



What is adaptation?

Adapting to the adverse effects of climate change is, along with mitigation, a major area of action under the UN Climate Change regime. The world is already experiencing changes in mean temperature, shifts in the seasons and an increasing frequency of extreme weather events. As the climate changes, societies will have to learn to adapt. The faster the climate changes, the harder it could be.

[Adaptation](#), in the simplest terms, refers to the actions that countries will need to take to respond to the impacts of climate change that are already happening, while at the same time preparing for future impacts. It refers to changes in processes, practices and structures that can reduce our vulnerability to climate change impacts, such as sea level rise or food insecurity. It also includes making the most of any beneficial opportunities associated with climate change, such as increased crop yields or longer growing seasons in some regions.

Adaptation solutions take many shapes and forms, depending on the unique context of a community, business, organization, country or region. There is no 'one-size-fits-all-solution'—adaptation can range from building flood defences, setting up early warning systems for cyclones and switching to drought-resistant crops, to redesigning communication systems, business operations and government policies. Many nations and communities are already taking steps to build resilient societies and economies, but far greater action and ambition will be needed to cost effectively manage the risks, both now and in the future.

Successful adaptation activities also call for the effective engagement of stakeholders—including national, regional, multilateral and international organizations, the public and private sectors, and civil society—and the management of knowledge for adaptation at each step.

Parties to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement recognize that adaptation is a global challenge faced by all with local, subnational, national, regional and international dimensions. It is a key component of the long-term global response to climate change to protect people, livelihoods and ecosystems. Parties acknowledge that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach, considering vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socioeconomic and environmental policies and actions.