

**Republic of South Africa**  
**NATIONAL SUMMARY REPORT**

**IDNDR**

**Contact:** Department of Local Government  
and National Housing  
(Civil Protection)

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**SECTION A: PROFILE**

(This section contains relevant basic information about your country.  
Please complete and check the information already included)

1. **Composition of National Committee (Focal Point):**  
(Please list the names of the institutions represented and indicate in the brackets the number of members for each group)

**Ministries** [4]  
Environment Affairs  
Water Affairs & Forestry  
Agriculture  
National Health and Population  
Development

**Non-Governmental Organizations** [1]  
Civil Protection Organisation of South  
Africa

**Academic & Research Institutions**  
University of Pretoria

**Private Sector** [1]  
South African Institution of  
Civil Engineers

**Insurance** [1]  
South African Insurance Association

**Public Services (e.g. meteorological, etc.)**  
National Welfare Council  
Weather Bureau [2]

**Others** [ ]

**2. Internal organisation of the National Committee  
(Please describe hierarchy, responsibilities, co-ordination and co-operation mechanisms in natural disaster reduction activities)**

At present we have no national plan to support the IDNDR because we have not been a member of IDNDR.

Each government department is responsible for the execution of functions applicable to its functional terrain.

Co-ordination and co-operation between the various departments occurs on an ad-hoc basis.

The Department of Local Government and National Housing is the co-ordinating body when a natural disaster occurs.

The Department for National Health and Population Development will be the co-ordinating body in respect of the rendering of social welfare intervention.

**3. Prevailing hazards**

Type	Location	Affected Population
Droughts	Local/widespread - entire country	Entire
Floods	Local/widespread - entire country	Entire
Tornados	Interior	± 5%
Severe thunderstorms	Mainly eastern half	± 82%
Temperature extremes - Hot	Entire country	Entire
Temperature extremes - Cold	Mainly central and southern regions	± 20%
Tropical cyclones	Extreme eastern areas	± 25%
Fire hazard	Eastern, southern and south-western areas	± 35%
Storm (cyclonic) - gales and high seas/coastal regions	Coastal regions	± 10%
Sinkholes	Dolomitic areas	± 5%

#### 4. Recent natural disasters

Type	Location	Affected Population	Losses
1983-86 Drought	Transvaal & Natal	30%	Severe economic
1984 Tropical cyclone	Natal	5%	50 deaths, R300 million damages
1987 Floods	Natal	10%	350 deaths, R400 million damages
1988 Floods	Interior	5%	38 deaths, R400 million damages
1990 Tornado	Welkom	Local	R130 million; 2 deaths
1991/1992 Drought	Whole summer rainfall region	75%	Severe economic
1994 Floods	Ladysmith	Local	Local economic

- Note:**
- \* Only national disasters which were proclaimed as such are listed.
  - \* The 1987 floods were the worst on record in some places.
  - \* The 1991/92 drought was the worst on record in South Africa.
  - \* The 1994 floods in Ladysmith were the worst on record for this town.

#### 5. National socio-economic conditions

- \* Population: 37 600 000
- \* Gross-National Product (GNP) US\$ 105 000M
- \* Per-Capita Income: US\$ 110

6. **Availability of assistance to other countries in the field of natural disaster reduction.**  
**(Please list potential resources, scientific expertise, technology, etc.)**

Weather warnings issued by the South African Weather Bureau.

Helicopter rescue services operated by the South African Defence Force.

7. **International assistance required for natural disaster reduction**

**(Please indicate requirements for scientific expertise, technology, resources etc.)**

Presently none, but this will receive attention with the change in the international situation.

## SECTION B: STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

(This section deals with current or planned strategies and activities)

### 1. Steps towards achieving the 3 main Decade targets

#### (a) Comprehensive national assessments of risks from natural hazards, with these assessments taken into account in development plans;

Most of South Africa lies within a region of southern Africa which has a semi arid to arid climate. This region is subject to climatic extremes including droughts and floods. As a result agricultural and water resource development projects and the associated research and development all take these risks from these natural hazards into account.

The widespread, severe floods and droughts of the past decade affected many southern African countries, and were the worst on record in some areas resulting in large loss of life during floods, and large economic and human distress during droughts and floods.

As in many other areas in Africa the vulnerability to these climatic extremes has increased over the years due to the population growth and consequent high degree of exploitation of the natural resources.

Two major national initiatives were launched as a result of these extremes. These are the development of national drought and flood management strategies. These are nearing completion will probably be implemented within the next year or two.

South Africa has good meteorological and river flow data bases with record lengths extending back to the beginning of the century in some cases. Permanent inventories, registers and data bases for agriculture, nutrition and household food security have been developed.

#### (b) Mitigation plans at national and/or local levels, involving long-term prevention and preparedness and community awareness;

##### The Department of Agriculture:

Plans are in place for the following:

1. The development and maintenance of drought relief related institutional capacity.
2. Education and training to promote self-reliance and sustainability in respect of agricultural development and nutrition.
3. The agricultural institutes at Glen and Grootfontein are involved in drought risk modelling.

**Water resource development and management:**

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry has published policy documents on:

- ◆ *Management of the Water Resources of South Africa.*
- ◆ *Water Supply and Sanitation for Developing Communities*
- ◆ *Water for the Natural Environment*
- ◆ *Dam Safety Legislation*
- ◆ *River Systems Analysis*
- ◆ *River catchment studies*
- ◆ *Afforestation permit system*

**Social Welfare:**

The development of a national strategy concerning social welfare services which should be rendered during a disaster.

The national department will be responsible to ensure that all the role players know what is expected of them. The public will be made aware through the media during a disaster.

**Weather Bureau:**

The occurrence of the 1991/93 drought again highlighted the importance of continuous monitoring to provide early warning of impending water shortages. Prediction and warning systems must provide all sectors of the population with information on the location, severity, onset and duration of a severe drought.

Several actions are under review.

(c) **Ready access to global, regional, national and local warning systems and broad dissemination of warnings.**

**Floods**

A computer based national Flood Advisory System has been developed and is currently being evaluated.

Computer based Flood Watch programs have been developed for local authorities with computer facilities, and simple procedures have been developed for communities without computer facilities.

**Droughts**

Climatic early warning systems, and monitoring systems have been developed relating to water supply, agriculture nutrition and household food security

**Weather**

The South African Weather Bureau has direct access to regional warning systems in regard to tropical cyclones in the southern Indian Ocean through the Cyclone Forecasting Centre in Reunion.

The Weather Bureau is actively participating in the international GDMSS system, and is responsible for the dissemination of weather warnings for Area VII. The Weather Bureau is also disseminating weather warnings for the southern part of AREA VIII as an interim measure.

4. **Disaster mitigation activities completed or underway:**  
(a) **Identification of hazard zones: hazard assessment**

**Title of project:**

1. Proposed National Drought Management Strategy (details below)
2. Ad hoc studies of various severe meteorological phenomena (no further details).

**Status:**

Ongoing

**Participating institutions in the country and/or on the international level:**

Several ministries

**Costs of project:**

Not available at present

(Drought aid for agriculture 1992-94 approximately US\$ 1 200 million).

**Sources of funding:**

South African government

**Implementing agencies:**

Several ministries

**Address (telephone and fax number) of the agency in charge:**

Department of Agriculture

Private Bag X250

Pretoria 0001

Telephone +27 12 206-2287

Fax +27 12 326-3454



**2. Present national plan for natural disaster reduction****(a) Time span covered:**

At present we have no national plans. We intend to draw up a plan for the second half of the decade after attending the conference in Japan. The handling of the human side will be the responsibility of the Department of National Health and Population Development.

**(b) Agencies, institutions and organisations involved:**

Not applicable

**(c) Implementing agencies:**

Not applicable

**(d) Funds available for implementation:**

Not applicable

**3. Legislation introduced and enacted in relation to natural disaster reduction**

Civil Protection Act, 1977

Fund Raising Act, 1978

Plant Improvement Act, 1976

Livestock Improvement Act, 1977

Agricultural Pests Act, 1983

Water Act, 1956

Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 1983

Agriculture Credit Act, 1966

Agriculture Development Fund Act, 1993

Agriculture Financing Act, 1993.

**(b) Monitoring, prediction and warning****Title of project**

Various projects in the Weather Bureau, including medium term weather warnings, nowcasting, tropical cyclones, fire hazards, ultraviolet radiation, cold spells, weather for aviation, storm warnings for shipping.

**Status:**

On a par with other short- to medium term forecasting disciplines (aviation, maritime, regional).

**Participating institutions in the country and/or on the international level:**

South African Weather Bureau, relevant regional radio stations and civil protection units.

**Costs of project:**

Absorbed into Weather Bureau budget.

**Sources of funding:**

Treasury

**Implementing agencies:**

South African Weather Bureau

**Address (telephone and fax number) of the agency in charge:**

The Chief Director  
Weather Bureau  
Private Bag X097  
PRETORIA  
0001

**(c) Short-term protective measures and preparedness**

**Title of project**

No specific title. When weather and flood warnings are issued the civil protection units and the public are expected to take the necessary precautions

**Status:**

Ongoing

**Participating institutions in the country and/or on the international level:**

Not applicable

**Costs of project:**

Not applicable

**Sources of funding:**

Not applicable

**Implementing agencies:**

Not applicable

**Address (telephone and fax number) of the agency in charge:**

Not applicable

**(d) Long-term preventive measures**

**Title of project**

None

**Status:**

**Participating institutions in the country and/or on the international level:**

**Costs of project:**

**Sources of funding:**

**Implementing agencies:**

**Address (telephone and fax number) of the agency in charge:**

**(e) Land-use and risk management**

**Title of project**

Various regional organisations all run projects to promote optimal land use to reduce agricultural risks.

**Status:**

**Participating institutions in the country and/or on the international level:**

State departments, agricultural co-operatives, the private sector and the Agricultural Research Council.

**Costs of project:**

**Sources of funding:**

Treasury

**Implementing agencies:**

Regional agricultural development institutes.

**Address (telephone and fax number) of the agency in charge:**

**(f) Public education and information**

**Title of project**

None

**Status:**

**Participating institutions in the country and/or on the international level:**

**Costs of project:**

**Sources of funding:**

**Implementing agencies:**

**Address (telephone and fax number) of the agency in charge:**

**5. Plans to fully achieve Decade targets by the end of 1999**

**(As in 4 above, for each area of activity (i.e. hazard zoning/assessment, monitoring, preparedness, etc.) please indicate as applicable, the project title, the participating institutions in the country and/or on the international level, the costs of projects, the sources of funding and the implementing agencies).**

South Africa has not been involved in the IDNDR activities to date.

## SECTION C: INTERACTIONS

(This section focuses on international involvement in die IDNDR)

### 1. Publications on IDNDR-related subjects:

(e.g. manuals, brochures, bulletins and other publications of relevance to IDNDR. Please mention title, author/institution, place and year of publication)

### 2. IDNDR meetings and conferences held or planned:

(Please indicate date, location, organising agency, national and international participation)

No international involvement at this stage but will receive attention in future.

### 3. Current or planned partnerships and co-operation related to IDNDR with other countries

(Please indicate Governments, National Committees, Institutions or Organisations involved)



## SECTION D: EVALUATION

**(This section analyses national progress and outlines possible improvement)**

- 1. Overall evaluation of national disaster mitigation programmes including, but not limited to, those initiated after IDNDR and achievements up to now.**

**(Please elaborate on whether the targets set by the National Committee, if any, the national disaster mitigation plans or other IDNDR activities have been met. If not, please indicate reasons).**

Because there has been no planning towards the IDNDR this cannot be evaluated.