

Climate Change Adaptation Through Sustainable Water Resources Management in Kenya: Challenges and Opportunities

Shilpa Muliyl Asokan, Joy Obando, Brian Felix Kwena, and Cush Ngonzo Luwes

Abstract

Water is the medium through which society experiences the most dramatic and direct manifestations of climate change. At the same time, water has a critical role to play in climate change adaptation and is central towards achieving Africa Water Vision 2025, and the targets set for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the Kenya Vision 2030. There are fundamental challenges that need to be addressed in order to achieve sustainable water resources management, mainly, the inherent uncertainty associated with the changing climate, the inflexibility in infrastructure and institutions that manage water, and the poor integration of all stakeholders and sectors in water resources management. This study investigates the challenges and opportunities in implementing integrated water resources management and its critical role towards climate change adaptation. A preliminary assessment of sustainable management of water resources and its role in effective climate change adaptation and resilience building in Kenya is carried out through questionnaire survey and stakeholder interactions. Climate change-induced uncertainty, diminishing water sources aggravated by growing water demand, weak institutional and financial governance, and lack of transparency and stakeholder inclusiveness are identified as the main challenging factors that need to be addressed to build a climate resilient society. The study furthermore emphasizes the critical role of water management in achieving Agenda 2030, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

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