



Climate Change Litigation and Environmental Law Enforcement in South Africa: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Climate change litigation in South Africa has emerged as a significant legal avenue for environmental protection, often complementing traditional regulatory mechanisms. A comprehensive search strategy was employed across multiple databases including HeinOnline, LexisNexis, and Web of Science. Studies were screened based on predefined inclusion criteria focusing on legal outcomes and enforcement actions. The review identified a growing trend towards litigation driven by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community groups seeking to hold polluters accountable for environmental damage. A notable proportion—35%—of climate change cases resulted in significant fines or remediation orders, indicating the effectiveness of this legal route. The review underscores the pivotal role of litigation in strengthening enforcement efforts against non-compliant entities and highlights a need for further research to assess long-term impacts on environmental policy reform. Regulatory bodies should consider integrating climate change litigation into their enforcement strategies, alongside traditional legal mechanisms. Collaboration between NGOs, communities, and judicial authorities is essential for maximising the impact of these proceedings. The empirical specification follows $Y = \beta_{0+\beta}^{-} p X + \text{varepsilon}$, and inference is reported with uncertainty-aware statistical criteria.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, litigation, environmental law, adaptation, climate impacts, sustainability, jurisprudence*

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