CLIMATE
RISK AND VULNERABILITY

A HANDBOOK FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

Second Edition

CHAPTER 13:
REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

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13.1. Introduction

The transboundary nature of climate change necessitates regional cooperation and action in the form of comprehensive strategies and policy. Article 5(2)(a) of the Treaty of the Southern African Development Community, 1992 (SADC Treaty) states that for the region to attain the objective of sustainable development, the harmonisation of political and socio-economic policies is necessary (Barnard, 2014). The SADC approach to climate change has focused on both mitigation and adaptation to increased climate variability and change (Lesolle, 2012), and has aimed to link climate change with the socio-economic development frameworks of the 15 SADC member states.

In August 1997, all SADC member states ratified the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), joining a host of nations in doing so, and providing one key component of post-1994 policy in the environmental sector and beyond. In committing to UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, countries committed to supporting the global goal of stabilising greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations at a level that would inhibit human-induced global warming and climate change. More recently, all 15 member states have signed the Paris Agreement, which aims to reduce GHG emissions in order to limit global temperatures from rising by more than 2 °C by 2100. In addition, SADC is committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) elaborated at RIO+20, with a range of cross-cutting features in the area of climate change (including focusing on co-benefits and multiple synergies).

The number of climate change-related programmes and initiatives are increasing in SADC, with the most recent strategies approved comprising the SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, the SADC Regional Green Economy Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Development, and the SADC Science, Technology and Innovation Implementation Framework to Support Climate Change Response 2020 (SADC/STI-IFCCR 2020). The following section outlines these documents and the progress made to date.
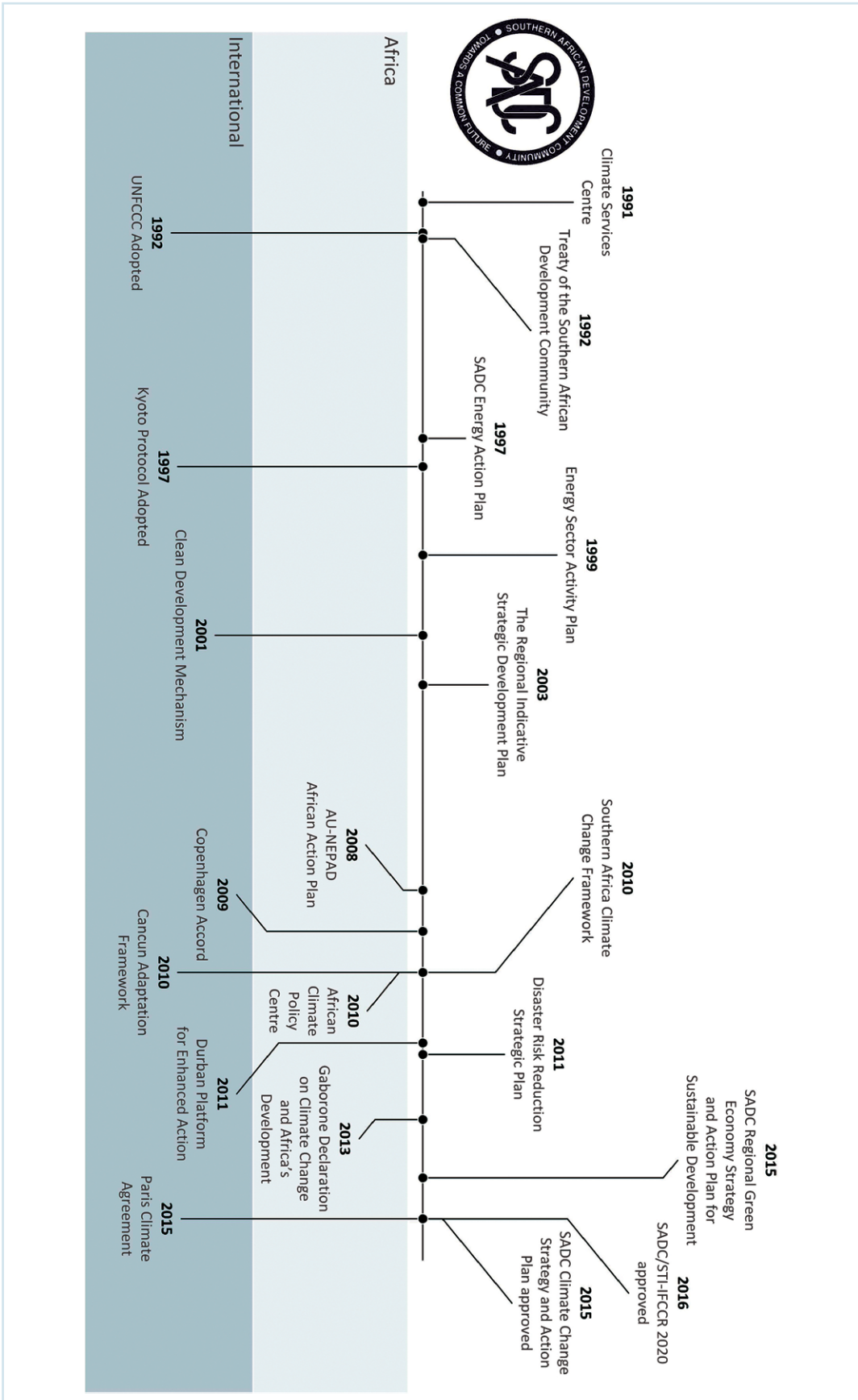
Figure 13.1: Timeline of SADC climate change strategies and relevant regional and international action plans and agreements

13.2. SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

Status

The SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan was developed in response to requests by the SADC Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) Directorate, taking place throughout 2010 and 2011, to develop a Regional Climate Change Strategy, a Regional Synthesis Paper on knowledge gaps and a Position Paper on best practices for developing a Regional Strategy. The two latter products have been rather dynamic in development, but the strategy has gone through a number of drafts, was validated with revisions at the validation workshop in Gaborone, Botswana for the three strategies under discussion there (Green Growth, Climate Change, and Climate Change STI); and revised in a revisions working group in Johannesburg in early July 2015. The strategy, along with the Green Growth Strategy, was approved by the Southern African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (SAMCEN) in November 2015.

Provenance

As in the case of the Green Growth Strategy, the Climate Change Strategy has been years in gestation, but arose in part out of the increased recognition throughout 2010 and 2011 (not unrelated to the COP in Durban) that while national strategies for climate change were in progress, SADC required an aligned, coordinated regional response to climate change, housed in or linked to FANR. One of the more difficult elements going forward is where not only this strategy, but also its sister strategies would be housed and implemented, and writing teams have attempted (with partial success) to align implementation architecture and modalities.

Structure and main adaptation themes

As in the case of the Green Growth Strategy, the Climate Change Strategy has considered impacts and adaptation options by sector. Although authors have attempted to work in cross-sectoral approaches (the strategy has been revised and commented on multiple times across working group teams), this remains a significant challenge to mainstream climate change planning across different sectoral plans and policies (see, for example, Stringer et al., 2014).

Adaptation interventions have been designed per sector, and revised by the working group, with accordant timelines, and, where possible, costs incorporated. Where possible, the interventions have been designed to align with the adaptation interventions identified in the Green Growth Strategy. As one example, alignment has been sought around conservation agriculture, strategies for building resilience in manufacturing and mining (for example, water conservation and quality measures in mining), and strategies for building resilience in the tourism sector. Both strategies include elements of infrastructure, and what investments to create more resilience in this area might comprise.

Implementation and modalities

One of the most difficult areas under discussion in the development of this strategy has been the means for implementation of the strategy. Since all strategies effectively consider the use of the Regional Development Fund as a repository and vehicle for investment in the measures proposed, the question of where implementation would lie is particularly politically charged.

In the case of the SADC Climate Change and Green Growth Strategies, the recommendation is that the body for implementation, with an eye to ensure cross-sectoral coordination, fall above SADC, comprising a SADC Environmental Committee with oversight, as well as modalities around the Regional Development Fund that would fall outside of SADC. This discussion is still in progress, as plans move to implementation.

13.3. SADC Regional Green Economy Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Development

Status

After a stakeholder consultation workshop in November of 2014 in Harare, a revised version was presented at the May 2015 validation workshop in Johannesburg. A final version has now been approved by SAMCEN (please note: both the Green Growth Strategy and the Climate Change Strategy fall under FANR, and thus under SAMCEN). The SADC STI Strategy falls effectively with the Science and Technology desk at SADC, and it has thus been presented at the SADC Sectoral Ministerial Committee on Science and Technology (SAMCOST).

Provenance

The strategy was effectively drawn out of the recognition that SADC needed to review progress towards goals of sustainable development (influenced in part by the RIO+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development, where the SDGs were elaborated), particularly linked to requirements of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements – MEAs (as well as negotiation targets). It theoretically represents recommendations, gaps and requirements in order to address the attainment of such goals. It is designed to link to a range of existing and in progress strategies and protocols, including the RISDP, the Infrastructure Development Masterplan, the SADC Industrialization Policy, and the Regional Agriculture Policy. Discussions are currently under way in terms of linking the strategy (as in the case of the others) to the SADC Resilience Framework (described here).

Structure and main adaptation themes

The Green Growth Strategy comprises six main sections, two of which have particular relevance for adaptation:

GE Policy

Policy options and instruments under discussion include (but are not limited to) feed-in tariffs for renewable energy; removal of fossil fuel subsidies; "polluter pays" and "user pays" taxes; as well as discussions around green market incentivisation (very much an emerging conversation). These obviously have relevance to adaptation – and again, there have been concrete (if ongoing, and challenging) attempts to align these policy and instrument recommendations with the sister climate change strategies – both in terms of adaptation and mitigation (and areas where there are synergies).

GE Action Plan by Sector

Main adaptation themes are covered in the Action Plan by Sector, which, again, has been designed to link to the two sister climate change strategies. Sectors covered comprise Agriculture and Livestock, Water, Forestry and Biodiversity, Fisheries, Energy, Manufacturing and Mining, Waste, Transport, Tourism and Cities. The action plans comprise key interventions with both time and financial scoping. There are significant multiple benefits for adaptation, both directly and acknowledged, as well as indirectly. For example, in the water sector, trans-basin management and adaptive management of dam resources are considered; while in the agriculture and livestock sector, approaches to ensure sustainable agriculture and a more resilient agricultural system are outlined.

Implementation architecture

The implementation architecture for the Green Growth Strategy is designed to align with that recommended for the two sister climate change strategies, although as mentioned earlier, this discussion evolves as the plans move to implementation.

13.4. SADC STI Implementation Framework to Support Climate Change Response (SADC/STI-IFCCR 2020)

Status

The SADC/STI-IFCCR 2020 was revised in response to the validation workshop held in Johannesburg in May 2015, and is currently under consideration by representatives of SAMCOST, and the Science and Technology desk at SADC. A revised implementation plan is also in design (building on older work undertaken in 2011). The strategy was conditionally approved by SAMCOST in Maputo, 2014 and given final approval at the Joint Ministerial Meeting in Gaborone, on June 30th, 2016.

Provenance

The strategy has been some years in design, with iterative consultations and revisions. In August 2008, SAMCOST hinted at the need to develop a coherent STI framework to support climate change response. The following year, in August 2009, STI senior officials met in Pretoria and mandated South Africa (the Department of Science and Technology) to lead the process of developing the framework. In June 2010, the DST secured funding from Australia to support the development of the framework, and two initial drafting workshops were held – in Windhoek, Namibia, in August 2010, and in Gaborone, Botswana, in March 2011. In May 2011, in Windhoek, SAMCOST endorsed the resulting report containing the draft framework and mandated further development of the framework.

In June 2011, in Pretoria, the draft framework was finalised, and presented to a technical cooperating partner's forum, while in November 2011 the draft framework and the process of developing it were presented as a COP11 side event. In December 2012,

the task team responsible for refining the plan met in Benoni, South Africa, to develop the framework's implementation plan.

In June 2014, the implementation plan was tabled at the Joint SADC Ministerial Meeting on STI and Education and Training, in Maputo, Mozambique, obtaining conditional ministerial approval (technical content approved, institutional arrangements and budget to be refined). In December 2014, further refinement was undertaken by the task team, at SADC House in Gaborone, including alignment with the 'sister' Climate Change and Green Economy Strategies. All three strategies were reviewed and revisions recommended at a Validation Workshop in May 2015. The framework and schedule were given final ministerial approval in Gaborone, on June 30th, 2016.

Structure and main adaptation themes

The strategy has four areas of focus, including adaptation – but interventions under other areas of focus also have adaptation implications/components:
- Systematic observation and monitoring;
- Impacts, vulnerability and risks;
- Mitigation;
- Adaptation.

Intervention areas under Adaptation are as follows, with their relevant section numbers shown. At present, older time and costing details have been omitted – they are currently under renewed design.
- Downscaling of climate change models – to inform adaptation strategies and responses (4.4.1);
- Develop portfolio of projects in green technologies (4.4.2);
- Long-term adaptation scenarios (4.4.3);
- Research focusing on the facilitation of value addition, optimisation and commercialisation (including appropriate IPR instruments) for indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) (4.4.4);
- Research and development with reference to disease-resistant and stress-tolerant crops; and key species in the biodiversity sector (4.4.5).

It is important to note that interventions shown here (as well as in other sections) are edited for repetition and redundancy, as far as possible.

Implementation and modalities

The means of implementation and modalities for taking the strategy forward, have, as in the case of the other strategies, been one of the more challenging areas of work.

In response to edits in December 2014, the STI Strategy was given precisely the same modalities for implementation as the Climate Change and Green Growth Strategies – namely the establishment of a Sustainable Development Committee, or similar body, that would sit above FANR, and report directly to the office of the Deputy Executive Secretary (with similar financial arrangements around the Regional Development Fund). This has proved, for all strategies, to be a challenging discussion.

In the case of the STI Strategy, working groups at the Validation Workshop in May 2015 made a slightly different recommendation, and a compromise has now been reached and approved.

Conclusion

It is clear that a priority area for work on the strategies described here includes how to align them, such that co-benefits may be realised, and action on the strategies has the opportunity to mutually reinforce each other. In southern Africa, and on the continent more broadly, successful examples of such alignment and achievement of multiple synergies are still somewhat thin. With increased attention in this area, however, including a clear focus within international process such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), it is hoped that the next decade will be more successful in this regard.