

GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKE – FRIDAYS FOR FUTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PETITION: TAKE IMPORTANT ACTIONS TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

Ghana for that matter Savannah Region is endowed with abundant natural resources that have played very significant roles in diversifying the livelihood of the people. The importance of the savannah ecosystem to the well-being of humans cannot be overstated. Our ecosystems are important for providing us with a broad variety of services and subsistence requirements including food, water, air, shelter, medicines, etc. Without these and many other ecosystem goods and services, life as we know would not be possible. Nature in Gonjaland is viewed as part of our cultural heritage, customs, and tradition and also as a resource that can be utilized to support national economic development while protecting the biodiversity and riparian ecosystem.

In recent times, the unprecedented illegal logging of Rosewood that took place in the landscape was really worrying. Charcoal production which was initially carried out on a small scale, has also recorded a massive surge to the extent that our traditional shea trees are being cut. Tonnes of illegally felled trees and charcoal have been transported out of the region due to lack of good monitoring system. The challenges of open defecation and indiscriminate use and disposal of plastics cannot be overlooked. The above mentioned threats and pressures have and still pose serious risks to the ecological integrity of the region and have greatly undermined the livelihoods of local communities which depend on this resource.

We are experiencing rapid deforestation and severe environmental degradation with the subsequent effects of erosion, loss of soil nutrients leading to very low agriculture productivity. Our water bodies are drying up. Pest and Disease outbreak cannot be left of the hook. The impact of the degrading environment has further resulted in shifting weather patterns that threaten food security and unprecedented climate catastrophe. Let us not underestimate the cost of losing these ecosystem services and the implications it may have on our lives.

Over the years, climate change has become a global headache. Gonjaland in recent times has suffered long period of drought and high temperatures with severe water shortages, little rainfall preceded with strong and frequent thunderstorms. The erratic rainfall pattern coupled with high temperatures make farming which is the core occupation of the people risky and has led to low productivity. As Pope Francis said “We must not forget the grave social consequences of climate change. It is the poorest who suffer the worst consequences”

We acknowledge your efforts geared towards the environment by instituting a ban but unfortunately, this ban has not been effectively enforced. We highly commend your commitment towards regulating unsustainable exploitation of natural resource by reinforcing the already existing traditional ban on logging and charcoal production in Gonjaland.

The urgency of the climate crisis requires a new approach and a just response centered on human rights, equity and justice. We state categorically that the collaborative efforts and decisions to regulate unsustainable exploitation of our

natural resources have not received much commitment and the limitations can be attributed to unwillingness of some of the traditional chiefs.

We, your children and grandchildren are worried for our future. We are worried that our health and wellbeing is threatened. We are worried that we won't get water for use. We are worried that we can't have fertile soils to cultivate our farms. We are worried that our Shea trees are being cut. We are worried that gradually our landscape is becoming a desert. We are also worried that our own children will have to blame us for not taking any action. We therefore humbly request you to be highly vigilant in ensuring that our ecosystem and environment is well protected for generations.

As a Key Stakeholder we humbly request you to ensure that;

1. All the District Assemblies in Savannah Region are informed to take Proactive measures to halt ongoing illegal logging and unsustainable charcoal production.
2. You fully support the Savannah Regional Coordinating Council to ensure that issues of climate change and biodiversity conservation in general are fully mainstreamed in the various districts medium term development plan with clear cut action plans and adequate budget allocations.
3. Pollution of the environment with plastic waste be minimized or stopped if possible.
4. Water bodies are adequately protected. We recommend growing trees around these water bodies and discouraging people from farming at the banks of these water bodies.

5. The voices of women in decision making on natural resources management and governance are recognized -Involving women in decision making will yield more positive results since they are more result oriented and have the knowledge that could be tapped to practically solve these climate challenge.
6. Strengthen stakeholder collaboration in Natural resources management and governance in the region

Thank you



ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB STUDENTS IN DAMONGO:

DAMONGO AGRIC COLLEGE
NDEWURA JAKPA SENIOR HIGH TECHNICAL SCHOOL
ST. ANNES GIRLS SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
DAMONGO GIRLS MODEL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
PRESBY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS "B"
LARABANGA PRIMARY "A" & JHS
MURUGU R/C PRIMARY & JHS
MOLE D/A PRIMARY & JHS
MOGNORI D/A PRIMARY
FALAHYAT PRIMARY "A"
BAWENA D/A PRIMARY & JHS

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**1. Savannah Regional Minister
Damongo**

**2. The Overlord, Gonja Traditional Council
Damongo**

For further Information

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