

African Climate & Development Initiative

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VACANCY: POST DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW: CLIMATE IMPACTS, RISKS AND ADAPTATION.

Two-year position renewed annually subject to satisfactory progress

Closing Date: 30 September 2026

The [African Climate and Development Initiative](#) (ACDI) at the [University of Cape Town](#) wishes to appoint an interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Research Fellow (PDRF) to lead research on climate impacts, risks and adaptation in Africa. The primary role of the PDRF will be to serve as a Chapter Scientist for the Africa chapter on climate change impacts, adaptation and vulnerability for the 7th Assessment Report (AR7) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

In support of this role, the PDRF will assess different aspects of climate impacts, risks and adaptation across different sectors, including water and infrastructure. Loss and damage are also of interest for the position. The PDRF appointee will synthesize evidence of climate change impacts, projected risks, and adaptation responses for a range of sectors in Africa, but with a particular focus on water and infrastructure. They will be part of the People in Nature and Climate (PiNC) Lab at ACDI and will work closely with the research team developing the IPCC AR7 Africa chapter.

The PDRF will also synthesize qualitative and quantitative evidence on observed impacts and projected risks of climate related loss and damage in Africa and synthesize evidence of effectiveness and feasibility of adaptation options for reducing climate change risks in key development sectors in Africa. The PDRF will support other key objectives of the Africa chapter, including participating in Lead Author Meetings (LAM), developing text and infographics, coordinating chapter authors from multiple disciplines (working remotely), and authoring or co-authoring publications from synthesis research work.

The Postdoctoral Research Fellow will form part of an inter- and trans disciplinary research team at the PiNC Lab, led by [Dr Petra Holden](#) – ACDI (South Africa). The PDRF will also report to [Dr Edmond Totin](#) from Université Nationale d'Agriculture (Benin), and, [Dr Stella Shumba](#) from the United Nations University – Institute for Environment and Human Security (Germany), the Coordinating Lead Authors of the Africa chapter for AR7 of the IPCC.

Qualifications, experience and skill criteria:

Required

- A PhD, awarded within the previous four years, within the field of environmental sciences with a topic associated with climate governance, water or infrastructure in Africa.
- A strong publication record, given the applicant's career stage
- Desire and ability to work in an inter and transdisciplinary research team setting
- Excellent organizational capability and ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English.
- Excellent literature search and literature review skills using search engines such as Scopus, Web of Science and Google.
- Experience of synthesizing large quantitative and/or qualitative datasets.
- Excellent computer literacy – advanced use of MS Word and Excel, Google Drive Apps.
- Experience in large reference list management with Zotero or similar manager.
- Experience with engagement and facilitation with research partners (policy or practice)

Desirable

- Experience in translation of research into knowledge for policy and practice
- Experience in quantitative and qualitative data pre-processing and post-processing
- Experience creating complex figures or infographics
- Experience working on large collaborative projects

The ACDI is a university-wide Institute that supports collaborative research and training in climate change and development.

- An applicant from any African country who is already legally based in South Africa.

Value and tenure:

- The value of the fellowship is R480,000 per year, payable as a tax-free stipend.
- The fellowship is valid for up to two years, renewed annually, subject to satisfactory progress

Conditions of award:

- Applicants may not previously have held full-time permanent professional or academic posts.
- The successful applicant will be required to register as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Cape Town and will be expected to commence as soon as possible and at least **by 1 November 2026**.
- The successful applicant will be required to comply with the University's approved policies, procedures and practices for the postdoctoral sector, and be based at ACDI, UCT, Cape Town.
- The selected applicant will be required to attend Lead Author Meetings LAMs (at least two) to provide support to the Chapter team.

Application requirements:

Applicants should submit, *combined into a single PDF* (i) an application letter that includes a short description of their expertise and research interests, and how these relate to the position, (ii) a CV, including a publication list, (iii) copies of academic transcripts and/or certificates, and (iv) email addresses of at least two references who have been directly involved in their PhD and/or previous postdoctoral research.

Selection process:

The selection panel is committed to promoting diversity, equality and inclusion throughout the review and selection process.

- Only eligible and complete applications will be considered by the selection committee.
- If you have not heard within one month of the deadline, please assume your application has been unsuccessful.
- Virtual interviews of short-listed candidates are likely to take place in **October 2026** and the successful candidate is expected to start as soon as possible and at least from **1 November 2026**.

Closing date: Applications received before **30 September 2026** are guaranteed to be considered. Applications received thereafter may be considered if the position has not been filled.

Submit applications with subject "Post-Doc application IPCC-AR7" to Ruwani Walawege,

ruwani.walawege@uct.ac.za

Contact details for enquiries about the research topic and project: Dr Petra Holden, petra.holden@uct.ac.za

Additional information on ACDI, PiNC and UCT can be found at: www.acdi.uct.ac.za / <https://www.pinclab.co.za> / www.uct.ac.za

The University of Cape Town reserves the right to disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications. The University of Cape Town also reserves the right to change the conditions of the award or to make no awards at all.