



Championing Action Against Climate Change in South Africa

Scenario

South Africa is particularly vulnerable to climate change owing to its environmental and socio-economic conditions. The impacts of climate change affect almost every sector, including agriculture, water, health, trade, transportation, infrastructural development, tourism and finance. Extreme weather events such as droughts or flooding will be felt most strongly by the poor.

In addition, South Africa is a major emitter of greenhouse gases. The country's dependency on domestic coal has resulted in a yearly per capita emission rate of approximately 10 tonnes of carbon dioxide. This is 43% above the global average, making South Africa one of the 15 largest emitters of greenhouse gases worldwide and number one on the continent.

As a signatory to the United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, the country is committed to combating climate change. Its voluntary reduction targets (Copenhagen Pledge) are ambitious: South Africa is expected to aim for a reduction in greenhouse gases of 34% and 42% against a business-as-usual scenario by 2020 and 2025 respectively.

Project

In order to assist the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) in achieving these objectives, the Climate Support Programme (CSP) was initiated in 2009, funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI). It is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB). The programme aims to reduce South Africa's carbon footprint and to strengthen the country's resilience to climate change.

The Climate Support Programme fosters the development and is assisting with the implementation of the South African Government's National Climate Change Response Policy by providing expert knowledge. It supported the Department of Environmental Affairs in conducting analyses and developing strategies in order to create a solid foundation for the establishment and effective implementation of the policy. It also helped set up a monitoring, reporting and verification system to be part of the policy.

A core element of developing the National Climate Change Response Policy together with DEA was a unique stakeholder-consultation process that resulted in the translation of scientific research into national policy. Task teams were established to deal with detailed and complex climate-change related topics, such as climate finance and research, technology and adaptation strategies. Provincial workshops were held with members of the public, civil

society, non-governmental organisations and all levels of government to get buy-in from a range of stakeholders, to facilitate feedback, support the mainstreaming of climate change in the country, and adopt mitigation and adaptation measures where possible.

Concerning the implementation of the National Climate Policy, the Support Programme is strengthening the national process of developing Long-Term Adaptation Scenarios (LTAS). During the first phase of this process, state-of-the-art, localised climate-change scenarios were developed by leading scientists, while impacts were assessed for core sectors, for example in the health and agriculture sectors. As a contribution to the LTAS and the national biome adaptation framework, the programme supported a vulnerability assessment of the nine biomes (areas with similar vegetation) existing in South Africa. In the ongoing second phase of the LTAS, specific vulnerabilities of core sectors, such as human settlements, will be identified and economic modelling of different response measures will be done.

Additionally, the Programme supported the DEA in the compilation of a comprehensive study assessing sectorial mitigation potential, which was presented to Cabinet in 2014. A broad stakeholder participation process was initiated and experts in the field assessed the potential of different sectors, such as transport and waste management, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This study will form the basis for the development of adequate measures to reduce South Africa's carbon footprint. Based on the results, a study is currently being undertaken to specify Desired Emission Reduction Outcomes (DEROs), in other words quantifying greenhouse gas reductions for key sectors and even for major companies.

The Climate Support Programme also assists the DEA in developing an intricate framework policy to foster climate-friendly waste management practices in South Africa. It is complemented by a guideline for municipalities on developing waste-to-energy projects. Moreover, it supports the implementation of a pilot project at the municipal level to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from waste.

Including subnational actors such as municipalities into climate protection action is also one of the priorities of the project. The Climate Support Programme, inter alia, supported an intergovernmental initiative involving the DEA, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the South African Local Government Association aiming for an integration of climate-change response into municipal planning. The "Let's Respond Toolkit and Guide", launched in 2012, takes municipalities through the necessary steps on their way towards climate-responsive planning.

The Programme also supported the process of developing South Africa's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) in the run-up to the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris, France, in November/December 2015. In particular, it facilitated the INDC consultation process at the provincial level.

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Referat KI II7 · 11055 Berlin

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For more information please contact:

Dr Stephan Paulus

Programme Manager, Climate Support Programme

GIZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

Hatfield Gardens, Block C, 1st Floor

333 Grosvenor Street, Hatfield

Pretoria, South Africa

Phone: +27 12 423 5907

Email: stephan.paulus@giz.de



 @iki_bmub

www.international-climate-initiative.com