

# CLIMATE WATCH

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Joy news Journalist  
Erastus Asare Donkor

## The Cost of Galamsey: Ghana Loses 35,000 Hectares of Forest Cover



Kwame Anane  
Frempong, Executive  
Director of PACC,

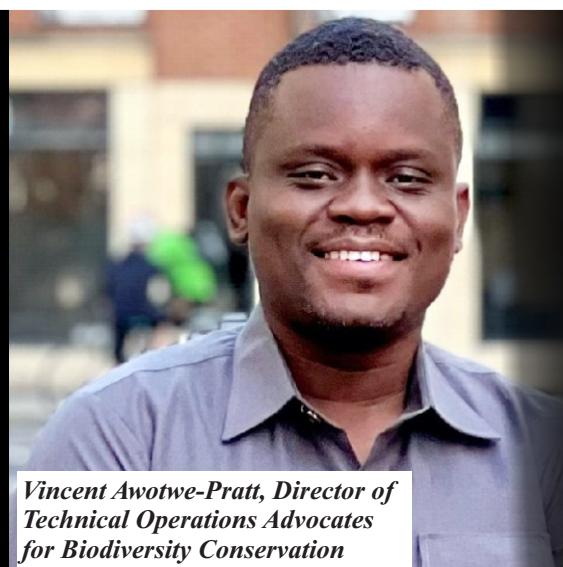
## Experts Call for a Holistic Approach to Address Environmental Degradation

# Supreme Court Judge Calls for Strict Enforcement of the Environmental Protection Act

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Supreme Court  
Judge, Justice  
Dennis Dominie  
Adjei



Vincent Awotwe-Pratt, Director of  
Technical Operations Advocates  
for Biodiversity Conservation

## Ghana to Host World Bamboo Day 2025: A Celebration of Sustainability and Innovation




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## EDITORIAL

**A**s the world faces the escalating climate crisis, Ghana's Environmental Protection Act 2025 stands as a beacon of hope for sustainable development and environmental stewardship. However, the effectiveness of this landmark legislation depends on one critical factor: strict enforcement. In this editorial, we argue that a steadfast commitment to enforcing the Act is not only a legal necessity but also a moral imperative for protecting the health of our planet and future generations. The Environmental Protection Act 2025 offers a comprehensive framework designed to tackle the pressing environmental challenges facing Ghana. It establishes vital mechanisms such as the Environmental Protection Authority, the Ghana Carbon Registry, and the Mitigation Fund. However, without rigorous

# Strict Enforcement:

## The Key to Unlocking Ghana's Sustainable Development

enforcement, these provisions risk becoming mere rhetoric. Strict enforcement is essential to ensure that corporations and individuals comply with environmental standards, mitigate pollution, and adopt sustainable practices. We strongly believe that strict enforcement will:

**1. Protect Public Health:** Environmental degradation directly impacts public health. Air and water pollution, improper waste management, and pesticide misuse are just a few practices that can lead to severe health issues. Strict enforcement of the Act

will safeguard the health of Ghanaians, especially vulnerable populations.

**2. Combat Climate Change:** Ghana's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting sustainable development is integral to the Act. Effective enforcement will enable the country to achieve its climate goals, contributing to global efforts against climate change.

**3. Promote Sustainable Development:** Environmental protection and economic growth are not mutually exclusive.

In fact, sustainable practices can drive innovation, create green jobs, and ensure long-term economic viability. By enforcing the Act, Ghana can pave the way for a sustainable future. At Climate Watch, we believe that the strict enforcement of the Environmental Protection Act 2025 is crucial for Ghana's environmental sustainability and climate resilience. We urge all stakeholders—government officials, businesses, civil society organizations, and citizens—to collaborate in ensuring that the Act's provisions are rigorously enforced.

This collective responsibility requires vigilance, transparency, and accountability. The Environmental Protection Act 2025 is a testament to Ghana's dedication to environmental stewardship. However, the true measure of this commitment lies in its enforcement. By prioritizing strict enforcement, Ghana can set a precedent for environmental responsibility and sustainable development in Africa. Let us rise to the challenge and protect our environment for ourselves and future generations. Together for a Greener Tomorrow.

# Supreme Court Judge Calls for Strict Enforcement of the Environmental Protection Act

*Report By: Ishmael Barfi*

**S**upreme Court Judge Justice Dennis Dominic Adjei has commended the passage of the Environmental Protection Act 2025 and has urged its strict enforcement to safeguard Ghana's environment for future generations. Speaking at the two-day Environmental Education and Lifelong Learning (EELL) 2025 Conference, Justice Adjei emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts in addressing environmental degradation.

"The Environmental Protection Authority, established under this Act, will play a crucial role in overseeing environmental protection, climate change, and sustainable development," Justice Adjei asserted. "We must develop and integrate climate change strategies into our national, sectoral, and district plans to protect our economy, ecology, and communities from the long-term effects of climate change," he added. The conference, held at the British Council under the theme "Sustainable Futures: Bridging African Traditions

with Modern Land Use in the Face of Corporatization," was organized by the Pan African Centre for Climate Policy (PACCP). Justice Adjei highlighted key provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 2025, including the Ghana Carbon Registry, designed to track greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate carbon credit trading—an important tool for climate change mitigation. He also discussed the Mitigation Fund established under this Act to provide financial support for climate change mitigation projects and initiatives.

"This fund will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable development," he stated. Regarding pesticide control and management, Justice Adjei reiterated the importance of regulating the formulation, production, storage, transport, use, and advertising of pesticides to minimize their impact on the environment and human health. On the subject of hazardous waste management, he noted that the Act regulates the handling, transport, and management of hazardous waste, ensuring that environmentally sound

practices are utilized to protect both the environment and public health. Justice Adjei urged stakeholders to collaborate in combating environmental degradation and fostering sustainable development. "If we are mindful of our health, we should also consider the health of future generations," he remarked, adding, "The fight against environmental degradation requires a united effort, and we must come together to protect our environment for the sake of those to come." In conclusion, the Pan African Centre for Climate Policy's landmark conference on environmental issues provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss the environmental challenges facing Africa. With its commitment to making a positive impact on the environment, the center is well-positioned to play a key role in promoting environmental sustainability and climate change mitigation across the continent.

# The Cost of Galamsey: Ghana Loses 35,000 Hectares of Forest Cover

By: Ishmael Barfi

**E**nvironmental journalist and climate change activist Erastus Asare Donkor has raised concerns about the devastating impact of illegal mining, known as galamsey, on Ghana's forest reserves.

According to Erastus Asare Donkor, 35,000 hectares of forest cover have been destroyed in the past 8 to 10 years, with 44 forest reserves invaded by illegal miners. Speaking at the Environmental Education and Lifelong Learning (EELL) 2025 Conference, the Joy News journalist Asare Donkor expressed his alarm over the severe consequences of galamsey, which include loss of biodiversity, pollution of rivers, and disruption of ecosystems. "We are not serious about protecting our existence from illegal mining, or we just don't care," he stated. He added, "If there is any country that truly cares about its forests and environment, we should be taking drastic measures to stop this by now." The two-day conference, held at the British Council under the theme "Sustainable Futures: Bridging African Traditions with Modern Land Use in the Face of Corporatization," was organized by the Pan African Centre for Climate Policy (PACCP). Donkoh emphasized that the destruction of forest reserves is not merely an environmental issue; it also threatens the livelihoods of communities that depend on these forests for survival. "We are negatively impacting the communities that rely on these forest reserves," he noted. To address this issue, Donkoh calls for urgent measures to combat galamsey, which include robust enforcement and regulation. He suggests that the government identify specific forests for

mining, if necessary, and allow companies to bid for the opportunity to mine using environmentally friendly methods. Additionally, he advocates for strengthening the Forestry Commission by providing them with the necessary resources to protect forest reserves, establishing duty posts at forest

entry points to monitor and prevent illegal mining, and revoking the Minerals and Mining (Amendment) Act, 2019 (Act 995) in favor of creating a new law with detailed provisions for the protection of forest reserves. While commending the government for initiating

operations to reclaim affected areas and promote sustainable forest management, Donkoh stressed that more needs to be done to address the scale and complexity of the problem. "A collective effort from all stakeholders, including the government, traditional leaders, and the media, is necessary to ensure the long-term

sustainability of Ghana's forest reserves," he reiterated. The destruction of Ghana's forest reserves poses a serious threat to the country's ecosystems and natural resources. It requires a united effort from all stakeholders to ensure their long-term sustainability.

## Ghana to Host World Bamboo Day 2025: A Celebration of Sustainability and Innovation

Report By:  
Ishmael Barfi

**G**hana is set to become a hub for sustainability and innovation as the Advocates for Biodiversity Conservation (ABC) announce the country's hosting of World Bamboo Day 2025.

This celebration is scheduled to take place from September 16 to 18, 2025, at the University of Ghana campus in Accra. The event promises to be a landmark gathering, bringing together youth, artisans, policymakers, private sector representatives, and environmental leaders under the theme "Bamboo for Climate, Skills, and Youth: A Future Rooted in Green Gold." The aim of this event is to highlight the multifaceted

benefits of bamboo as a climate-smart, economically viable, and socially inclusive resource. Participants will have the opportunity to explore the potential of bamboo in driving sustainable development and climate resilience through a series of activities, including workshops, showcases, policy dialogues, and exhibitions. World Bamboo Day is celebrated annually on September 18 to raise awareness about the importance of bamboo in our ecosystem and its role in promoting sustainable development. According to Vincent Awotwe-Pratt, Director of Technical Operations, bamboo can play a critical role in Ghana's journey toward a sustainable future. "By harnessing the power of bamboo, we can create

green jobs, promote sustainable livelihoods, and contribute to the country's economic growth while protecting the environment," he emphasized. He also explained that bamboo plays a crucial role in protecting and restoring natural ecosystems. It absorbs more carbon dioxide and produces more oxygen than many other plants. Additionally, bamboo supports sustainable economic development, creates new industries, empowers local communities, preserves traditional uses, and promotes cultural significance, fostering global unity and a shared responsibility for the environment. Regarding the upcoming World Bamboo Day 2025, he revealed that the event will feature various activities designed to inspire innovation, foster

collaboration, and drive policy change. These will include a youth climate and bamboo workshop, a bamboo skills showcase, stakeholder dialogues on bamboo policy, and a Green Gold Fair. The Advocates for Biodiversity Conservation (ABC) invite organizations and individuals to partner with them in celebrating World Bamboo Day 2025. By supporting this event, partners can demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, engage with key stakeholders, and contribute to the development of a greener economy. For more information on World Bamboo Day 2025 and sponsorship opportunities, please contact the Advocates for Biodiversity Conservation (ABC) at +233 24 324 2859. Let's work together towards a sustainable future for all.





## Experts Call for a Holistic Approach to Address Environmental Degradation

Report by: Ishmael Barfi

**E**xperts gathered at the Pan African Centre for Climate Policy's (PACCP) landmark conference on environmental issues highlighted the necessity of a holistic approach to tackling environmental degradation in Africa, particularly in Ghana. The two-day Environmental Education and Lifelong Learning (EELL) 2025 Conference focused on land use mismanagement and corporatization. Held at the British Council on 24th-25th July, 2025 under the theme "Sustainable Futures: Bridging African Traditions with Modern Land Use in the Face of Corporatization," brought together experts from academia, civil society, and the media to discuss and take action on pressing environmental challenges facing Africa. Kwame Anane Frempong, Executive Director of PACCP, noted that the conference is part of a broader initiative to promote environmental sustainability and climate change mitigation. "We are not taking seriously the erosion of our existence caused by illegal mining, or perhaps we just don't care," Frempong remarked, emphasizing the need for collective action against environmental degradation. The conference underscored the importance of a holistic approach to addressing environmental issues, which involves collaboration among traditional leaders, civil society, and the media. Frempong stressed the need to empower local communities and organizations to take action against environmental degradation. "If people understand the ripple effects of illegal activities on their land and the subsequent impact on their health, they will take action," he stated.

The Pan African Centre for Climate Policy aims to partner with organizations and institutions to promote environmental awareness and action. The center plans to hold the conference annually in Accra, with the next event scheduled for 2026. It also seeks to collaborate with partners to disseminate information and increase awareness about environmental issues affecting Africa. The conference generated actionable ideas and focused on translating research findings into practical, scalable solutions. It provided a platform for experts to share their knowledge and experiences while facilitating networking and partnership building among participants. Frimpong called on stakeholders to work together to address illegal mining and its environmental impact reinforcing "We need to build capacity and empower our local communities". To achieve this, we must support organizations and institutions that operate at the grassroots level," he asserted. Regarding future plans for PACCP, Frimpong shared that the center will continue its efforts to promote environmental sustainability and climate change mitigation, working with partners to disseminate information and raise awareness about environmental issues in Africa. At the conference, Ghanaian environmental hero and Joy News journalist Erastus Asare Donkor, recognized for his extensive reporting on illegal mining, received the 2025 Environmental Heroes Award. In his acceptance speech, Donkor highlighted the devastating impact of illegal mining on Ghana's forest reserves, pointing out that over 35,000 hectares of forest cover have been destroyed in the past 8 to 10 years, and 44 forest reserves have been invaded by illegal miners.

*Continued on page 8 ...*

## Ghana Advances Climate Change and Health Vulnerability Assessment

**C**limate change is increasingly recognized as one of the greatest health threats of the 21st century. Climate risks are increasing, and Ghana is no exception.

From deadly heatwaves, erratic rainfall, flooding to rising cases of climate-sensitive diseases, the climate crisis will exert additional pressures on the country's health and social care systems.

Climate change is directly contributing to humanitarian emergencies from heatwaves, wildfires, floods, drought, tropical storms and hurricanes and they are increasing in scale, frequency, and intensity. Research shows that 3.6 billion people already live in areas highly susceptible to climate change.

Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250 000 additional deaths per year, from under nutrition, malaria, diarrhea, and heat stress alone. In response to these compounding risks, World Health Organization (WHO), with support from the United Kingdom Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (UKFCDO) and partners supported the Ministry of Health/Ghana Health Service to undertake a health vulnerability and adaptation to climate change assessment.

The assessment sought to identify vulnerability to health risks, health system capacities and adaptive capacities to response to climate related disease risk.

The Ministry of Health with WHO convened the first, in a series of stakeholder validation workshops, on a draft of Ghana's harmonized Climate Change and Health Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment.

The workshop brought together policymakers, researchers, civil society, and development partners to review findings and provide inputs towards finalizing the assessment, which is expected to guide the development of Ghana's Health National Adaptation Plan (HNAP).

Dr. Frank Lule, WHO Officer in Charge in Ghana, emphasized the importance of the harmonized assessment for building a climate-resilient health system.

"This assessment is a vital tool that helps us understand how climate change is affecting the health of Ghanaians—from increased disease burden to impact on service delivery—and how we can adapt. WHO remains committed to working with Ghana and partners to ensure the health sector is not only protected but also proactive in the face of climate change", he stated.

The Climate Change and Health Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment consolidates multiple sectoral assessments and projections of the impact of climate change on health into a unified national framework. It highlights regional health vulnerabilities, identifies climate-sensitive diseases, and recommends adaptive strategies. It also aims to provide a baseline to integrate health into Ghana's broader climate adaptation efforts under the Paris Agreement.

Enyonam Azumah, Team Leader, Human Development from the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (UKFCDO), reiterated the importance of collaborative planning. "UK FCDO Ghana is delighted to have partnered with the Ministry of Health, Ghana Health Service, World Bank, WHO, and all of you to support this harmonised assessment. Building adaptation into the health system and across sectors

means starting now, and this analysis will give us the evidence base to effectively target our efforts and ensure health is reflected across Ghana's efforts to combat climate change", she said. As the health impact of climate change becomes more pronounced, the Climate Change and Health Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment offers a critical evidence base for Ghana to prioritize interventions, improve coordination across sectors, and protect vulnerable populations. Representing the Ministry of Health, Mr Ernest Owusu Sekyere, the Head of Planning and Budget, MoH added, "this policy frameworks will highlight the health sector's action plan for climate change adaptation for the medium term and serve as a springboard for accessing global climate funding mechanism for health resilience initiatives". The validation process included expert reviews, stakeholder consultations, and region disaggregated data analysis. Participants examined risks, reviewed, and proposed context-specific solutions, and discussed how to mainstream climate resilience into existing health and development strategies. This effort signals a major step forward in Ghana's climate and health agenda—one that ensures policy decisions are informed by science, shaped by inclusive dialogue, and guided by a commitment to equity and sustainability. Source: <https://www.afro.who.int/countries/ghana/news/ghana-advances-climate-change-and-health-vulnerability-assessment>



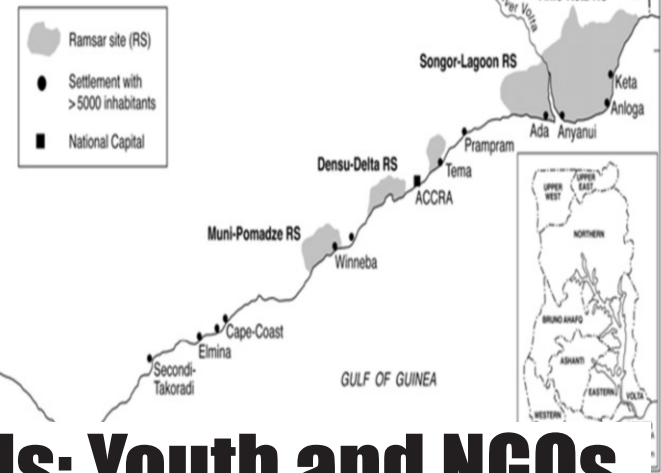


FEATURE



Volunteering with SYND Ghana as part of their Mangrove Restoration Project at Wasakuse, Greater Accra.

Map of Ghana showing the five designated coastal wetlands (Ramsar sites)



(Youth-NREG) initiative, we empower young people to participate meaningfully in environmental governance. I'm proud to share that between 2024 and 2025, SYND planted over 5,000 mangrove seedlings in Ada Foah, within the Songor Ramsar Site, as part of a mangrove restoration project. This effort aims to reverse environmental degradation, support biodiversity, and strengthen community resilience to climate impacts. Let us stop seeing wetlands as wastelands. They are living systems, full of life and potential—critical for biodiversity, climate resilience, and local livelihoods. I call on government agencies, traditional authorities, NGOs, youth, and all citizens to recognize the value of wetlands and act collectively to protect them. To learn more or support wetland conservation initiatives in Ghana, please reach out to SYND or visit [www.syndgh.org](http://www.syndgh.org).

# Wetlands Are Not Wastelands: Youth and NGOs Lead the Fight to Protect Ghana's Wetlands

**O**n 3rd July 2025, I had the privilege of presenting to my class on the implementation and enforcement of the Ramsar Convention in Ghana.

This presentation provided an opportunity to reflect on the critical importance of wetlands and the growing threats they face in Ghana.

Ghana, a signatory to the Ramsar Convention since 1988, is home to six Ramsar Sites: Densu Delta, Sakumo Lagoon, Songor Lagoon, Keta Lagoon Complex, Muni-Pomadze, and Owabi Wildlife Sanctuary. These internationally recognized wetlands support biodiversity, host migratory birds, sustain fisheries, and provide flood control and water purification for surrounding communities.

Wetlands are not empty spaces—they are vital climate buffers. They store carbon, absorb floodwaters, and protect coastlines from erosion and storm surges.

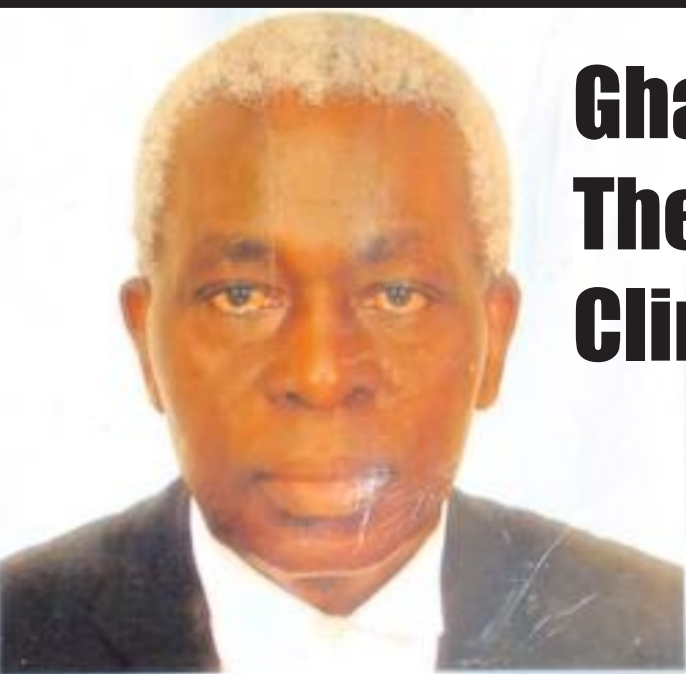
As the climate crisis escalates, these ecosystems offer nature-based solutions that help us adapt and survive. Destroying wetlands means dismantling our natural climate defenses. Despite their importance, wetlands in Ghana are increasingly under threat from:

- Encroachment for housing and agriculture
- Sand mining and mangrove deforestation
- Plastic pollution and poor waste management
- Weak enforcement of environmental regulations
- Fragmented governance and low

public awareness further undermine conservation efforts. As a young advocate, I've seen how non-state actors are driving grassroots action to protect wetlands:

Hen Mpoano, a respected coastal NGO, is working with local communities to restore mangrove forests and promote sustainable coastal management through education and policy dialogue.

At the Strategic Youth Network for Development (SYND), where I serve as a youth advocate under the Youth in Natural Resource and Environmental Governance



Mr. George Ahadzie, Executive Director of The Green Earth Organization (GEO)

Report By: Lovelace Opoku-Agyemang

**G**hanaians felt the direct effects of climate change and for that matter, must champion the crusade on combating it. Ghanaians should equip themselves with the current communications and knowledge on climate change in order to serve as agents of change in their various communities.

## Ghanaians Must Champion The Crusade On Combating Climate Change

The Executive Director of the Green Earth Organisation (GEO), Mr. George Ahadzie made these remarks with the entire staff of the Organisation when speaking to the Climate Change newspaper in an exclusive interview at his office in Nsawam recently. He said the government should ensure that the existing laws protecting the

environment should be fully enforced and called on the government to increase funding for more research into activities pertaining to the sustenance of the environment. The Executive Director further said that the government should make available resources for public education, stressing that laws banning the importation of second-hand goods like refrigerators, air conditioners with CFC gases that have negative impact on the environment should be enforced or implemented.

The Organisation hinted that the government should fund the production of bio-degradable packaging materials to replace the polythene, adding that Ghanaians must engage to undertake restoration activities that are tree planting. The Organisation noted that Ghanaians need to constantly be reminded of climate change issues and the role they can play in mitigating the effects since they have the ideas, creativity of energy to protect and restore the environment. He mentioned the efforts the GEO is making to bring to the fore issues about climate change, especially its impact on Ghana to the level of young people, youth and students. He emphasised the negative environmental impacts on climate change such as the recent floods in Ghana, where human lives were lost and properties worth millions of cedis were destroyed. E- mail address: [opukulovelace1@yahoo.com](mailto:opukulovelace1@yahoo.com)





# The Role of Technology in Sustainable Living

**I**n today's rapidly evolving world, the need for sustainable living has never been more urgent.

As we face the challenges of climate change, resource depletion, and environmental degradation, technology has emerged as a powerful tool in driving sustainable solutions. From renewable energy sources to smart cities, technological innovations are reshaping how we live, work, and interact with the environment. Here's how technology plays a key role in promoting sustainable living.

## 1. Renewable Energy Solutions

One of the most significant contributions of technology to sustainability is in the energy sector.

Renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and hydropower have become more accessible and efficient due to advancements in technology. Solar panels, wind turbines, and energy storage systems are now more affordable and efficient than ever before, making them viable alternatives to fossil fuels.

By reducing reliance on non-renewable energy, these technologies help reduce carbon emissions, combat climate change, and promote a cleaner, greener future.

## 2. Smart Homes and Energy Efficiency

Technology has also revolutionized the way we

consume energy in our homes. Smart home devices, such as thermostats, lighting systems, and appliances, can be controlled remotely and optimized for energy efficiency. These devices use data and artificial intelligence to learn patterns and adjust energy consumption accordingly, ensuring that energy is used only when necessary.

This not only reduces the environmental impact of households but also leads to cost savings for homeowners. By integrating energy-efficient technologies, individuals can significantly reduce their carbon footprint.

## 3. Sustainable Agriculture

Technology is transforming agriculture, helping farmers grow food more sustainably while using fewer resources. Precision farming technologies, such as drones, sensors, and GPS systems, allow farmers to monitor crop health, soil conditions, and water usage in real-time.

This data-driven approach enables them to make informed decisions that optimize resource use, reduce waste, and increase crop yields. Additionally, vertical farming and hydroponics are innovative farming techniques that require less land and water while providing local, sustainable food sources for urban populations.

## 4. Green Transportation

Transportation is another area where technology is playing a crucial role in sustainability.

Electric vehicles (EVs) are becoming more popular as a cleaner alternative to gasoline-powered cars.

Advancements in battery technology have led to longer driving ranges, shorter charging times, and lower costs, making EVs an attractive option for consumers.

Furthermore, technologies like ride-sharing apps and electric scooters are helping reduce the number of cars on the road, easing traffic congestion, and lowering emissions.

## 5. Waste Management and Recycling

Technology has made significant strides in waste management and recycling, helping reduce the environmental impact of waste.

Smart waste management systems use sensors to monitor waste levels in bins and optimize collection routes, reducing fuel consumption and labor costs.

Advanced sorting technologies, including AI and robotics, can separate recyclables more efficiently, ensuring that valuable materials are reused rather than ending up in landfills.

Additionally, innovations in composting and waste-to-energy technologies are helping turn organic waste into valuable resources.

## 6. Digital Platforms for Sustainable Practices

The rise of digital platforms has also contributed to the adoption

of sustainable practices.

Apps and websites that promote eco-friendly habits, such as reducing water consumption, tracking carbon footprints, or promoting sustainable shopping, are helping individuals make more informed choices.

These platforms provide users with practical tools to reduce waste, conserve resources, and live more sustainably.

Technology has a critical role to play in advancing sustainable living by providing innovative solutions that reduce our environmental impact, conserve resources, and improve the quality of life.

As technological advancements continue, we can expect even more efficient and effective ways to live in harmony with our planet.

By embracing these technologies, individuals, communities, and businesses can contribute to a more sustainable and prosperous future for generations to come.

Source: <https://ciiblog.in/the-role-of-technology-in-sustainable-living>

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

# The Urgent Call for Environmental Sustainability: Securing Ghana's Future in a Changing World

The urgency of addressing environmental sustainability has never been more critical than it is today. From the accelerating impacts of climate change to the widespread degradation of ecosystems, the world is facing a tipping point. For nations like Ghana, which are grappling with rapid industrialization, population growth, and resource exploitation, the stakes are even higher.

As we confront these environmental crises, the question is no longer whether we should act, but how fast we can implement the necessary changes.

The financial sector, particularly banking professionals, plays a pivotal role in navigating this complex landscape. With their unique influence over capital flows and investments, banking professionals can help drive the shift toward a sustainable economy by financing projects that prioritize long-term environmental health.

This feature explores the urgency of environmental sustainability from a financial lens, weaving together global, regional, and national perspectives, while highlighting key facts and figures to underscore the pressing need for action.

**The Widening Environmental Crisis**

Globally, environmental sustainability has taken center stage as countries race to combat climate change, mitigate biodiversity loss, and reduce pollution.

The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, set a target of limiting global temperature increases to below 2°C.

However, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), global temperatures are already on track to rise by 1.5°C by 2030 if current trends continue, bringing with it more frequent extreme weather events, droughts, and floods.



Francis Ayisi, Head, Sustainability (ESG) – Stanbic Bank Ghana

Sub-Saharan Africa is among the most vulnerable regions to climate change, with millions of livelihoods dependent on agriculture, which is highly sensitive to changing weather patterns.

The African Development Bank estimates that by 2030, climate change will push an additional 100 million people into extreme poverty across the continent, exacerbating already existing inequalities.

In Ghana, these global trends are felt acutely. The country has experienced significant deforestation, water contamination, and soil degradation, all of which are directly tied to economic activities like illegal mining and bad agriculture and fishing practices.

The Forestry Commission reports that Ghana loses an estimated 315,000 hectares of forest annually due to logging, farming and now, mining.

Moreover, the Ghana Meteorological Agency has recorded an increase in the frequency and severity of floods, particularly in urban areas like Accra, where poor waste management exacerbates the problem.

**A Race Against Time**

For Ghana, environmental sustainability is not just an abstract ideal, it is a matter of survival.

Agriculture, which employs nearly 44% of the population, is directly threatened by climate change, with erratic rainfall and prolonged droughts disrupting food production.

In 2022, Ghana experienced a 10% decline in agricultural output due to extreme weather events, a trend that, if left unaddressed, could have devastating consequences for food security and economic stability.

Illegal mining, commonly referred to as “Galamsey,” has also taken a heavy toll on the environment.

Over 60% of Ghana's water bodies have been contaminated by chemicals used in mining, posing serious health risks to communities and devastating aquatic ecosystems.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the cost of environmental degradation in Ghana was estimated at 10% of GDP in 2020, underscoring the urgency of addressing these issues.

Compounding these challenges is the country's heavy reliance on fossil fuels for energy, which

contributes to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Despite having abundant renewable energy resources, only 4% of Ghana's energy mix comes from renewables, a statistic that underscores the untapped potential of the sector.

**Financing a Green Future**

The banking industry, with its ability to direct capital, plays a key role in Ghana's journey toward environmental sustainability.

From a banking practitioner's perspective, integrating sustainability into financial decision-making is not just an ethical obligation but a strategic imperative.

Global trends in sustainable finance show that businesses with strong environmental credentials are more resilient and offer long-term value.

In 2022, the global market for green bonds, financial instruments designed to support projects with environmental benefits reached \$1.1 trillion, with African countries increasingly tapping into this market to fund sustainable development.

In Ghana, banks are starting to follow suit.

For example, Stanbic Bank Ghana introduced green finance products in 2023, providing loans to businesses in the renewable energy and waste management sectors.

This shift reflects a growing recognition within the financial sector that environmental sustainability is key to future-proofing the economy.

Ghana's banking sector also has a crucial role in supporting the transition to renewable energy.

With a potential to generate over 300 megawatts of solar power annually, the country has the capacity to significantly reduce its carbon emissions by transitioning from fossil fuels.

In 2023, the government launched the Renewable Energy Master Plan, aiming to increase the share of renewables in the energy mix to 10% by 2030.

Financial institutions can accelerate this transition by offering affordable loans to renewable energy projects, stimulating innovation and job

creation in the sector.

**Opportunities for Economic Growth and Sustainability**

The intersection of environmental sustainability and economic development presents significant opportunities for Ghana.

Renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and eco-tourism are sectors poised for growth, provided they receive the necessary investment and regulatory support.

Renewable energy alone could create up to 30,000 jobs in Ghana by 2030, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

Meanwhile, climate-smart agriculture including farming techniques designed to increase productivity while reducing environmental impact could boost agricultural GDP by 15% by 2035.

Sustainable tourism, which generated \$3.7 billion in revenue for Ghana in 2022, could grow by an additional 20% over the next decade by promoting eco-friendly practices that preserve biodiversity and cultural heritage.

However, these opportunities can only be realized through concerted efforts across all sectors, including government, businesses, and financial institutions.

By promoting green finance and integrating environmental sustainability into corporate governance, the banking sector can play a crucial role in unlocking these opportunities.

The urgency of environmental sustainability cannot be overstated.

As global and national challenges like climate change, deforestation, and pollution intensify, the need for swift, coordinated action is clearer than ever.

From the perspective of a banking professional, the financial sector holds immense power in driving this change by directing capital toward projects that prioritize long-term environmental health.

For Ghana, the path to sustainability is both an opportunity and a necessity.

By leveraging green finance, investing in renewable energy, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices, the country can not only mitigate the impacts of climate change but also unlock new avenues for economic growth.

The choices we make today will determine the future of our environment, our economy, and the livelihoods of future generations.

Now is the time to act, before the window of opportunity closes.



SPECIAL REPORT:

# Kasoa can't breathe: The Alarming rise of Air Pollution in Our Backyard.

By Paul Nwachukwu,  
Co-Founder,  
Quali-Breeze, Ghana

In the heart of Ghana's Central Region, Greater Kasoa stands as a symbol of rapid urban expansion. Once a quiet and secluded place, has grown into one of Ghana most densely populated urban towns, fueled by its proximity to Accra and its affordable living conditions. But behind its booming development lies an invisible danger, air pollution that is silently choking the life out of the community. A recent community-based research study conducted by Quali-Breeze, a local advocacy group that is working for the improvement of air quality in communities reveal that Kasoa is increasingly suffocating under the weight of uncontrolled environmental practices. The study, which combined field observations, surveys, interviews, and health data analysis, exposes the alarming sources of air pollution in the town and their effects on public health and the environment. **Open Waste Burning: A deadly daily routine** Across Kasoa, it's not unusual to see smoke rising from waste at the roadside, backyards, or

open fields. In fact, the study found that 6 in 10 households engage in open waste burning, often early in the morning or at night. Plastics, Styrofoam, paper, packaging-material, and even PVC pipes are regularly set on fire emitting harmful pollutants into the air. Residents cite limited waste collection, high disposal costs, and a lack of alternatives as key reasons but the health cost is dire. Burning plastic and synthetic material releases toxins linked to respiratory disease, which also severely degrade air quality. **Cooking with Smoke** In many homes and chop bars across Kasoa, meals are still prepared using charcoal and firewood. The study observed that women and children often near the source are most exposed to the toxic smoke from biomass fuels, which causes persistent coughing, eye irritation, and respiratory illnesses. Cleaner alternatives like LPG exist but are still unaffordable or inconsistent in supply for most families. "We cook with what we have," one food vendor said, "Gas is too expensive and sometimes not easily available."

**Dusty Roads, Dirty Lungs** Kasoa's road network tells another story. While a few main roads have been tarred, most inner routes remain untarred and in an uneven state. Vehicular activities kick up clouds of dust that linger in the air and settle on everything from windows and altering original building colour. This can become a serious health risk as dust can easily be inhaled, entering the bloodstream, and triggering respiratory problems. **Vehicular Emissions: Old Engines, Toxic fumes** Kasoa streets are packed with tricycles, motorbikes, taxis, and secondhand vehicles, many over 15 years old with outdated engines. These emit high levels of carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons, creating a haze that hangs over busy roads,

especially during rush hours. According to the study, motorcycles, and tricycles, the popular transport modes emit significantly more pollutants than larger vehicles. "You can smell it in the air," said one resident. "Every morning, the fumes hit your face like smoke from a burning tire." **Livestock Rearing and Open Drainage Add to the Problem** Less discussed but equally important, the rearing of livestock in residential areas and clogged open gutters contribute significantly to poor air quality. Stagnant waste, decomposing matter, and animal droppings release foul odor making everyday life uncomfortable and unhealthy. **Health Impacts Already Visible** Interviews with health workers in Kasoa show a rise in complaints of persistent coughing, sneezing, running nose, and eye irritation, especially among children and the elderly. Pregnant women, in particular, are at high risk from exposure to fine particles. The study also highlighted a worrying lack of public awareness. Few residents understand what air quality monitoring is and the consequences of engaging in waste burning. In a community of over 300,000, there is only one operational air quality monitor, limiting the ability to respond quickly and accurately to rising pollution levels.

**What Must Be Done** To address the growing crisis, we recommend the following:

- Launching public health campaigns to raise awareness about air pollution.
- Establish community-based waste aggregation and recycling systems.
- Subsidize clean cooking fuels like LPG for low-income households.
- Pave and maintain inner roads to reduce dust emissions.
- Enforce existing environmental regulations and monitor vehicle emissions.
- Install more air quality monitors at strategic points across the town.

**A Wake-Up Call for Ghana** Kasoa's situation mirrors a larger problem in Ghana where development is outpacing environmental planning. But it also presents an opportunity. With strategic investments, sound policies, and community engagement, Greater Kasoa could become a **model for urban sustainability** in West Africa. Until then, the air we breathe remains a quiet killer, polluting the very space we call home. To access the full research report or partner on our **School Air Monitor Project**, contact us via: **Tel: 233-59-113-7333** **Email:qualibreeze@gmail.com** Paul Nwachukwu is the Co-Founder of Quali-Breeze, a community based organization focused on improving air quality and environmental awareness in communities in Ghana.



## Experts Call for a Holistic Approach to Address Environmental Degradation

...Continued from page 4

He emphasized the critical role of empowering local communities and organizations in combating environmental degradation. The conference featured various topics, including Policy Frameworks for the Future, The Role of Education in Empowering Communities for Sustainable Land Use, Synergies Between Sustainable Development

Goals and Indigenous Farming Practices, and Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Urban Expansion: Learning from Grassroots Movements. PACCP's landmark conference on environmental issues marks a significant step forward in promoting environmental sustainability and climate change mitigation in Africa. It provided an essential platform for stakeholders to

discuss environmental challenges and underscored the need for collective action to combat environmental degradation. With plans to hold the conference annually and collaborate with partners to disseminate information and raise awareness, the center is dedicated to making a positive impact on the environment.





# 9-Unexpected-Ways-Your-Lifestyle-Contributes-To-Climate-Change

Climate change is an urgent global issue, and while we often think of large-scale industrial activities as the primary culprits, it's essential to recognize the unexpected ways our daily lifestyle choices can also contribute to this problem. In this article, we will explore seven surprising ways your lifestyle may be unintentionally contributing to climate change. By understanding these examples, you can make informed decisions and take action to reduce your carbon footprint and help combat climate change like traditional lawn.

**Traditional lawn**

**Digital Carbon Footprint:**

Example: Streaming videos and online gaming  
In our digital age, activities like streaming videos and online gaming consume a significant amount of energy, contributing to carbon emissions. Did you know that streaming an hour of video on a popular platform can emit as much carbon as driving four miles in a car?  
By reducing unnecessary online streaming and optimizing device settings for energy efficiency, such as lowering screen brightness and using power-saving modes, we can lower our digital carbon footprint. Additionally, consider supporting platforms that use renewable energy sources to power their servers.

Water Consumption:  
Example: Long showers and excessive water use  
Many people are unaware of the water-energy nexus. The energy required to treat, pump, and heat water contributes to carbon emissions. By reducing water consumption, we not only conserve this precious resource but also decrease the energy needed to provide it. Simple actions like taking shorter showers, fixing leaks promptly, using low-flow showerheads and faucets, and collecting rainwater for gardening can make a significant impact.

**Landscaping Practices:**



Example: Traditional lawn maintenance  
Maintaining pristine lawns often involves excessive water usage, chemical fertilizers, and gas-powered traditional lawn equipment. These practices not only contribute to water scarcity but also release greenhouse gases.  
Instead, consider embracing alternative landscaping practices like xeriscaping, which involves using native, drought-tolerant plants that require less water. Additionally, using electric or manual traditional lawn tools instead of gas-powered ones can significantly reduce your environmental impact.

**Food Choices:**  
Example: Eating meat and dairy products  
The production of meat and dairy products is resource-intensive and contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. Livestock farming requires vast amounts of land, water, and feed, leading to deforestation, water pollution, and methane emissions. By reducing meat consumption and opting for plant-based alternatives, we can significantly lower our carbon footprint.  
You can start by participating in "Meatless Monday" or incorporating more vegetarian and vegan meals into your diet. Additionally, supporting sustainable farming practices and

choosing locally sourced, organic produce can further reduce your environmental impact.

**Fast Furniture:**  
Example: Buying new furniture frequently  
The furniture industry contributes to deforestation, carbon emissions from manufacturing, and waste generation. Fast furniture, characterized by inexpensive and often low-quality pieces, encourages a throwaway culture. Instead of buying new furniture frequently, consider refurbishing, repurposing, or purchasing second-hand furniture. Not only will this help reduce your carbon footprint, but it can also add character and uniqueness to your living spaces. Look for local thrift stores, online marketplaces, or community swap events to find pre-loved treasures.

**Disposable Beauty Products:**  
Example: Single-use makeup wipes and cotton pads  
Single-use beauty products like makeup wipes and cotton pads generate significant waste and contribute to deforestation. These products often end up in landfills and take a long time to decompose. Switching to reusable alternatives like washable cloth wipes or bamboo cotton pads can minimize your environmental impact. They are not only better for the planet but also gentler on your skin. Additionally, consider exploring

sustainable and eco-friendly beauty brands that prioritize minimal packaging and natural ingredients.

**Fashion Waste:**  
Example: Discarding clothes instead of donating or upcycling  
The fashion industry produces excessive waste and emits greenhouse gases throughout the production cycle. Fast fashion, characterized by inexpensive and rapidly changing clothing trends, encourages a culture of disposable clothing. Instead of disposing of clothes after a few uses, consider donating them to local charities or organizing clothing swaps with friends and family.  
Another option is upcycling, which involves transforming old garments into new creations. By extending the life of clothing items, you can help reduce the environmental impact of fast fashion and promote a more sustainable approach to dressing.

**Air Travel:**  
Example: Frequent air travel and carbon emissions  
Air travel is a significant contributor to carbon emissions, and frequent flying can have a considerable impact on climate change. In a country as vast as India, air travel is often necessary for long-distance travel, but it's important to be mindful of its environmental impact. Whenever possible, consider alternative modes of

transportation like trains or buses for shorter distances. Additionally, you can offset your carbon footprint by supporting initiatives that invest in renewable energy projects or conservation efforts.

**Waste Management:**  
Example: Improper waste disposal and landfill emissions  
All are facing a substantial challenge in waste management, with overflowing landfills and inadequate recycling infrastructure. Improper waste disposal leads to the emission of methane, a potent greenhouse gas.  
To reduce your contribution to landfill emissions, practice responsible waste management. Separate your waste into recyclable and non-recyclable categories and dispose of them accordingly.  
Embrace recycling and composting practices at home to minimize the amount of waste sent to landfills. Additionally, support initiatives and organizations that promote sustainable waste management practices.  
Climate change is a collective challenge that requires individual action. By understanding the unexpected ways our lifestyle choices contribute to climate change and implementing sustainable alternatives, we can make a difference. Whether it's reducing digital consumption, conserving water, adopting plant-based diets, choosing eco-friendly furniture, embracing reusable beauty products, practicing mindful fashion choices, or exploring other avenues of sustainable living, every small step counts. Let's make conscious decisions and work together to create a sustainable future for our planet. Remember, your choices matter, and by making informed decisions, you can be a part of the solution to combat climate change.  
Source: <https://earth5r.org/9-unexpected-ways-your-lifestyle-contributes-to-climate-change-traditional-lawn>





# New Brazil development law risks Amazon deforestation, UN expert warns



**T**he Amazon is already under pressure from industries like agriculture and mining

A new law in Brazil could cause “significant environmental harm and human rights violations”, and represents a “rollback for decades” of protections in Brazil, including for the Amazon, a UN expert has told BBC News. Plans to speed up approvals for development projects were criticised by Astrid Puentes Riaño, a UN special rapporteur, as the country prepares to host the COP30 climate summit this year. Lawmakers passed plans to simplify environmental licences for infrastructure including roads, dams, energy and mines this month, though the president

has not formally approved the bill. Critics have dubbed it the “devastation bill” and say it could lead to environmental abuses and deforestation. Proponents say a new nationwide licensing regime would simplify the long and complex process that companies face to prove to authorities that planned developments do not cause unacceptable environmental harm. Under the changes, some developers would be able to self-declare their environmental impact through an online form for projects deemed smaller – a move supporters say would reduce bureaucracy but critics feel is a major concern. Ms Riaño told the BBC she feared the lighter regulations would “apply to some mining projects” and will “impact the Amazon region”.

She also said was “very worried” about plans for automatic renewal of some projects’ licences where no major changes have occurred, saying: “This will prevent environmental impact assessments from being done on these projects. Some of the projects will include mining projects or infrastructure projects where a full assessment is needed. “It will also cause deforestation. Modifications or continuations of projects might mean deforestation in the Amazon without a proper assessment.” A lot of deforestation and land-clearing in the Amazon has been driven by agriculture and mining, sometimes illegally – but Ms Riaño said the bill is “going backwards” on efforts to prevent that. Her intervention comes two months after new analysis

was published showing vast swathes of the Amazon were destroyed in 2024, with forest fires fuelled by drought adding to man-made deforestation pressures.

Under the new law, environmental agencies would have 12 months – extendable to 24 – to make a decision about whether to grant a licence for strategic projects. If that deadline was missed, a licence could be automatically granted. Supporters say this would give businesses certainty by preventing delays that have plagued projects, including hydroelectric dams for clean energy, or rail lines to transport grain.

Ms Riaño said she understood the need for more efficient systems but assessments must be “comprehensive” and “based on the science.” The law would also relax the requirement to consult indigenous or traditional quilombola communities – descendants of Afro-Brazilian slaves – in some situations unless they are directly impacted. UN experts raised concerns that fast-tracking assessments could remove some participation and affect human rights. Supporters of the bill say it will encourage economic development, including for renewable energy projects, held to grow the economy, and reduce costs for businesses and the state. But critics fear weakening environmental protections could increase the risk of environmental disasters and violate indigenous rights. In particular, UN experts

argue it could contradict constitutional rights guaranteeing the right to an ecologically balanced environment – which means legal challenges could lie ahead.

The Senate and Chamber of Deputies have approved the bill and it is now pending presidential approval.

President Lula da Silva has until 8 August to decide whether to approve or veto the new law.

Brazil’s Environment and Climate Change minister, Marina Silva, has strongly opposed the bill, condemning it as a “death blow” to environmental protections.

But she has been at odds with the president on other issues in the past, including proposals to explore oil drilling in the Amazon basin.

Even if the president vetoes it, there is a chance the conservative-leaning congress could try to overturn that.

Brazil’s Climate Observatory has called the bill the “biggest environmental setback” since Brazil’s military dictatorship, in which the construction of roads and agricultural expansion led to increased Amazon deforestation and the displacement of many indigenous people.

Ms Riaño said scientists in Brazil estimate the bill “will lift protections for more than 18 million hectares in the country, the size of Uruguay,” adding “the consequences are huge”

**Source:**  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy98jqr4p0xo>



# Environmental Education and Lifelong Learning (EELL) 2025 Conference in pictures



Nana Appa Korankye VII presenting EELL Africa 2025 Environmental Heroes to Dr. Essien on behalf of Prof. Nana Ama Browne Klutse at EELL 2025 Africa Conference



Mr. Roland Affail Monney presenting EELL Africa 2025 Environmental Heroes award to Goodness Dickson at EELL 2025 Africa Conference



Joy news Journalist Erastus Asare Donkor receiving his Environmental Hero Award



Executive Director, Pan African Centre for Climate Policy- Mr. Kwame Anane Frempong







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