

Ghana

Ghana's Ambitious Climate Reporting Programme

Activity	Development of an ambitious reporting system on climate change: an integrated system for continuous data generation on greenhouse gas inventories (GHGI), mitigation actions and support.
Country	Ghana
Sector(s) involved	Energy; Industrial Processes; Agriculture; Land-use Change & Forestry (LUCF); and Waste
Time frame	2013-ongoing

Case summary

In 2013, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) launched the Ghana Climate Ambitious Reporting Program (G-CARP) following the Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC decision to enhance climate reporting.

The G-CARP aims to facilitate the setting up of an integrated climate data management system that meets both national and international reporting standards as well as track national policies implementation.

There are four functional components of the G-CARP including: (1) Setting up of a revised institutional arrangement, (2) Operationalising the collaborative mechanisms (MOUs) that underpin activities of the institutions, (3) Setting up an online climate change data hub and (4) Continuous training and capacity development of new and existing teams.

The established Climate Change Data System shall serve as a good example of a comprehensive data system, which is well-integrated into institutional structures and processes involving all key stakeholders.



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Background

Ghana, as a party to the UNFCCC, has successfully submitted its first, second and third National Communications (INC, SNC, TNC) in 2001, 2011 and 2015, as well as its first biennial update report (BUR) in 2015 respectively. However, the country's preparations of the INC and SNC under the national system were mostly built around an ad-hoc and informal institutional arrangements that were both unsustainable and unreliable. This, coupled with the informal arrangements for data collection and the minimal involvement of key stakeholders such as sector ministries, led to the decision to reform the existing national system for compiling climate change information for international and domestic reporting.

The G-CARP seeks to facilitate the development of an integrated national reporting system that helps the country meet its international reporting obligations of: (1) preparing national communications (NATCOMs) every four years, (2) preparing Biennial Update Reports (BUR) every two years, (3) participating in International Consultation and Analysis (ICA) of the BUR and above all (4) providing evidence to support climate mitigation planning at all levels.

An important objective of the G-CARP is to support the country's capability to generate, collate and publish GHG inventory estimates both at the national, sectoral and where possible, project level at regular intervals.

Activities

Setting-up functional institutional arrangements

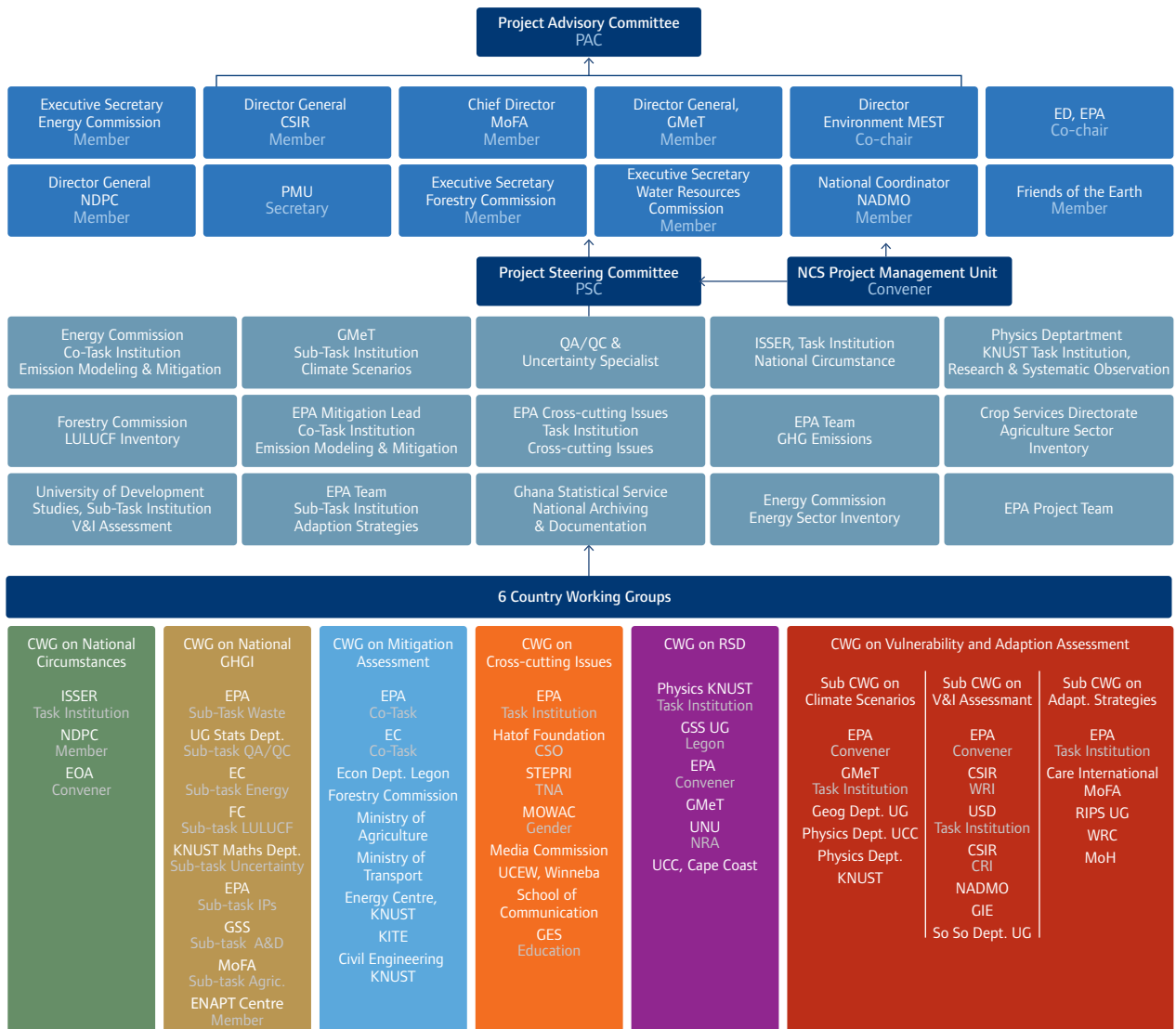
The new institutional arrangements were implemented in 2013 and contributed to the TNC, BUR and National GHGI. The Ghana Environmental Protection Agency is the overall coordinator.

The new decentralised structure has three tiers (Figure 1):

1. At the top is the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) composed of 13 senior representatives (from government, civil society, academia, and research institutions) that provide the highest level of decision making for the national communications (NATCOMs) and overall guidance;
2. The middle tier is the Project Steering Committee (PSC), which constitutes the implementation clearinghouse of the national communication composed of QA/QC & Uncertainty Coordinator (Mathematics and Statistics Departments of public universities and the Ghana Statistical Service), lead government agencies of the 6 country working groups (refer below) and EPA;
3. The lower tier comprises the six (6) Country Working Groups (CWGs) each led by a lead institution governed by the Working Package Memorandum of Understanding (EPA Act 490). The CWGs are National GHGI, Vulnerability & Adaptation Assessment, Mitigation Assessment, National Circumstances, Research & Systematic Observation (RSO), Climate Modelling, and Cross-cutting Issues. The members are drawn from relevant private, public institutions, and knowledge community such as public universities, government agencies, CSOs, think tanks.

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Figure 1: Institutional arrangement for national communication in Ghana



Source: International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV 2013

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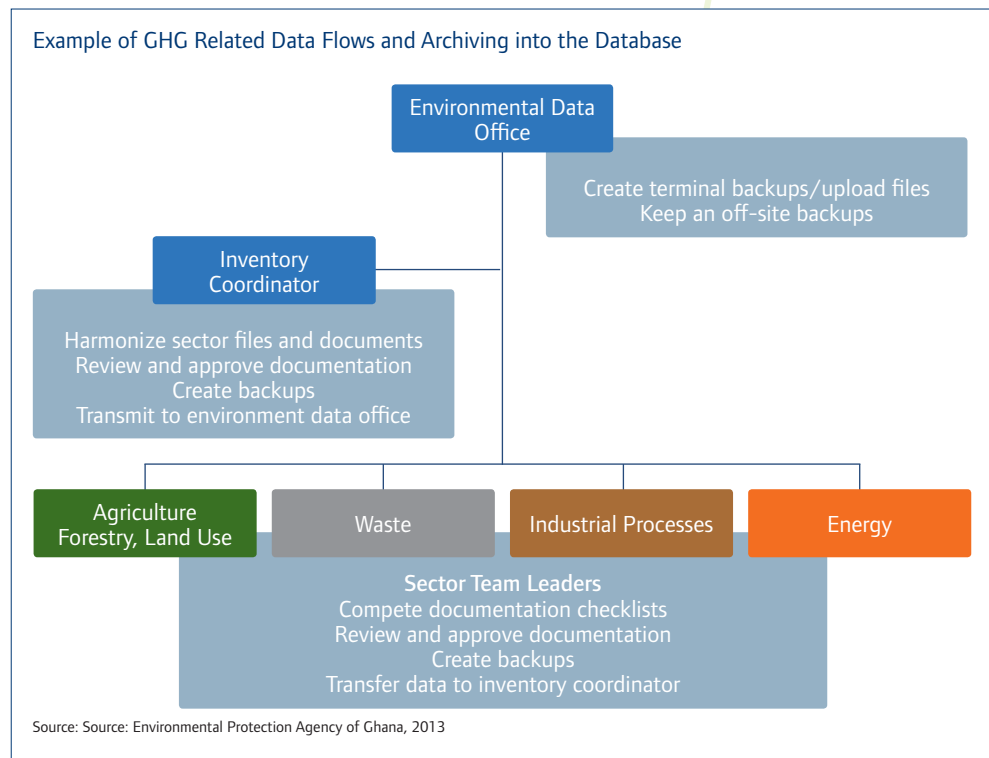
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Development of an online database and registry system:

The first generation version of the newly-developed online system was launched under the UNDP Low Emission Capacity Building Program (LECBP) in Ghana and is currently undergoing testing. Additional funding has been secured from the World Bank along with continued support from UNDP LECBP and other development partners under the Natural Resources and Environmental Governance (NREG) Program to complete the portal by the end of 2015.

The system has three interfaces:

- 1) A GHG Emission Database containing all archived data, mainly activity data used in sectors GHG inventory estimates from 1990-2012; An example of GHG related data flows and archiving into the database are shown in the diagram below.



- 2) A domestic Electronic Registry System as a centralised data point for monitoring all past and present climate change initiatives, including sources of support;
- 3) A Dashboard on Climate Policies and Measures that captures all climate-related policies and measures in productive and economic sectors in Ghana.

Continuous training and capacity development: New and existing teams have been trained since 2013 under the UNDP LECBP. This process is continuous and ongoing.

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Institutions involved

- » **Technical Coordinator:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- » **Lead institutions:** Forestry Commission, Energy Commission, National Development Planning Commission;
- » **Line Ministries:** Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Energy & Petroleum, Ministry of Lands & Natural Resources, Ministry of Trade & Industry, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Food & Agriculture, Ministry of Local Government & Rural Development;
- » **Government Agencies:** National Energy Statistics, Public Universities, Tema Oil Refinery, Ghana Meteorological Agency, Ghana Railway Company, Volta River Authority, Driver & Vehicle Licensing Authority, Ghana Statistical Service (GSS);
- » **Private Sector/Others:** Business associations, Zoomlion Ghana Limited, Volta Aluminium Company, and International Energy Agency.

Cooperation with

- » Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) through the 'Information Matters' project;
- » Sustainable GHG Management in West Africa Project
- » Low Emission Capacity Building (LECB) Programme implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on behalf of the European Commission, the BMUB, the Australian Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency and AusAID;
- » CD-REDD project.

Finance

Global Environment Facility (GEF)/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); UNDP LECB; German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB); and World Bank. The Government of Ghana provided kind support in the form of office space, maintenance, and operating cost.

People

About 30 experts from 16 different public and private institutions constitute the institutional arrangements for climate change reporting.

Impact of activities

- » **Insights for policy makers:** involvement of the key sector ministries and lead institutions in the reporting process provides valuable feedback on how GHG emission reduction goals are being met and the scale of emission reductions successfully attained in which sector, and by which set of policies.
- » **International communication and policy processes:** allows for communicating and documentation of Ghana's mitigation efforts and support for the development of the intended nationally determined contribution (INDC).
- » **Supporting policy implementation:** technical information for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the national climate change policy and strategies in the five prioritised sectors.
- » **Mainstreaming climate change:** a major catalyst to integrating climate change into sector planning such that, under the third national communication, key line ministries and agencies are conducting their own sectorial inventories.
- » **Improved development planning:** provision of vital information for assessing and planning for economic development, such as information on the supply and utilisation of natural resources.

Why is it good practice

- » The **scope of this integrated system** covers the GHG inventory, UNFCCC reporting requirements- for BURs and NATCOMs, NAMAs, and national policies.
- » The **rejuvenation of the existing institutional arrangements** under the TNC with new experts and institutions has ensured continuity and, at the same time, benefits from building on existing experiences.
- » The new institutional arrangement also establishes **strong relationships with institutions responsible for the GHG inventories** governed by the working package memorandum of understanding (EPA ACT 490), which clearly outlines mandates, deliverables, and timelines.

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- » Strengthened pre-existing national and international reporting mechanisms for compilation and tracking data on the progress of the implementation of mitigation actions and support.
- » The newly developed integrated online climate change data hub will serve as a central database for all climate related documentation and archiving.

Success factors

- » The establishment of institutional arrangements with the three tiers of PAC, PSC and the CWGs, each led by the task institutions with clear mandates, timelines and reporting outlines, data access and management and budgets.
- » The establishment of the Online Climate Change Data Hub as a "one stop shop" for all climate change-related data and activities along with vast improvements in data access.
- » The integration of the national preparation of the NATCOMS and BURs into the national structures for the coordination of planning and implementation of climate change activities in Ghana. For instance under the TNC, the sector ministries conducted the inventory. This has long-term benefits for mainstreaming climate change policies into the work plans of sector ministries.

Overcoming barriers/
challenges

What were the main barriers/challenges to delivery?
How were these barriers/challenges overcome?

Financial

The Lack of sustainable national funding coupled with project/activity specific funds such as the GEF/UNEP support for only NATCOMS and BUR preparations. These funds received were inadequate given the high costs of data generation and setting up stand-alone IT infrastructure.
The strategy is to shift to core financing with possible national budget allocations to the sector ministries by fully integrating the GHG system as part of the sector ministries' work plans.

Institutional

The previous national system was ad-hoc and mostly centred around individuals to compile data such that the absence of team members made the system fragile and unsustainable.
The revised institutional arrangements, with lead/task institutions assigned to each working group and clearly defined roles and timelines, ensures coordination and effectiveness in terms of deliverables and meeting reporting deadlines.

Information

Under the INC and SNC, the modality for assessing data was mostly based on informal arrangements, with minimal involvement of key stakeholders who generate the data.
The long-term goal is to have Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) take the lead in data compilation, storage and archiving. The GSS is mandated legally to compile data for the country, but their biggest constraint has been funding which will be overcome with national budget allocations to support climate data compilation.
Difficulty and slow pace in establishing data sharing. For instance, the data compiled remains with the lead person for each sector and is not shared because there are no formal arrangements for this to take place.
Building the capacities and constant dialogue with all relevant data handling institutions to strengthen the existing national data sharing platforms and support continuous data generation.
For confidential data and in cases where data providers incurred cost in generating data, the EPA is constrained in fully assessing these data –especially information from the private sector and industries.
The agencies will institutionalise the concept of contact persons by nominating and documenting all information from the appointee. Also, mainstreaming the data gathering process into the professional duties of relevant staff.

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Capacity

Lack of understanding of the detailed inventory process and reporting and accounting methodologies. A series of stakeholder meetings at the beginning of each GHG inventory cycle with all sector teams and data providers contributed to national capacity development.

Continuous support is provided to national experts to attend the UNFCCC Inventory meetings and external trainings on GHG inventory.

Political / Policy

The EPA Act 490 provides a legal framework using MOUs as collaborative mechanisms between EPA and relevant institutions for assessing climate data and climate change related activities. However, it is weak on enforcement particularly with public institutions.

It has been discussed to introduce a law or regulation to enforce EPA Act 490 to ensure ease in assessing climate data from institutions

Lessons learned

- » Integrating existing data collection hubs into the Online Climate Change Data Hub has proved valuable in generating new activity data into one central database. For instance, the hub will link to other data sites such as the Ghana Energy Access (GhEA) Database, National Forestry Inventory WebGIS Portal etc. The new platform introduces a comprehensive, holistic data collection system, transparent and robust QA/QC, data archiving and data reporting.
- » The revised institutional arrangement is more coordinated at all levels, with the working groups having been given clear mandates and timelines. However, Act 490, the legal framework using MOUs for collaborative mechanisms between EPA and relevant institutions, is not adequately enforced. A new law or regulation will ensure the introduction of an effective data sharing system.
- » Existing structures and processes provide a good starting point. The revised institutional arrangement relies heavily on existing structures and technical expertise of team members and data providers as a basis for broadening the stakeholder base.

How to replicate this practice

- » The approach has been to begin with a simple system but to consistently improve towards a dynamic and comprehensive climate data management system.
- » Define a strategy for data management, including identifying data needs, methods/approaches to collect data, documentation needs, and responsible entities to collect the data, as well as infrastructure provisions to store and retrieve data.
- » Institutional arrangements and expert teams should have well-defined structures, clear mandates and timelines.
- » The establishment of an online "one stop shop" for all climate related data and activities could benefit from being linked with existing data providers and databases to generate new information.

Contact for enquiries

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Further key resources

- » Ghana's Third National Communication Report to the UNFCCC.
- » Ghana's National Climate Change Policy, MESTI 2013.

Website(s)

- » EPA, Ghana: www.epa.gov.gh
- » Online Climate Change Data Hub: <http://197.253.69.38/#>
- » Ghana's TNC: www.unfccc.int/resource/docs/natc/ghanc3.pdf

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