Advancing SDGs and Climate Synergies in National Planning Frameworks: Insights from Ghana

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Institutional and Policy Framework for SDG and Climate Integration

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

- Ghana's Long-term Development Plan
- Ghana's Medium-Term Development Plan
- The Planning Guidelines for Medium-Term Development Plan Preparation
- The SDG Budget Tracking Mechanism
- The Results Framework for the National Medium-Term Development Plan

NATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

- Ghana's Climate Change Policy (2013)
- Climate Ambitious Reporting Program (CARP)
- National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2012)
- Ghana's Nationally Determined Contributions
- National Green Jobs Strategy (2021-2025)
- National Energy Transition Framework (2022-2070)

Institutional Arrangements

- The National Development Planning Commission
- The Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology
  - Environmental Protection Agency (now Environmental Protection Authority)
- The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
  - Forestry Commission
- Ministry of Finance
- SDGs Implementation Coordinating Committee
- MDAs and MMDAs
- Multi-stakeholder Coordination

Our work at NDPC in supporting Climate Action

Capacity Building: The NDPC, with support from partners, has strengthened capacities at the decentralised levels to mainstream climate change and SDGs into local development planning. This includes developing toolkits and conducting training for MMDAs

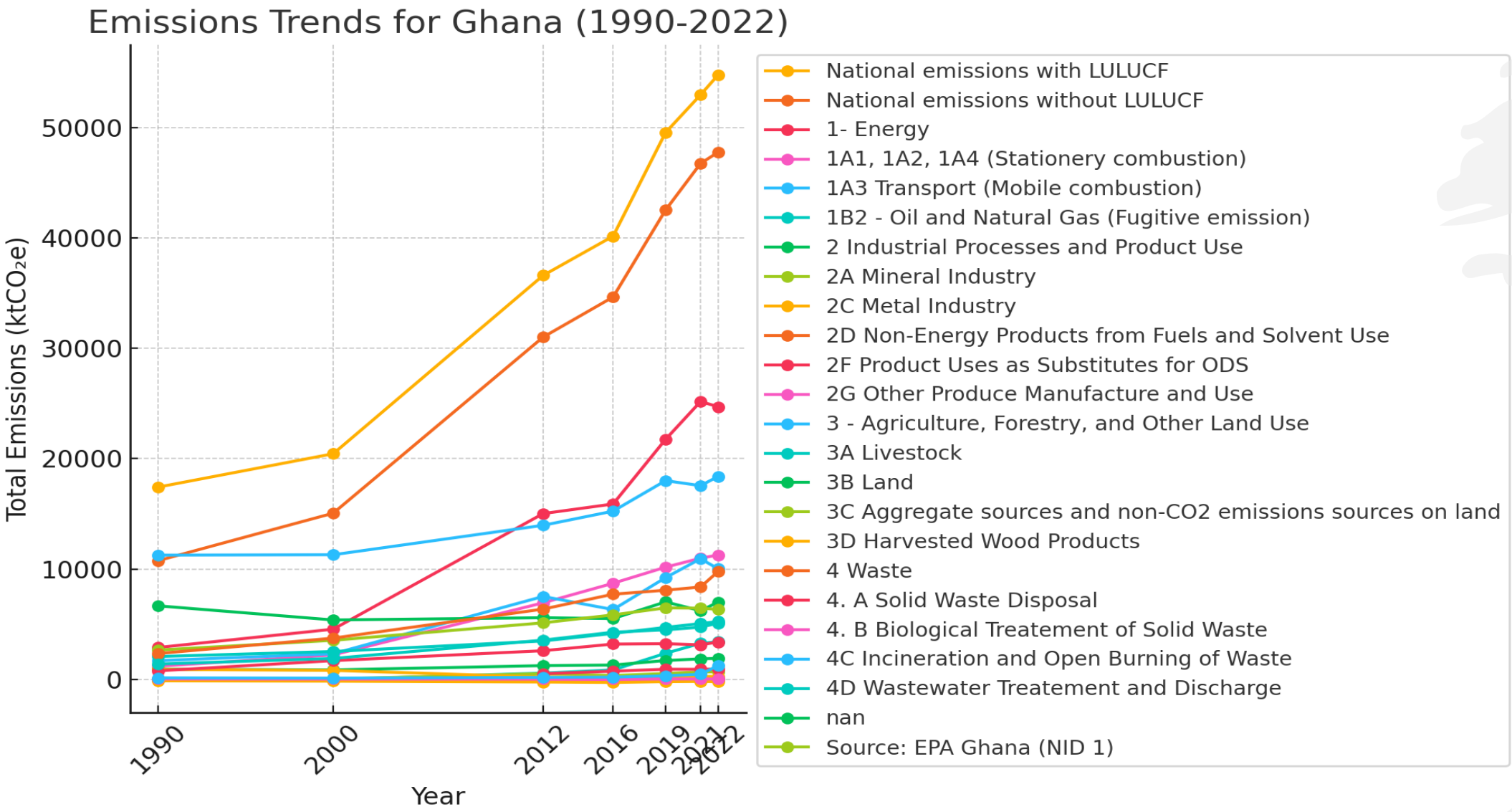
Climate Action in Ghana's 2022-2025 Medium-Term Development Policy Framework which incorporates climate actions as part of commitment to the Paris Agreement.

Progress in Embedding SDGs and Climate Synergies into Planning

GHG Emissions (including LULUCF) reached 54,758.6 $ktCO_2e$ in 2022, representing a 214.3% increase from 1990 levels

The energy sector remains the largest emissions contributor (45.1%), followed by agriculture (21.2%), waste (17.8%), LULUCF (12.4%), and industrial processes (3.5%)

Despite rising emissions, GDP intensity has declined by 75.1% since 1990, indicating a decoupling of emissions from economic growth


Emissions Trends for Ghana (1990-2022)
Total Emissions (ktCO₂e)
50000
40000
30000
20000
10000
0
1990
2000
2012
2016
2019
2021
2022
Year
National emissions with LULUCF
National emissions without LULUCF
1- Energy
1A1, 1A2, 1A4 (Stationery combustion)
1A3 Transport (Mobile combustion)
1B2 - Oil and Natural Gas (Fugitive emission)
2 Industrial Processes and Product Use
2A Mineral Industry
2C Metal Industry
2D Non-Energy Products from Fuels and Solvent Use
2F Product Uses as Substitutes for ODS
2G Other Produce Manufacture and Use
3 - Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use
3A Livestock
3B Land
3C Aggregate sources and non-CO2 emissions sources on land
3D Harvested Wood Products
4 Waste
4. A Solid Waste Disposal
4. B Biological Treatement of Solid Waste
4C Incineration and Open Burning of Waste
4D Wastewater Treatement and Discharge
nan
Source: EPA Ghana (NID 1)

Findings on Emissions Trends and Implications for NDCs implementation and Tracking

• Energy sector emissions surged by 754% (1990-2022) due to increased vehicle ownership, fuel consumption, and urbanization.

• Methane emissions from agriculture and waste management remain high

• LULUCF sector emissions fluctuated

Implications for NDCs implementation:

- low-carbon energy investments and stricter emissions regulations are critical for meeting Ghana's targets.

- Policies on renewable energy expansion and sustainable land use will be prioritized.

Key Climate Actions and Strategies

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE CLIMATE ACTIONS EFFECTIVELY

INTENSIFYING CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE AT BOTH NATIONAL AND DISTRICT LEVELS

ESTABLISHING AND OPERATIONALISING COMPREHENSIVE DATA SYSTEMS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE MONITORING

ACCELERATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GHANA'S NDCS

INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO ACCESS GLOBAL CLIMATE FUNDS

PROMOTING CLEAN ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE LAND USE TO REDUCE EMISSIONS

EXPANDING THE GREEN GHANA CAMPAIGN

Key Achievements in Climate Action

- **Reduction in Carbon Emissions: Ghana's total GHG emissions declined from 50.5 MtCO2e in 2017 to 42.2 MtCO2e in 2019, though there was an increase to 49 MtCO2e in 2020.**
- **Institutional Capacity Building: In 2023, 40 Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) were trained for effective climate action (compared to 50 MMDAs in 2022).**
- **Green Economy Progress: Ghana held the 98th position in the Global Green Economy Index (GGEI) in 2023 with a score of 47.7 out of 160 countries.**
- **Carbon Credit Earnings: Ghana earned USD 4.8 million by reducing nearly one million tons of carbon emissions through forest conservation initiatives.**
- **Ghana Shea Landscape Emission Reduction Project (GSLERP): In partnership with the Green Climate Fund, Ghana launched the USD 54.5 million project to restore 100,000 hectares of degraded Shea parklands and 200,000 hectares of savannah forests and woodlands.**

Key Achievements

Ghana has achieved a 75.1% reduction in emissions intensity per GDP, showcasing efforts to decouple economic growth from carbon emissions

- **TRACKING Progress in NDCs Implementation**

Ghana's NDC implementation framework includes:

- **A fixed-level single-year GHG emission reduction target of 64,000 $ktCO_2e$ by 2030.**
- **Unconditional reduction target: 24,600 $ktCO_2e$.**
- **Conditional reduction target (dependent on international support): 39,400 $ktCO_2e$.**

As of 2022, Ghana has achieved 45% progress toward its total NDC target, with:

- **63% progress on the unconditional target.**
- **33% progress on the conditional target.**

Key Achievement and Initiatives

Energy Transition:

- Shift from fuel oil to natural gas for electricity generation
- Expansion of renewable energy investments, including solar and wind power
- Electric Vehicle Policy

Agriculture and land Use:

- Reforestation and land restoration policies to reduce deforestation
- Promotion of climate-smart agriculture strategies

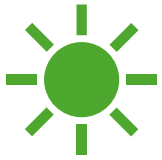
Waste Management:

- Introduction of waste-to-energy projects
- Expansion of wastewater treatment facilities

Key Achievements and Initiatives

Green Ghana Initiative: Large-scale afforestation efforts to enhance carbon sequestration

Climate-Sensitive Budgeting: Government budgets integrate low-carbon development measures



Energy Transition Strategy: Investments in renewable energy to reduce fossil fuel dependence

National Adaptation Plan

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been formally recognised as the national entity responsible for GHG inventory coordination, a role reinforced by the new EPA act making the Agency and Authority

Other Achievements

Re-design the climate data hub system with functionalities running on an open-source platform.

Develop an operational guidance document detailing the protocols for data flow, system management (access, security, updates, upgrades), and roles profile.

Establish virtual interactions between the redesigned climate change data hub and existing databases (such as Energy statistics, Forestry Monitoring System, Agriculture Facts and figures, etc.)

National Green Jobs Strategy

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Coordination Gaps: Limited synchronisation between national and local-level planning and climate change initiatives**
- **Data and Financing Limitations: Insufficient financial resources and data tracking for climate action and climate-smart initiatives**
- **Limited capacity to access climate finance**
- **Limited private-sector involvement in Climate Action initiatives**
- **Capacity gaps at the sub-national level in implementing SDG-climate strategies**
- **Policy Coherence: Strengthening regulatory frameworks to ensure climate action is mainstreamed across development actors**

Lessons Learned

1. **Multi-stakeholder engagement and Institutional Coordination is strengthening alignment between climate action and SDG goals, and enhancing access to Climate finance**
2. **Robust data collection and tracking mechanisms enhance policy effectiveness**
3. **Policy coherence and institutional frameworks foster a holistic approach to SDG-climate integration**

Future Directions and Opportunities

1. Incorporate GHG reduction strategies into Ghana's 2026-2029 Medium-term Development Policy Framework
2. Expand Climate financing mechanisms, including carbon markets and blended finance initiatives
3. Strengthen partnerships with international institutions and private sector players to enhance technology transfer
4. Promoting South-South knowledge exchanges
5. Improve data monitoring systems to track SDG and climate action progress more effectively
6. Strengthening local government capabilities to implement climate-smart development strategies

Current Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Measures

- MITIGATION POLICIES AND MEASURES

Ghana has adopted 12 key mitigation policies across energy (5), transport (2), forestry (2), waste (1), industrial processes (1) and Carbon Pricing (1):

- **Scaling up renewable energy investments**
- **Phasing out hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and promoting energy-efficient cooling**
- **Promoting electric vehicles and developing charging infrastructure**
- **Implementing forest conservation strategies such as REDD+ and afforestation programs**
- **Promoting Clean Cooking Solutions and preparing a National Policy on Clean Cooking to guarantee the gradual transition towards the use of Clean cooking technolgies**

Climate Adaptation Strategies

- **Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA): Drought-resistant crops, improved irrigation, and early warning systems**
- **Infrastructure Resilience: Investments in in flood mitigation and climate-adaptive urban planning.**
- **Water Resource Management: Strengthening irrigation systems and rainwater harvesting**
- **Biodiversity Protection: Expanding forest conservation initiatives and sustainable land-use policies**

Projections of Ghana’s Emissions (2022-2040)

2030

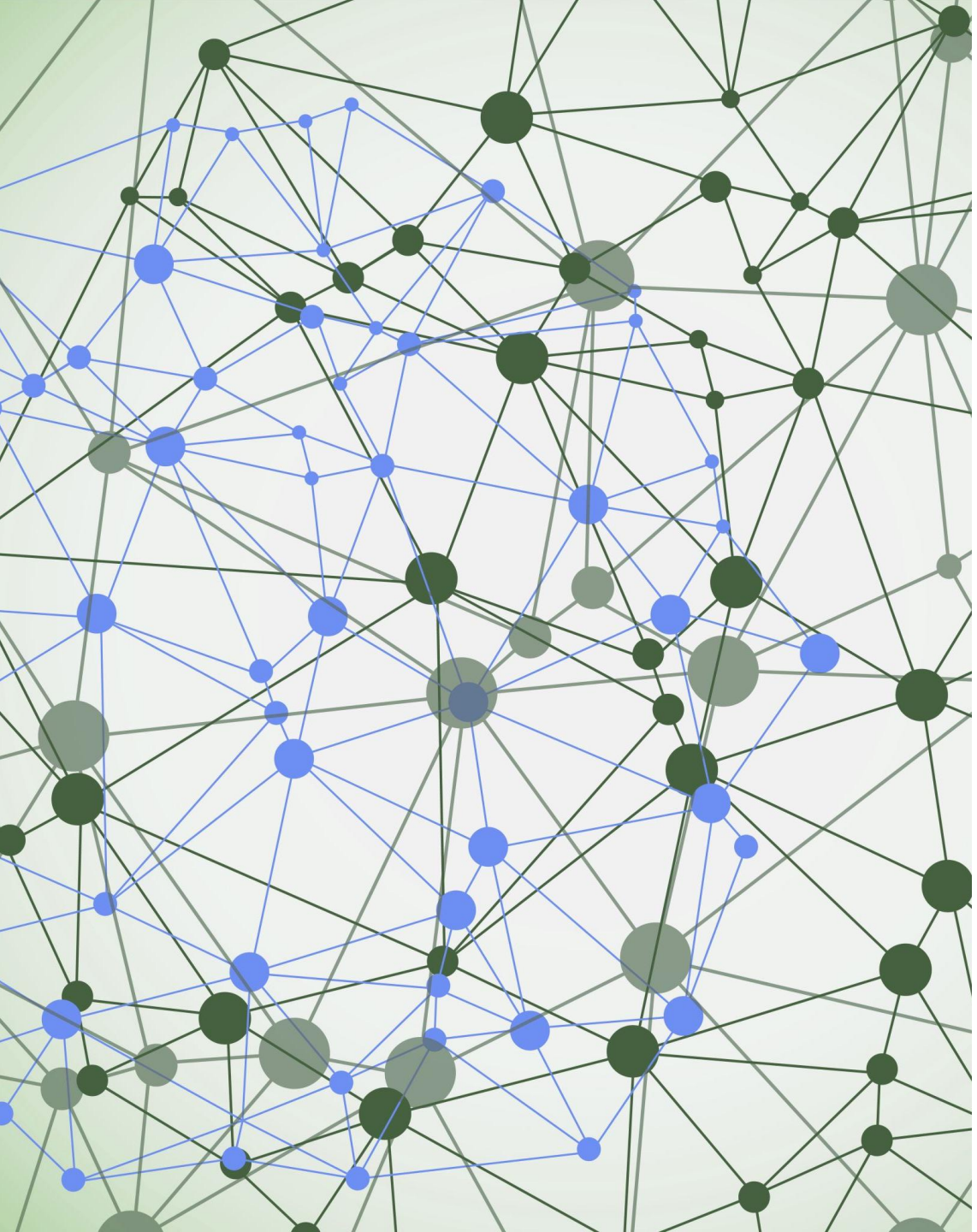
With current measures, Ghana’s emission will reach 69,677 $ktCO_2e$ by 2030 and 168,379 $ktCO_2e$ by 2040

2040

Without interventions, emissions could reach 289,295 $ktCO_2e$ by 2040, a 313% increase from 2025 levels

With additional measures, emissions can be limited to 55,935 $ktCO_2e$ in 2030 and 91,346 $ktCO_2e$ in 2040

2030



Synergies Between Climate Action and SDGs in Ghana

Evident in the following:

- **Integration into National Development Planning**
- **Institutional Coordination: HLMC exist to oversee SDG implementation. This committee ensures climate action is integrated across various sectors, fostering synergies between environmental sustainability and socio-economic development**

Enabling SDG Localisation and Ensuring a Just Transition

- **Community-Based Initiatives: Projects like the Sustainable Community Project by the Green Africa Youth Organisation exemplify local actions addressing waste management and climate education, contributing to SDG 11 (Sustianable Cities and Communities)**
- **Ghana is developing a Just Transition Framework to maximise job growth, minimise losses, and protect vulnerable populations**

Conclusion

1. Ghana remains committed to fostering sustainable and climate-resilient development
2. Ghana requires USD 15.9 billion for climate action between 2020 and 2030.
3. USD 18.7 billion was committed between 2012 and 2022, but only 80% was mobilized, mainly in the energy sector.
4. Financial gaps in adaptation efforts remain significant
5. The Government will need to increase international climate finance access, particularly for climate adaptation.
6. Greater engagement with private sector investors and carbon market participation is necessary
7. As a country we need to expanding renewable energy penetration to meet mitigation goals

Call for Help!

How do we encourage green industries such as renewable energy, agroforestry, and waste-to-energy projects?

How do we ensure that climate funds benefit marginalized and vulnerable communities, including women and youth?

What are some of the best approaches to decentralising climate action to empower districts and municipalities?

Any ideas on how we can target support for rural and climate-vulnerable communities?