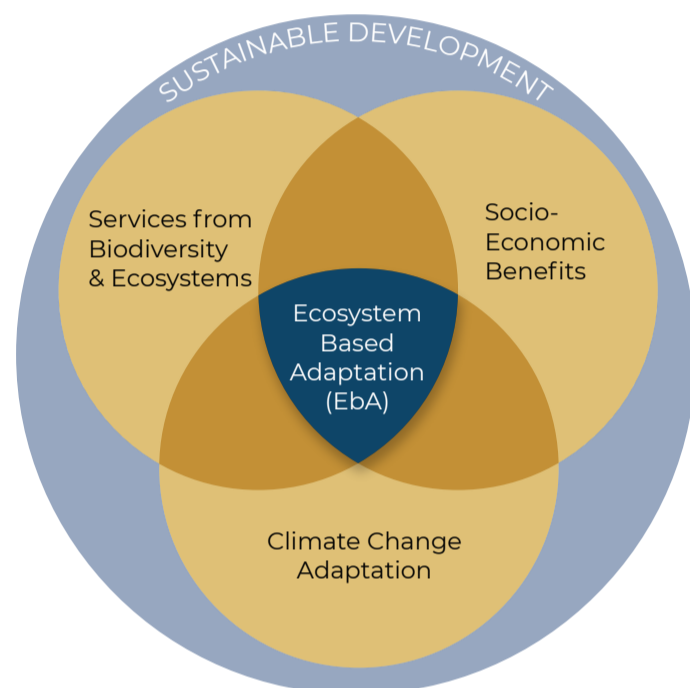
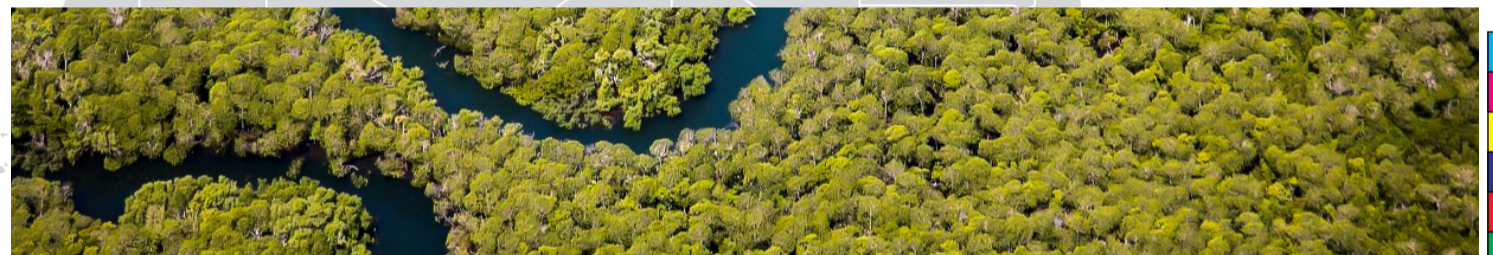


Working with Nature to Strengthen Climate Resilience in Southern Africa's Marine and Coastal Zones

Ocean ecosystems are increasingly impacted by climate change through more severe tropical storms, sea level rise and numerous other drivers. Yet, where marine and coastal ecosystems are protected and restored, they can help communities buffer the impacts of climate changes. The use of biodiversity and ecosystem services to help communities adapt to climate change is referred to as ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA). EbA involves governing and managing ecosystems to enhance their resilience to climate stresses – maintaining, and where possible, improving the quality and quantity of ecosystem services they provide – and thus supporting the ability of communities to adapt to climate risks. The benefits of EbA extend to social outcomes and contribute to more sustainable forms of development, livelihoods opportunities and the reduction of environmental degradation.



Despite their enormous value, the degradation of coral reefs, mangrove forests, sea grasses, coastal dunes and wetlands continues unabated. Moreover, these ecosystems are not fully integrated into national and sectoral policy frameworks, particularly in small island and developing countries. The advancement of adaptation strategies, the revision of countries' Nationally Determined Contributions, and the development of new blue economy strategies, provide important opportunities for the inclusion of marine and coastal ecosystems in climate policy responses. There is also much to learn from emerging good practice in both policy and project implementation within the sub-region.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) is implementing the project *Marine and Coastal Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the National Climate Responses of Coastal and Island Countries in Southern Africa* as part of the Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) Programme, supported by the European Union and implemented under the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The project's objective is to enhance the resilience of SADC coastal and island states by strengthening EbA in their national climate policy responses. Through enhanced policies and peer learning, the ultimate outcome will be more resilient coastal communities in the region. A participatory approach, including community-based organisations, is fundamental to the project's design and implementation.

To strengthen inclusive governance and promote peer learning, this project will establish a regional Community of Practice on marine and coastal EbA in Southern Africa.



Thematic areas of focus will include:

- Strengthening the uptake of EbA in climate policy
- Governance of marine and coastal EbA, with a focus on community participation
- Financing for climate change adaptation in coastal and marine resources
- Job and livelihood opportunities through scaling marine and coastal EbA