

Vulnerability to Climate Change Related Disasters in the Eastern Cape Province: An Application of the Household Vulnerability Index (HVI)

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ABSTRACT Globally there is now a consensus that extreme climatic events are occurring and pose significant challenges, particularly for resource poor rural households. This paper assesses household vulnerability to climate change related disasters in the Eastern Cape (EC) Province in South Africa. The Household Vulnerability Index (HVI) was used to determine the levels of vulnerability to climate change related disasters by households. Data from 1546 households was collected, however only 1510 questionnaires were used for analysis. The majority (83%) of the households were found to be moderately vulnerable to climate change related disasters. A Tobit censored regression, used to determine the factors influencing household vulnerability to climate change related disasters, established that socio-economic factors including age, marital status, highest level of education, employment status, health status, ownership of farm assets, receiving external support, income generating activities, livestock ownership and extension access were significant. The findings suggest that households need to be empowered in terms of their socio-economic attributes, a move that will enhance adaptation and resilience under extreme climatic conditions.