Climate Change, Trade and Southern Africa

An Overview of the Relevant Issues

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Climate Change Impacts on Southern Africa

- Uncertainty of predictions (esp. at regional level)
- Climate model predictions for Southern Africa
  - Region’s climate likely to be among most severely affected
  - Rising temperatures
  - Variability in rainfall patterns
  - Extreme weather conditions
  - Rising sea levels
- Vulnerability of the region
  - Reliance on agriculture
  - Weak adaptive capacity
  - Health, ecosystems, biodiversity, forestry, human settlements, coastal zones and water and food security all threatened
Impacts on Southern African Trade

• Importance of trade for development in the region
• The region’s ability to trade goods and services will be affected primarily through two channels:
  – Direct and indirect effects on productive capacity
    • Losses in agricultural productivity
    • Health
    • Infrastructure
    • Impacts on natural resources
  – ‘Green’ protectionism
    • Border carbon adjustments
    • Standards and labelling
    • Shifting consumption patterns
Responses

- National/regional versus multilateral action
- Adaptation will play a bigger role than mitigation
- Mitigation
  - Especially in SA and for ‘dirty’ industries in the region
  - Land use policy and forest management
- Adaptation.
  - Especially NB is adapting agricultural techniques/crops
  - Potential for regional approaches to facilitate:
    - Publication of information, migration, food security, water management, development of renewable energy, economic diversification, regional trade, disaster management, investment in infrastructure, trade in environmental goods and services, etc.
Challenges and opportunities

• Challenges in designing appropriate responses:
  – Capacity
    • Lack of information, expertise and institutions, good governance, etc.
  – Finance
    • Aid for Trade, carbon finance, etc.
  – Technology
    • Importance of technology transfer

• Opportunities:
  – New/expanded industries
  – New financing for development
  – A spur for regional integration
  – Renewable energy