



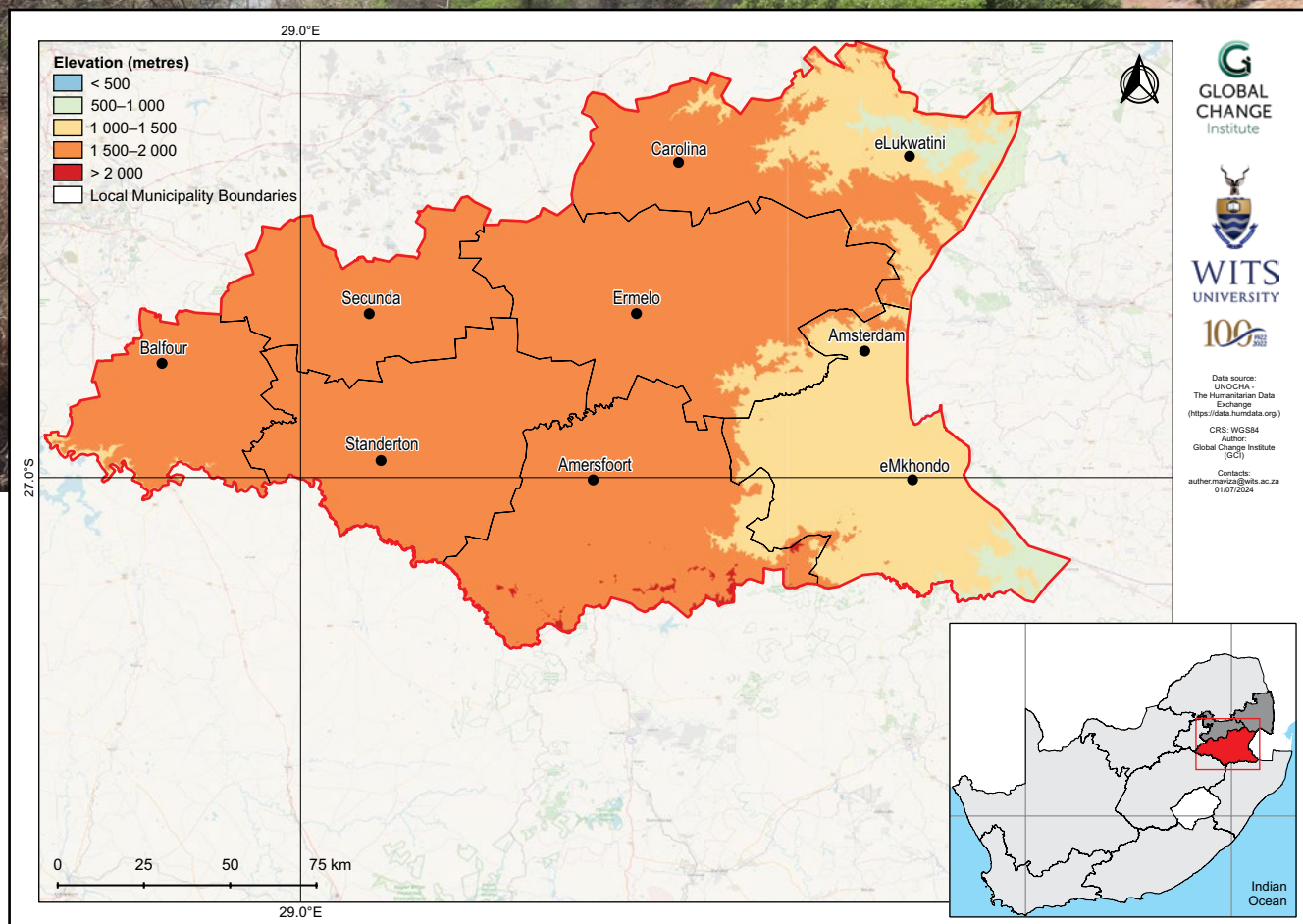
Gert Sibande District Municipality climate change fact sheet

Mpumalanga, South Africa

MUNICIPAL

Introduction

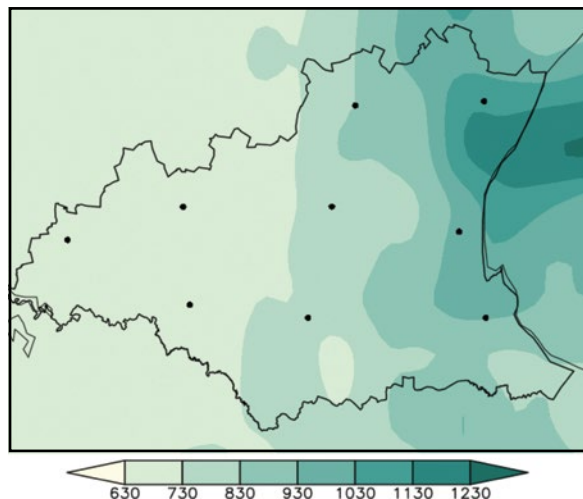
- This fact sheet is part of a series of district municipality fact sheets developed by the Wits GCI and SANBI. The fact sheets present a summary of observed and projected changes in climate over district municipalities in South Africa. They should be used together with the guidelines presented in the cover page.
- Gert Sibande covers an area of approximately 31 841 km², most of which lies on the Highveld plateau. Elevation ranges from 1 000 m above sea level in the east to 1 800 m over the central and western plateau.
- Climate varies from subtropical in the east to continental conditions on the Highveld, with cold winters and hot summers. Rainfall occurs predominantly during the summer months.



Observed climate: rainfall (1981–2000)

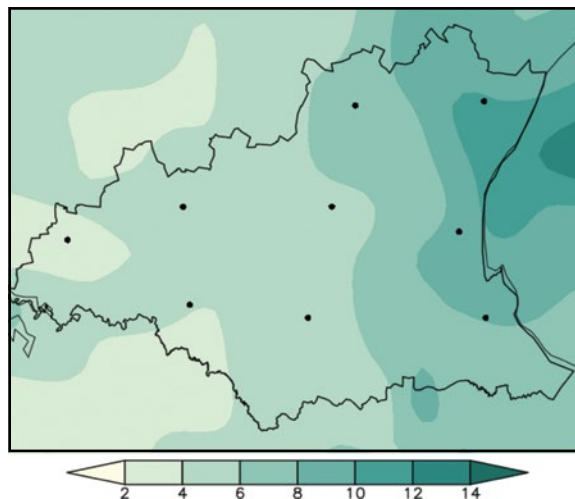
Mean annual rainfall

Mean annual rainfall ranges from 650 mm over the western region to more than 1 100 mm over the northeastern region.



Extreme rainfall days

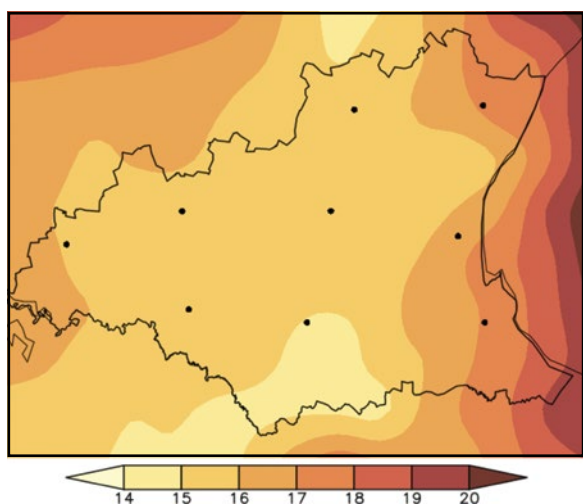
Observed mean annual number of extreme rainfall days range from 2 days in the west to up to 14 days in the east.



Observed climate: temperature (1981–2000)

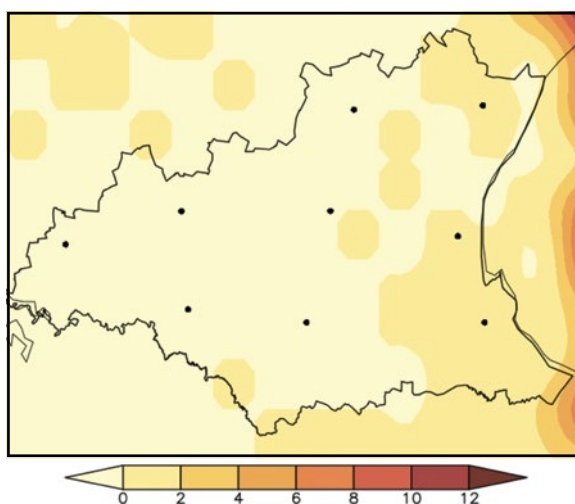
Mean annual temperature

Mean annual temperature ranges from 14 °C over the Highveld (plateau) to 18 °C over the lower-lying eastern parts.



Very hot days

Mean annual number of very hot days range from 0 days over most of the Highveld to 2 days in the lower-lying eastern parts.

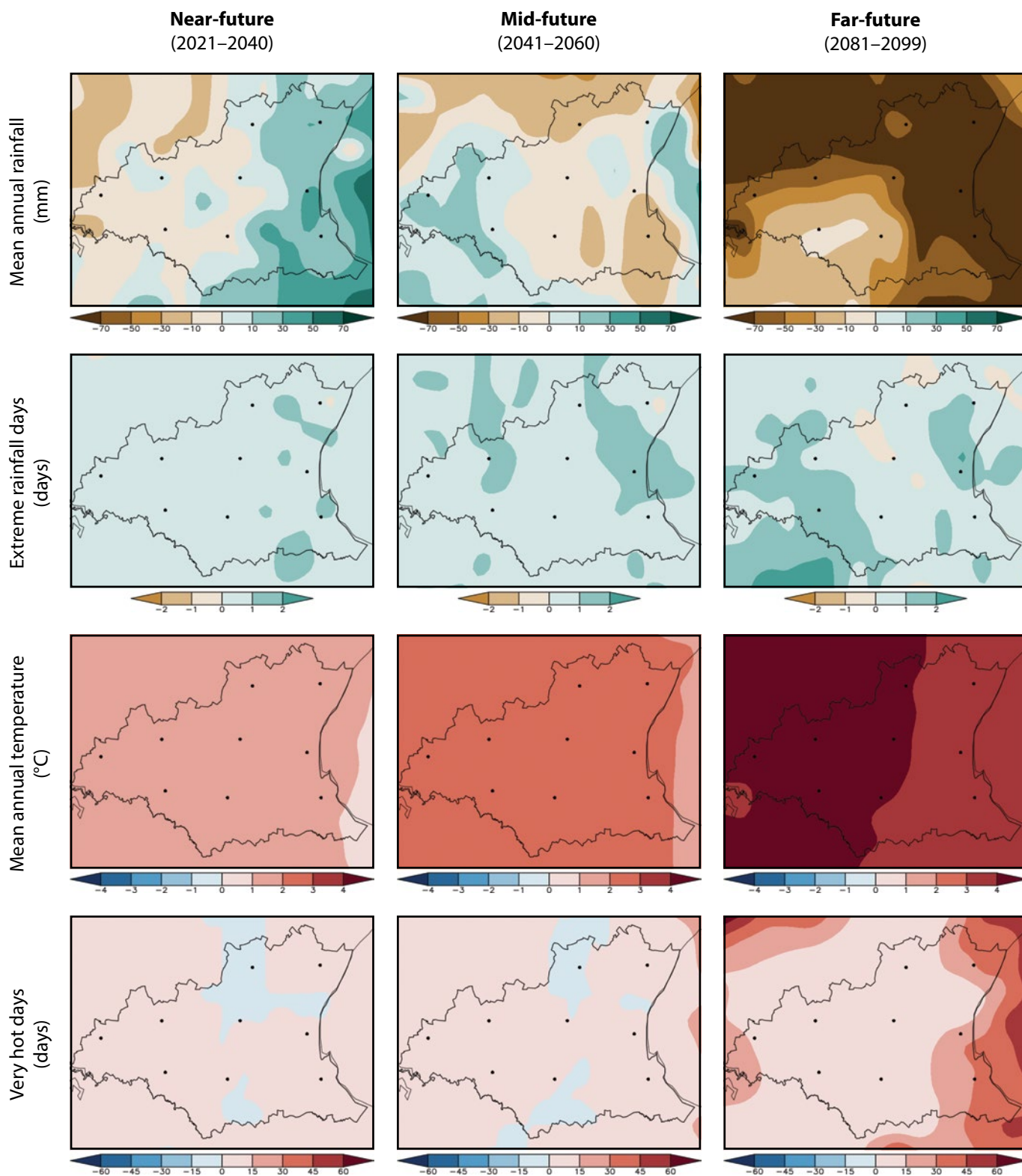


Observed climate trends (overview)

- Observed decrease in mean annual rainfall (*low confidence*).
- Observed increase in the frequency of extreme rainfall events (*low confidence*).
- Observed increase in mean annual temperature and warm extremes (*virtually certain*).
- Observed increases in meteorological and agricultural drought (*low confidence*).

Projected future climate change (overview)

- Projected changes in mean annual rainfall are *uncertain* in the near- and mid-future, but there is *high confidence* in decreases in the far-future.
- Projected increase in the frequency of extreme rainfall events into the future (*medium confidence*).
- Projected increase in mean annual temperature and warm extremes (*virtually certain*).
- Projected increase in agricultural and meteorological drought in the far-future (*high confidence*).



Projected climate (detailed)

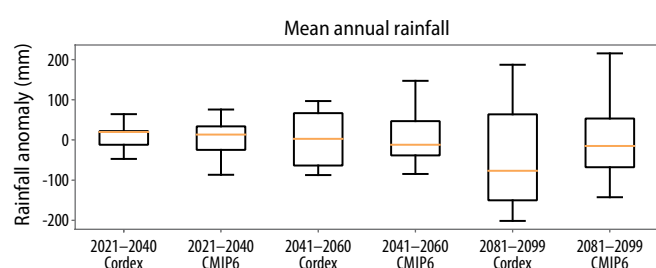
Near- and mid-future

- Projected changes in rainfall in the near-future and mid-future are *uncertain*.
- Projected increase in extreme rainfall events (*likely*).
- Projected increase in temperature and warm extremes (*virtually certain*).
- Projected increase in agricultural and meteorological drought (*low confidence*).

Far-future

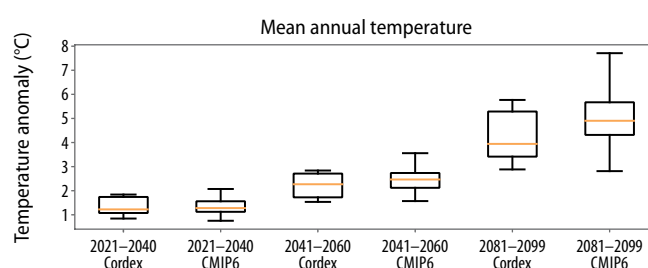
- Projected decrease in rainfall over the entire district (*very likely*).
- Projected increase in extreme rainfall events (*likely*).
- Projected increase in temperature and warm extremes (*virtually certain*); decrease in cold extremes (*likely*).
- Projected increase in agricultural and meteorological drought (*very likely*).

Climate model projections: model agreement and uncertainties



Mean annual rainfall

- Averaged across the district, projected rainfall changes for the near- and mid-future are *uncertain*.
- Rainfall in the district is projected to decrease in the far-future under low mitigation scenarios (*very likely*).
- Partially in response to *virtually certain* temperature increases, agricultural drought is to occur more frequently in the far-future (*very likely*).



Mean annual temperature

- Temperature increases averaged across the district in the near-future are *virtually certain* and may be as high as 1.5 °C.
- Under low mitigation, further temperature increases are *virtually certain* and may approach 3.0 °C in the mid-future and 5.5 °C in the far-future.
- Increases in average temperature will be accompanied by increases in warm temperature extremes such as heatwaves and high fire danger days (*virtually certain*).

Citation:

Engelbrecht, F.A., Maviza, A., Steinkopf, J., Vogel, C., Von Maltitz, G., Yose, P. & Barnett, M. 2025. *Sub-national climate change fact sheets for South Africa*. © South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and University of the Witwatersrand – Global Change Institute (WITS-GCI). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16962181>.

This work is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 (Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International).

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.en>.

Contact

- Global Change Institute (GCI), University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. Website: www.wits.ac.za/gci
- South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). Website: www.sanbi.org