



AN ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE TO COMMERCIAL ARABLE FARMING IN THE EASTERN FREE STATE

Given the importance of agriculture to mountain communities, there has been a global concern about related potential effects of climate change, resulting in substantial research on the sector over the past decade. From existing literature there is consensus that globally, some regions may benefit from climate change whilst others may not. Literature has revealed that the southern African region is among those regions that will face devastating consequences such as extreme droughts triggered by the expected increased frequency of El Nino occurrences. Temperature increases are expected to be more conspicuous at higher altitude than at lower altitude, hence climate change impacts worsened in mountain areas. This study, therefore focuses on areas lying above 1600 meters in Maluti a Phufung, Ditlhabeng and Setsoto administrative districts. Through the analysis of rainfall, temperature, and yield data, the study will establish the impacts of climate change on arable farming in the Eastern Free State mountain areas. Questionnaires and interviews will be used to derive farmers' perceptions on the changing climate.