

The Report

Anthropogenic climate change drivers, are projected to increase the global mean surface temperature between 1.5°C and 5.8°C by 2100. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its 4th Assessment Report, 2007 has stated that warming is expected to be higher than the global annual mean warming, with drier subtropical regions warming more than the moister tropics.

The implication for Africa is immense as the African continent is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change due to low adaptive capacity and the livelihoods of many Africans being largely dependent on utilization of land-based resources.

In response to the challenge of climate change adaptation, the University of Nairobi has launched the Institute for Climate Change and Adaptation, which serves to offer unique inter- and multi-disciplinary programmes that will:

- Build the human capacity needed to address climate change and adaptation that meet African societies unique needs by offering University-based curricula for conventional degrees and short training courses for a wide range of professionals from all sectors of society.
- Encourage action-oriented research activities, including research into climate change adaptation technologies that will help to improve the climate adaptation capacity of the African peoples.
- Provide a framework for national and regional policy assessments and advice to governments and other public and private sector actors, and
- Include the grassroots and various communities within the African region in its programmes execution and implementation of research findings.

The main objectives of the Institute for Climate Change and Adaptation at the University of Nairobi are to provide and/or conduct:

Formal training on climate change and adaptation at postgraduate level (Masters and Doctorate) initially, and eventually at the undergraduate level.

Professional Short courses for various climate change and adaptation actors and stakeholders in the public and private sectors including NGOs;

Climate change and adaptation research and knowledge exchange;

Action-oriented community outreach programmes for implementation of practical climate change and adaptation options; and

Policy advice on climate change and adaptation.

The institute offers studies under the following thematic areas

- Policy and Communication
- Climate Risk Management and Food security
- Human Dimensions and Health
- Technology and
- Water, Environment and Ecosystems

The inaugural Masters and Doctorate programmes in Climate Change and Adaptation were launched in February 2012. The Masters students will be completing the coursework at the end of this semester in December 2013 whereas the PhD students have already completed their coursework and have presented the initial drafts of their research proposals to the institute's Academic Board.

As one of the few university programmes in Africa addressing the natural, anthropogenic and human dimensions of climate change and adaptation, ICCA is working towards developing a niche in an area that will put science within the reach of the community.

It is against this background that ICCA has been involved in a pilot outreach programme in the Sakai region of Kenya. The pilot was to demonstrate approaches for reducing vulnerability to climate change induced drought and included interventions designed to improve climate information availability and use through income generating activities and crop improvements, to increase food security; and water mobilization and conservation (sand dams). The project also included the engagement of policy makers towards the integration of adaptation and vulnerability to drought in sustainable development policies.

ICCA has also worked with the Isiolo county in a Total Value-chain Evaluation project that identified priority research areas that were aimed at filling information gaps while critically looking at; economic benefit; equity and distribution; ecologically friendly solutions that work for the public good and are resilient to climate change.

With the impact of climate change cutting across all aspects of development, the ICCA will apply this trans-disciplinary approach that will not only provide sustainable solution to climate change adaptation, but will also train the next generation of scientists to carry the baton.