

# 2022 GHANA BUDGET STATEMENT: Any CARE for the Environment, Ecosystem Services and SDGs?

This assessment looks at how far Ghana government's key development programmes prioritised in the 2022 budget impact and depend on the country's natural resources and ecosystem services. It also assesses how far government's 2022 budget invests in protection and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystem services, how it builds climate change resilience and mitigation capacities, and how it supports poor rural communities to overcome poverty and environmental degradation.

- Planting for Food and Jobs
- Planting for Export and Rural Development
- Rearing for Food and Jobs
- Fisheries and aquaculture development
- National Afforestation Programme
- Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication (IPEP), including water and sanitation, rural markets, One Village One Dam (1V1D)
- One District One Factory
- Water and sanitation (WATSAN)
- Youth programmes (National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (NEIP) and Nation Builders Corp, NABCo)
- Integrated Aluminium Initiative (IAI)
- Community Mining Programme
- Road and rail infrastructure
- Renewable energy
- Oil and gas development
- Education
- Health

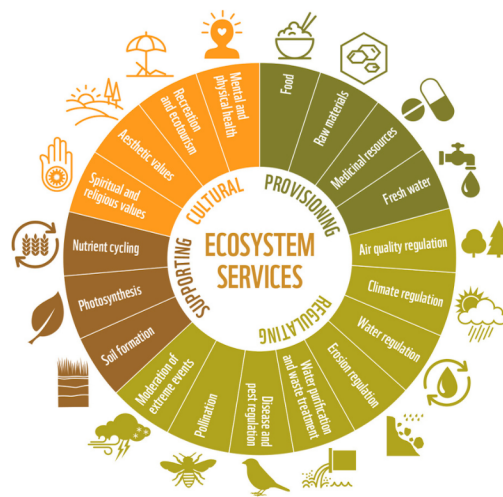
## Government's development programmes: Their impacts and dependencies

### 1.1. Govt's forest programmes

- Heavy dependence and impacts on Ecosystem Services (ES): e.g. clean water, good local climate and air quality, moderation of extreme events, erosion prevention and more
- Afforestation and reforestation MUST include diverse indigenous species to maximise ES benefits e.g. habitats for species, pollination, biological control
- Target bare slopes to control erosion
- NOT plantations due to restricted species and low/short-term ecosystem benefits

### 1.2. Govt's mining programmes

- Devastating impacts on many ES
- Bauxite mining in Ghana's forests especially destructive, and will disrupt the delicate balance of biodiversity and ES
- Locations for community gold mining schemes have so far been forests or farmlands so social and environmental impacts are huge
- Government's promise is that community and bauxite mining will be sustainable
- Civil society must monitor to hold government to account on this promise
- Mining companies must be made to pay full rehabilitation bonds



### 1.3. Govt's food production programmes

- All government's farming and fisheries progs are highly dependent on ES
- Crop farming in particular e.g. climate & air quality regulation, moderation of extreme events, erosion prevention, maintenance of soil fertility, pollination, biological control, & fresh water.
- However, current farming practices also damage these services, particularly soils and biodiversity due to chemical pesticides and fertilizer use
- Farming is undermining its own sustainability
- Farmers need training to use sustainable alternative inputs and techniques.

### 1.4. Govt's WATSAN programmes

- WATSAN's biggest dependence is on the availability of clean safe water.
- BUT there is very limited attention to protecting vital ecosystems e.g. forests that secure the headwaters of Ghana's critical water resources
- If the headwaters are not protected then the water resources will eventually dry up
- Our assessment shows clean water is the top service for Ghana's development dependencies and impacts as it cuts across almost all Ghana's development programmes.
- Its proper protection is vital.

### 1.5. Govt's energy programmes

- Energy production depends on natural resources and has broad impacts
- COP26 agreed "the phasedown of unabated coal power and phase-out of fossil fuel subsidies"
- However, renewable energy is creating new pressures due to the need for different resources (e.g. lithium, cobalt, aluminium, copper)
- Ghana's energy demand is rising so we must maximize energy efficiency and minimize consumption e.g.
  - 1.integrate natural cooling techniques in new buildings
  - 2.Fit solar panels to all new buildings coupled with energy efficiency measures.

### 1.6. Grey infrastructure development

- New infrastructure is critical to fill gaps for life saving social amenities and industrial development, but grey infrastructure impacts negatively on ES, e.g. air pollution, raw materials depletion, obstruction of nature's flood control systems
- Ghana must foster and promote green cities for co-habitation of people and nature by creating spaces, facilities and systems that enhance ES

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## 2. Ecosystem services: Which are the most important for Ghana's development programmes?

### 2.1. Most critical ecosystem services

#### Water

- The most impacted service and the second most depended on
- But Ghana's development programmes damage its quality, quantity and availability
- Bauxite mining will cause toxic heavy metals to seep into mountain streams damaging the health of people and wildlife
- Toxic heavy metals cannot be cleaned from water to make it safe again.

#### Moderation of extreme events

- The most depended-upon ES for government's development programmes
- Farming, fisheries, transport infrastructure, buildings, electricity transmission, industry, our safety, and more is disrupted by extreme events
- Forests, wetlands and mangroves help moderate extreme events and protect us from their impacts, so they must be secured, especially as extreme events increase with CC



### 2.2. Other critical ES

- Raw materials important as inputs
- Erosion prevention for farming and protecting homes, communities, infrastructure and construction
- Soil fertility maintenance for farming and forestry
- Local climate and air quality regulation for farming, forestry, and health

These are all damaged by Ghana's development programmes e.g. mining and industries cause toxic dust pollution and emissions; industrial agriculture causes erosion and damages soil fertility maintenance services

- Food services – both farmed and wildlife – are impacted by programmes that take over or damage lands that communities farm or collect wild foods
- Wastewater treatment critical for human health and for government programmes that produce wastewater or are damaged by it

#### Regulating & supporting services:

- Maintenance of genetic diversity, habitats for species, carbon sequestration, pollination, and biological control:
  1. Dependent programmes e.g. crop and livestock farming, cocoa farming, forestry, plantations, and fisheries
  2. Impacting programmes: e.g. any that damage natural environments, especially small and large scale mining, IAI, infrastructure, oil and gas, industrial monoculture farming
- Medicinal resources are affected by the same impacts.





#### Key messages: Fisheries

- Government recognizes decline in fish resources are declining, and that species critical for local livelihoods are overexploited.
- Commercial fishing trawlers (mostly foreign) including saiko are damaging communities' livelihoods, incomes and food security, leading to conflict.
- No budget identified for addressing illegal fishing in 2022
- It requires urgent and innovative efforts to get the sector on track towards sustainability
- It is vital that government adequately supports monitoring and enforcement of the sector and imposes penalties high enough to be effective deterrents, especially on saiko activities.

#### Key messages: Water supply

- Access to safe water is vital for people's health and welfare
- But water supply projects cannot be sustained unless the upstream sources of water that feed them are properly secured from any damaging developments
- That means the forests and ecosystems that protect their headwaters must be fully and permanently protected
- If this is not done, the water service supply projects that government and partners build will one day run dry

#### Key messages: Energy

- Solar energy is a win-win for Ghana and should be expanded to all off-grid communities to secure energy access.
- Government's pursuit of nuclear energy is deeply worrying because, it is not emission free, over its lifecycle it releases 3.5 times more CO2 per kilowatt-hour than solar photovoltaics, 15 times more than windfarms, 29 times more than hydropower.
- Nuclear power plants are also 4 times more expensive than wind or solar, and take 5 times as long to build, requiring 15-20 years lead time for a new plant.
- And the waste remains radioactive for hundreds of thousands to millions of years
- Ghana does not need nuclear power
- Ghana must stop the offshore oil drilling in VR and invest in green alternatives.



#### Key messages: Green and circular economy

- Ban single use plastics immediately. This is the single most vital action government can take to end the threat of plastic waste
- Urge companies to implement circular economy for their products that ensures companies' bottles are returned to them to recycle into new bottles
- Companies must cover the cost of the pollution they are causing.
- Raise awareness about recycling options for water sachets and plastic bottles
- Trial adding a small charge on plastic bottles redeemable when the bottle is returned. It will also incentivise people to collect from the environment to get the deposit on return.
- Establish more plastic collection points where households can deposit plastic waste for recycling.



#### Key messages: Climate change

- Government promises a low carbon economy but continues to cut the forests down and drill for oil

#### Mitigation

- Stop cutting trees down. Protect the remaining forests from all developments
- Shift the economy away from fossil fuels to renewable energies
- Fully enforce laws that control vehicle emissions. This is also critical for people's health

#### Adaptation and resilience

- Train farmers in organic farming, agroecology and agroforestry techniques to build resilience and adaptation capacity
- Support communities with climate change adaptation and resilience capacity building
- Protect and replant mangrove forests and stop any developments that would damage them.

#### Recommendations

- Fulfil government's own commitment of no more mining (including of bauxite) in forests reserves
- Increase monitoring of Ghana's remaining natural forests to control illegal and unsustainable activities
- Set new logging limits to ensure it is both sustainable and legal
- Root out corruption in ALL sectors; it is a huge contributory factor to the persistence of environmental crimes
- Protect watersheds, watershed ecosystems and all water bodies from damaging developments. They should be completely off-limits.
- Strengthen monitoring and enforcement of Ghana's fishing sector, especially foreign trawlers, and fully enforce penalties.
- When Ghana's fisheries are gone, foreign fishers will move on. Ghana's fishermen cannot. Protect Ghana's fisheries for the livelihoods of Ghana's fisherfolks.
- Support all farmers with skills in conservation agriculture, agroecology and agroforestry
- Protect existing NbS to climate change e.g. forests and mangroves, nurture and restore degraded ones, re-establish lost ones, and establish new ones where communities need protection.
- Implement Community Mining Programme extremely carefully and NOT on community farmland or in forests
- Support green economy initiatives
- Ban single use plastics.



#### Cultural services

- Recreation, aesthetic appreciation, tourism, spiritual experience, and sense of place are all critical for people's physical, mental and emotional health
- These are damaged by any programme that destroys natural spaces of peace and tranquility such as forests, waterfalls, rivers, mountains, lakes, wetlands, beaches

#### Key messages: land, farming & climate change

- Farmers urgently need skills in climate change adaptation and resilience. If not, Ghana's food security will quickly decline.
- Government must support farmers with organic farming and agroforestry as they are the best solutions for building farmers' resilience
- Government's proposed Agricultural Land Information Bank (GhLIB):
- It is VITAL that communities' land rights, access, and use are NOT undermined in ANY WAY.
- If not, farmers who do not own or have secure tenancy for their farm lands could be victims of land grabs and lose their access, with grave impacts for local and national food security.

#### Key messages: Forests & biodiversity

- Government's tree planting and restoration of lost forest cover are critical but the top priority should be protecting Ghana's remaining natural forests.
- Afforestation must mimic the diversity of the natural forest, NOT plantations.
- Plantations are NOT forests. They do not have the diversity of natural forests and the overall aim is to cut them down for income
- Government's forest and biodiversity plans are inconsistent e.g. Atewa Forest – boasts of CSIR discovery of the Atewa slippery frog AND wants to mine bauxite in the frog's only habitat in the world
- The only way forward to ensure consistency is to immediately stop plans to mine bauxite in the Atewa Forest so stakeholders can come together to plan the green future for the forest

#### Key messages: Community mining

- Community mining will ensure more of the value of Ghana's gold resources benefit local people and Ghana's economy than largescale
- But there are flaws: key stakeholders have been ignored, so we urge government to:
- Immediately halt all existing and planned community mining activities
- Hold inclusive stakeholder engagements with all groups living around the proposed community mining sites
- Implement FPIC. No mining should go ahead without this
- Establish an elaborate regulatory and compliance mechanism that ensures no damaging impacts on forests, water bodies, farmlands or communities
- Embed the Polluter Pays Principle to ensure mined sites are restored to productive functions or other suitable uses
- Without this, community mining will just be an exercise of rebranding but as destructive as galamsey.