



POLICY & PRACTICE BRIEF

Adapting to Climate Change

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN GIYANI

In this policy brief we explore the need for climate change adaptation in Giyani, South Africa, a region highly vulnerable to its effects. With the Southern African Development Community (SADC) leading the way with a Regional Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) Strategy, local action is being taken by the Giyani Local Scale Climate Resilience Programme in rural villages of Giyani, South Africa. In this brief we offer a list of recommendations for dealing with climate change in rural communities.

Southern Africa faces daunting challenges as one of the world's most vulnerable regions to the impacts of climate change. To reduce these challenges, adaptation measures are crucial to enhance the resilience of societies and economies. The GLSCR, under the Water Research Commission and partners, is supporting skills development for local scale climate resilience in the Giyani area of South Africa.

The GLSCR aims to reduce climate vulnerability and ensure adaptable water management practices, recognizing that negative impacts extend to sectors like energy, health, and agriculture. The strategy promotes a partnership approach to adaptation, addressing various geographical levels, focus areas, and stages of the adaptation process.

South Africa's climate trends over the past five decades reveal rising temperatures, increased temperature extremes, variable rainfall, and the potential for more intense rainfall events. South African policies recognise climate change adaptation as a top priority, emphasising the integration of climate change impacts into rural water resource planning and supply at all levels.

“ Simple communication tools and plans for action help build preparedness and responsiveness.”

Key principles include aligning initiatives and institutions, elevating climate and water on national agendas, protecting critical natural and physical infrastructure, and planning infrastructure for a changing future. The Giyani Local Scale Climate Resilience Programme (GLSCR) contributes to these objectives through case studies and a proof-of-concept approach.

Communicating climate change adaptation is essential, and the GLSCR takes a dialogical approach to engage communities effectively. Simple communication tools and plans for action help build preparedness and responsiveness. Key climate change messages include the urgency of adapting to temperature-related effects and the increased risks of flooding and drought.



The Giyani Local Scale Climate Resilience Programme (GLSCR) is an innovative initiative aimed at enhancing water utilization, building community resilience, and promoting sustainable economic growth in the Giyani region. Through collaborative partnerships, innovative solutions, community engagement, and rigorous monitoring, the program strives to address the challenges posed by climate change and ensure a more resilient and prosperous future for local communities.

By adopting a holistic and inclusive approach, the GLSCR serves as a model for other regions grappling with climate-related water challenges, contributing to broader global efforts toward a sustainable and climate-resilient future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Here are key recommendations for effective climate change adaptation, communication and action:

Multi-Level Integration

Integrate climate change adaptation into development plans, disaster risk reduction strategies, and local agro-ecological practices at all levels of government so that we can all work effectively together.

Community Empowerment

Adopt a dialogical approach to engage communities and ensure climate change messages are relevant and empowering, avoiding anxiety-inducing information.

Climate Tracking

Implement systems for tracking climate-related changes, such as monthly water-availability reports (especially groundwater), to enhance preparedness and responsiveness.

Temperature Adaptation

Prioritize adaptation to temperature-related effects, given the evidence among climate models for rising temperatures.

Flexible Planning

Plan infrastructure and policies with a "no-regrets" and "low regrets" approach (see guideline), considering the changing climate landscape.

Disaster Management

Leverage disaster management functions at the local level to facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation into local government plans.

Funding Allocation

Advocate for adequate funding for climate change adaptation initiatives, recognizing the importance of climate resilience in communities and economies.

By embracing these recommendations, the people of Greater Giyani Local Municipality can proactively adapt to climate change, build resilience, and secure a sustainable future for its people and ecosystems.



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