

Draft climate change adaptation strategy open for public comment

Environmental Affairs Minister Nomvula Mokonyane has published the Draft National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for public comment in Government Gazette 42446 (Notice No 644).



Image source: www.pixabay.com

The publication of the strategy in the Government Gazette opens the channel for members of the public to submit their comments to the director-general of the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA).

“Members of the public or organisations are invited to submit to the director-general within 30 days of publication of the notice in the Gazette,” said DEA spokesperson Albi Modise.

The adaptation strategy has been developed in line with South Africa’s commitment to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The strategy will introduce measures to adapt to the effects of climate change, while achieving the stabilisation of greenhouse gas emissions and limiting temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

“The development of the strategy is central toward the attainment of the National Climate Change Response Policy objective of effectively managing the inevitable climate change impacts through interventions that build and sustain South Africa’s social, economic and environmental resilience and emergency response capacity,” said Modise.

Changing climate conditions

The DEA said there is evidence that extreme weather events in South Africa are increasing, with heatwave conditions found to be more likely, dry spell durations lengthening slightly and rainfall intensity increasing.

“Increases in annual-average near-surface temperatures are projected to occur over large parts of South Africa, including the western interior and northern parts of South Africa.

“Climate zones across the country are already shifting, ecosystems and landscapes are being degraded, veld fires are becoming more frequent, and overused natural terrestrial and marine systems are under stress,” said Modise.

South Africa is therefore taking immediate action in planning for, and responding to intensified climate change impacts.

In particular, urgent action in respect of managing water resources in a changing climate, planning for the potential impact on agricultural production, and ensuring that local governments are able to anticipate and reduce the risk of extreme events such as floods and droughts on human settlements, is needed.

“Adaptation to climate change presents South Africa with an opportunity to transform the economy, strengthen the social and spatial fabric, and become and build a climate resilient society.

“The National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (NCCAS) provides a common vision of climate change adaptation and climate resilience for the country, and outlines priority areas for achieving this vision,” said the DEA.

The NCCAS’s vision draws on South Africa’s National Climate Change Response Policy, the National Development Plan, adaptation commitments included in the Nationally Determined Contribution tabled with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), sector, provincial and local government adaptation plans.

The NCCAS is an important step forward for South Africa, as it:

- Acts as a common reference point for climate change adaptation efforts in South Africa in the short to medium-term, providing guidance across all levels of government, sectors, and stakeholders affected by climate variability and change.
- Provides a policy instrument which national climate change adaptation objectives for the country can be articulated to provide overarching guidance to all sectors of the economy.
- Facilitates the degree to which development initiatives at different levels of government and business integrate and reflect critical climate change adaptation priorities, and thus inform resource allocation by the various stakeholders towards climate change resilience.
- Guides stronger coherence and coordination on climate change adaptation activities between different institutions and levels of government.
- Supports South Africa in meeting its international obligations by defining the country’s vulnerabilities, plans to reduce such vulnerabilities and leverage opportunities, outlining the required resources for such action, whilst demonstrating progress on climate change adaptation.

[Access the Gazette.](#)

Written inputs and comments must be submitted:

By post to:

The Director-General
Department of Environmental Affairs
Attention: Mr Sibonelo Mbanjwa
Private Bag X447

Pretoria
0001

By hand at: Environmental House, 473 Steve Biko Street, Arcadia, Pretoria, 0083.

By email: smbanjwa@environment.gov.za

Any inquiries in connection with the Notice can be directed to Sibonelo Mbanjwa on +27123999175 or to Tlou Ramaru on +27123999252.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>