

## Climate change vulnerability: Can environmental sustainability play a role?

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It is universally accepted that environmental sustainability is a fundamental pillar to human sustainable development. Since the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the environmental sustainability cause has taken centre stage in human development debate. With the aim of achieving sustainability, many treaties, conventions and summits have been signed, convened and held since then. However, another serious threat to humanity has emerged in climate change. Many countries are vulnerable to climate change and it is threatening to derail human development at a faster rate than environmental degradation. With general reference Africa and specific reference to southern Africa, it is the considered view of this paper that sustainable environmental management can significantly diminish a population's vulnerability and enhance adaptation to climate change. The previous decade has witnessed more frequent and severe climatic extremes in the southern African region. Droughts have dominated the inland areas while floods ravaged the coastal areas. Future projections are that southern Africa will become even drier. For that reason this paper focuses on vulnerability to drought. Considering the low economic development and high unemployment rates in the region, especially the rural communities, it will be difficult to rely on the economy to reduce vulnerability. Humanity will, therefore, naturally look up to the biophysical environment for survival. It is arguable then that if the biophysical environment is degraded then humanity faces an even greater threat to climate change. In view of this observation, this paper posits that a sustainable biophysical environment can significantly reduce climate change vulnerability and enhance adaptation for the rural poor. As such detailed research can establish the role of environmental sustainability in reducing climate change vulnerability and enhance adaptability in rural poor communities.

### Biography

Edmore Kori is a Junior Lecturer in the Department of Geography and Geo-Information Sciences at the University of Venda in South Africa. He holds a Master of Environmental Sciences (Cum Laude) from University of Venda. This paper is a part of his Ph.D. research proposal development. This therefore, seeks input about its research ability, possible focus areas, among others.

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