

# The role of ecosystems in human adaptation



## Disparities & convergence between CBA and EBA

# Unequal burden and the equity principle

*“Climate change affects us all, but it does not affect us all equally. The poorest and most vulnerable - those who have done the least to contribute to global warming - are bearing the brunt of the impact.”*

- UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon

The UNFCCC’s equity principle acknowledges that:

- ▶ some countries have contributed more than others to the problem
- ▶ some countries are more vulnerable to the impacts of CC than others...
- ▶ ...typically, these are poorer countries that have contributed least to the causes of CC.



# The human cost of climate change

- ▶ Greater food insecurity
- ▶ Greater water stress/scarcity
- ▶ Greater threats to health ... and fewer resources to prevent ill-health
- ▶ A decline in the productivity (and viability) of NR-based livelihoods
- ▶ An increase in the frequency & intensity of natural resource conflicts
- ▶ More “humanitarian disasters”
- ▶ More people on the move in search of safe havens



# The equity principle & implications for adaptation action

- ▶ As per the UNFCCC’s “equity principle,” historical high emitters have agreed to help vulnerable [countries/populations] deal with the costs of climate change...
- ▶ For most southern governments and civil society organisations, this is about dealing with the *human* costs of climate change.
- ▶ CARE and many other development-oriented NGOs believe biodiversity and ecosystem services have a critical role to play in overarching strategies to help people adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.



# Climate change adaptation (CCA)

For CARE and many others, CCA includes:

- ▶ the integration of climate change into development efforts (by ensuring they are resilient to the impacts of climate change, result in minimal GHG emissions, etc.)
- ▶ *targeting* the world's most vulnerable human communities and *focusing* on activities that will make the biggest difference.



# Community-Based Adaptation (CBA)

- ▶ the *goal* of CBA is to build the resilience of individuals, households, communities and societies from the ground up
- ▶ action is based on local priorities (taking into account social heterogeneity)
- ▶ it starts with local knowledge but also seeks to integrate scientific knowledge into decision making processes
- ▶ operates at multiple levels and can be large scale, so long as communities remain at the centre of planning and action



# Community-Based Adaptation (CBA)

CARE sees CBA as a process involving four interrelated components:

- ▶ • The promotion of climate-resilient livelihood strategies, including capacity building for planning and improved risk management;
- ▶ Disaster risk reduction;
- ▶ Capacity strengthening of local civil society and government institutions so that they can provide better support to communities, households and individuals in their adaptation efforts;
- ▶ Advocacy and social mobilization to address the underlying causes of vulnerability, such as gender-based inequality and poor governance.



# Community-Based Adaptation (CBA)

CARE is tackling the challenge of adaptation to climate change in two key ways:

- ▶ Undertaking targeted Community-Based Adaptation (CBA) projects
- ▶ Integrating climate change adaptation into its work in climate-sensitive sectors.



# Community-Based Adaptation (CBA)

The most effective CBA is long-term and:

- ▶ strengthens the resilience of local livelihoods
- ▶ reduces disaster risks
- ▶ creates an enabling environment for effective action at individual, household, and community levels (through good governance, sound environmental stewardship, etc.)
- ▶ improves social equity (i.e. knocks down discriminatory structures that would prevent people from adapting to climate change)



# ecosystems in the context of CBA

- ▶ CBA frequently deals with natural resources (and often prioritises improved NRM)
- ▶ CBA is frequently concerned with the continuing flow of environmental goods and services
- ▶ however, it rarely takes a holistic approach to working with complex ecosystems...



# Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (EBA)

- ▶ Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (EBA) means different things to different people.
- ▶ sometimes, it is about using biodiversity and ecosystem services as part of an overall adaptation strategy to help people adapt to the adverse effects of climate.
- ▶ but, frequently, its about *targeting* the most valuable conservation areas (e.g. Protected Areas) and *focusing* on activities that will reduce the vulnerability of species or biological communities to the impacts of climate change.



# CBA and EBA, side-by-side

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## CBA

- ▶ Targets the most vulnerable human communities
- ▶ Often focuses on activities to reduce the vulnerability of people in marginalised social groups
- ▶ Sometimes incorporates “southern” environmental agendas (e.g. ensuring the continuity of environmental goods and services)
- ▶ Has an explicit social agenda that frequently includes good governance and social equality

## EBA

- ▶ Targets ecosystem services as the foundation to benefiting society, the economy and the environment
- ▶ Focuses on activities to reduce the vulnerability of ecosystems, including securing sustainable access to resources for natural resource dependent communities.
- ▶ Emphasis on conservation and sustainable use of natural resources
- ▶ Has an explicit ecological agenda that must also address sustainable management, access and benefit sharing

# Conclusions

- ▶ EBA and CBA are not the same thing by different names

*However, most of us would agree that:*

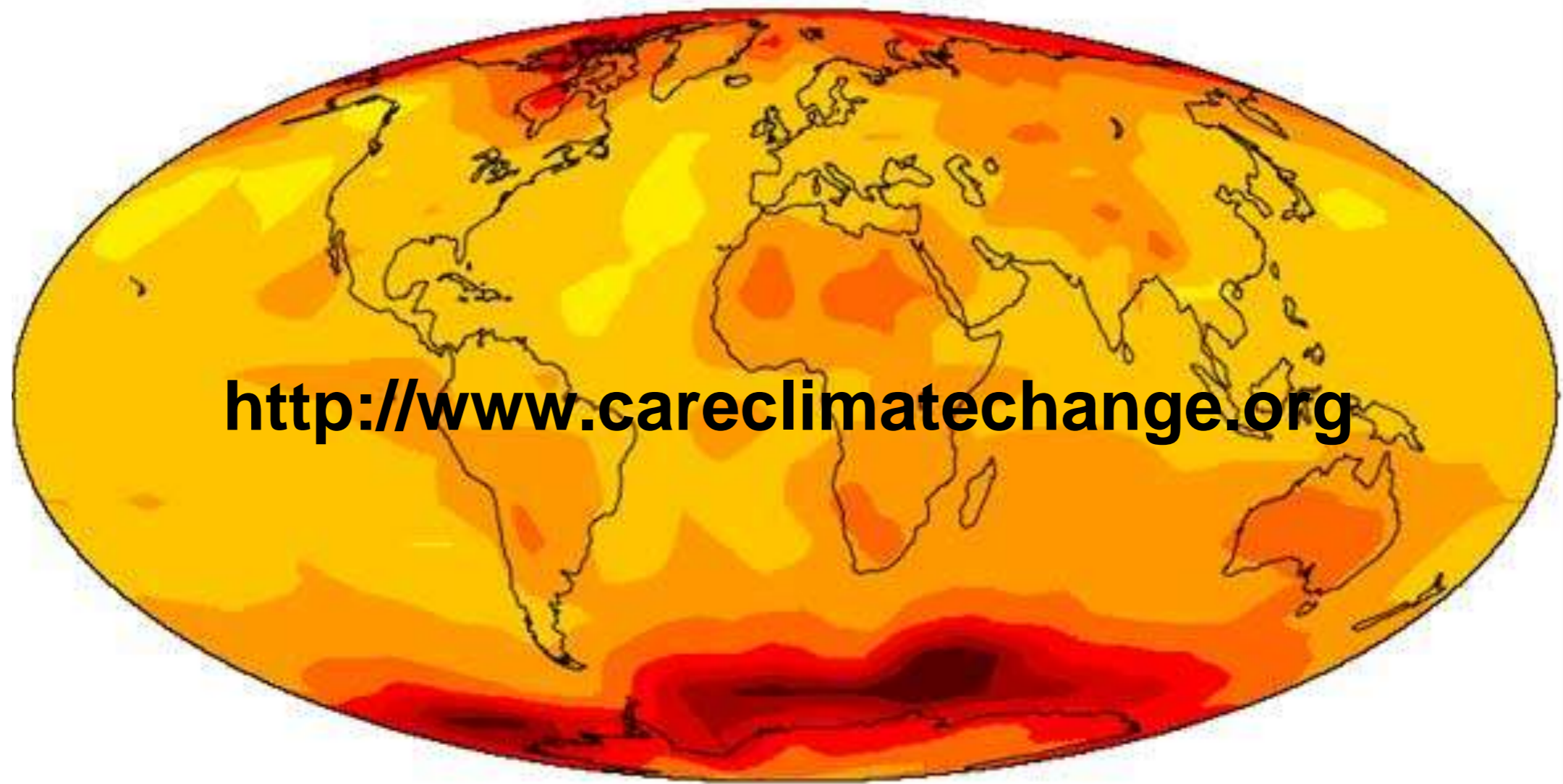
- ▶ an “ecosystem approach,” as a strategy, should be applied to all adaptation responses to ensure they are environmentally sound.
- ▶ in many cases, ecosystem adaptation has an important part to play in CBA
- ▶ and... community-based adaptation has an important role to play in EBA



# Potential implications for this workshop

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- ▶ Communities that are most vulnerable to climate change; are generally very poor, depend on natural resources and occupy areas already prone to shocks such as floods or droughts.
- ▶ Community's indigenous capacities, knowledge and practices of how to cope with climate hazards in the past provide answers for adaptation planning
- ▶ All organizations serious about preparing for climate change need to collaborate to develop common policies that make the synergies between EBA and CBA possible, this will require:
  - ▶ Innovative participatory partnerships between natural resource managers and resource dependent communities to allow complimentary, planning and management for future climate situations
  - ▶ Policy recommendations should be promoted that provide managers and communities with the flexibility, tools and approaches needed to effectively address climate change impacts



<http://www.careclimatechange.org>

Degrees Celsius

