

# Climate Change

Climate change is one of today's biggest challenges. Africa is responsible for the smallest percentage of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but the continent is believed to be the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change—a consequence of unpredictable weather, droughts and floods; people's heavy reliance on natural resources for subsistence; and limited resources to deal with the impacts.

## Dangerous Losses

Ever-increasing climate instability is predicted to become the biggest single driver of biodiversity loss in the next 50 to 100 years. Because of climate change, it is projected that:

- Up to 40 percent of Africa's mammals will be classified as critically endangered or even extinct by 2080; and
- Up to 42 percent of Africa's plant species will be lost by 2085.

## Impacts of Climate Change

The impacts from climate change, together with land conversion and population growth, pose major threats to Africa's people, wildlife and wild lands. Potential ecological changes include:

- Increased climate volatility, creating extreme conditions such as floods and droughts;
- More rapid desertification and rising sea levels, resulting in loss and degradation of arable land;
- Scarcity of fresh water; and
- Increased human-wildlife conflict resulting from competition for natural resources.

For Africa's people, the impacts of climate change severely threaten livelihoods and could lead to:

- Greater food insecurity;
- Growing risk of disease; and
- Displacement from coastal flooding.

## Our Approach to Climate Change

Climate change, viewed as a global threat, needs to be addressed at different levels. This is why African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) incorporates climate change mitigation and adaptation activities into all of our work.

Our approaches include:

- **Improving the monitoring, scientific assessment and modeling of climate change.** AWF is currently conducting a landscape-level study in the Kilimanjaro region to understand the effects of both climate change and our mitigation and adaptation programs.





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- **Helping communities adapt to the impacts of climate change.** In Tanzania's Maasai Steppe, sustainable agricultural training and improved seeds have increased crop yields despite increasingly unpredictable weather patterns across the continent.
- **Mitigating climate change impacts through landscape-scale conservation and reducing deforestation and forest degradation rates.** Community-led land-use planning in the Congo landscape works to ensure that certain parts of the expansive Congo Basin remain permanent forest.
- **Generating community and conservation through carbon payment mechanisms.** AWF has begun the carbon offset validation and verification process at a number of sites in East and Central Africa to establish carbon payment mechanisms for communities.
- **Helping African countries gain access to clean and fuel-efficient technologies.** Near Kilimanjaro, AWF has opened a shop selling jikos, or fuel-efficient cookstoves.
- **Providing training, education and capacity building to local and government partners.**

## | Combination of Efforts

This combination of approaches helps mitigate the effects of climate change and ensures that Africans throughout AWF's landscapes are well-equipped to weather its consequences.

AWF further is engaged in the climate change discussion at the national, regional and global levels, to share our experiences and learn from others, and to make sure that our voice is heard on policy debates around climate change issues.



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