

ARUA Centre of Excellence in Climate and Development



Rationale and Thematic Area: Climate and Development

Africa's existing socioeconomic development challenges will be greatly compounded under climate change.

The fundamental twin challenge is to enable development that is (i) resilient to existing and expected climate risks and impacts, and (ii) low carbon, avoiding substantial African contributions to the amount of global warming in the future: this challenge has been variously termed "climate compatible development" or "climate resilient, low carbon development"

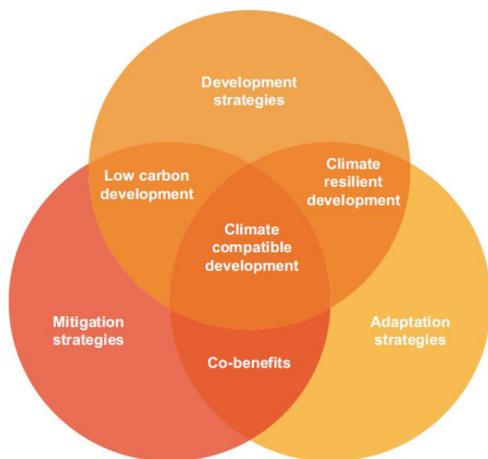


Figure 1: The concept of climate compatible development, and its two interlinked pillars, climate resilient and low carbon development (after CDKN 2011).

The African Climate and Development Initiative (ACDI) at the University of Cape Town is the lead organisation for a regionally distributed ARUA Centre of Excellence (Figure 2) that will undertake research, training and influencing to substantially contribute to achieving sustainable development goals in the face of climate change.

The initial ARUA CoE hub partners are UCT (CoE Secretariat and Southern African regional hub), University of Ghana (West African regional hub) and University of Nairobi (East African regional hub).

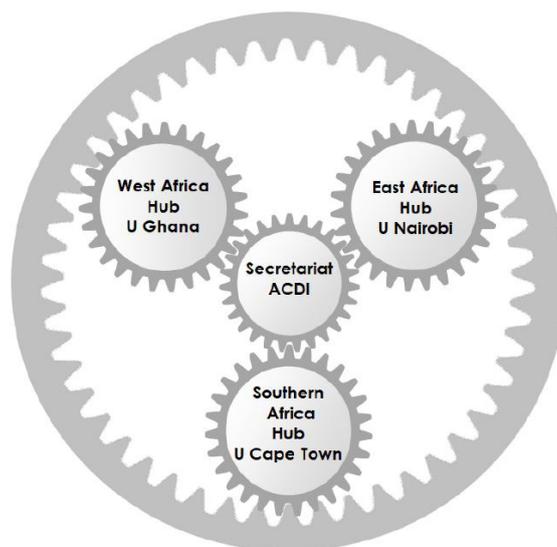


Figure 2. Hub-and-Gear Model for the ARUA CoE in Climate and Development

All three founding universities have established centres or programmes within which the ARUA CoE will be hosted.



The African Climate and Development Initiative at UCT

the ACDI is an interdisciplinary research and teaching hub that spans all faculties at UCT, and brings together academics, non-government organisations (NGOs), business, government and international partners to co-produce and test new insights, evidence and innovations that will help to solve Africa's climate and development challenges.



The Institute for Climate Change Adaptation at the University of Nairobi

ICCA was established in December 2010 through support from the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa to help meet the challenges posed by climate change.



The Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies at University of Ghana

The mission of the Institute is: "To meet the nation's needs for broad-based education, training and research in the science, policy and management of environmental and sanitation processes in the wider African and global context."

CoE Leadership and Management Structure



Prof Mark New, University of Cape Town (Director, ACDI)



Prof Sheona Shackleton, University of Cape Town (Deputy Director, ACDI)



Prof Chris Gordon, University of Ghana (Director, Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies)



Dr. Albert Ahenkan, University of Ghana (Convener, Graduate Climate Change and Sustainable Development Programme)



Prof Shem Wandiga, University of Nairobi (Director, Institute for Climate Change Adaptation)



Dr. Silas O. Oriaso, University of Nairobi (Communication Associate, Institute for Climate Change and Adaptation)



Research collaboration will be anchored in comparative research across the three regions.

The advantage of comparative research is that it allows for both nationally specific insights, as well as exploration of similarities and differences across settings, leading to more general theory and evidence.

Initial Thematic Focus Areas



Research Focus 1:

Enhancing knowledge systems for climate resilience

Leads: Dr Silas Oriaso (UN), Dr Chris Jack (UCT)



Research Focus 2:

Sustainable energy for poverty reduction

Leads: Dr Britta Rennkamp (UCT) and Dr Jiska de Groot (UCT)



Capacity Development Focus:

Next-generation researchers and practitioners

Leads: Prof Chris Gordon (UG) and Prof Sheona Shackleton (UCT)

About the Universities

University of Cape Town

The University of Cape Town (UCT) aspires to be a research intensive, premier academic meeting point between South Africa, the rest of Africa and the world. The university stands at the geographic tip and the academic heart of Africa, and from this vantage point it has set the strategic goal of making breakthroughs in solving global – and specifically African – problems.

University of Nairobi

Climate Change is a strategic priority at the Universities of Ghana and Nairobi, where there are established initiatives to bring together multidisciplinary teams from across each university to work on climate change issues. At the University of Nairobi this occurs through the Institute for Climate Change and Adaptation, which brings together staff from departments in the natural, engineering and Social sciences for interdisciplinary research and postgraduate training on climate change adaptation.

University of Ghana

Climate Change is one of the four university wide research thrusts that have been adopted by the University. The University of Ghana seeks to use the trans-disciplinary approach and this common and shared problem of climate change as a means to foster meaningful collaboration between researchers from the various Colleges, Schools, Faculties and Institutes so as to move forward the growth and development agenda of Ghana.