jkachinga.can@gmail.com) or Tshepo (tshepo@350.org) with any questions or if you would like to be part of this. In addition should you be engaging in Rise or the GCAS in any other way please me know so we can connect and support your engagement.

Forthcoming training opportunities offered by the Adaptation Network

The Adaptation Network will offer adaptation practitioners the option of participating in one of three training courses in the latter part of 2018:

- The two-day Practical Adaptation for Vulnerable Communities course will be offered in Gauteng on 16th & 17th October 2018, and in the Northern Cape on 30th and 31st October 2018.
- A four-day Advanced Facilitation for Adaptation training course in Cape Town from 19th – 22nd November 2018.

The courses are offered at no cost for Adaptation Network members. Non-members are required to pay a R500 registration fee for the two-day courses, and R1,000 for the advanced course.

A limited number of travel bursaries are available for Network members only. A bursary application form will be mailed out to any member requesting it.

If you are interested in attending, please contact Network Coordinator Dania Petrik at danial@emg.org.za.

Join the Adaptation Network on social media!

The Network has been increasingly active on social media. Join us, like us, follow us, and share your news and project updates! Send pictures and updates to danial@emg.org.za for posting across the AN platforms.



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Credits

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