

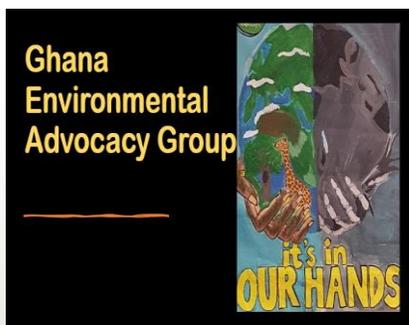
GHANA ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY GROUP

STATEMENT ON EI 144 FORESTS (CESSATION OF FOREST RESERVE INSTRUMENT, 2022)

May 18, 2022

We have read with dismay the above Executive Instrument (EI 144) by which the President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has declared a quarter of the Achimota Forest, which has been a forest reserve for almost a century, as no longer a forest reserve. By this singular act, the President, who was once co-chair of the United Nations Secretary-General's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Advocates with Prime Minister Erna Solberg of Norway, has not only set the country back several decades, he has also let down many who had believed in his words when it comes to protection of the environment.

The very loud public outcry that followed the leaking of this Executive Instrument shows the collective disbelief and pain of Ghanaians, especially at a time when Ghana has, at various fora on the environment, shared the challenges she faces and her desire to do what she can, in the committee of nations, to combat climate change. Below is an



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excerpt of the statement by the President at the recently held 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference(COP 26), In Glasgow, Scotland¹.

"Climate change is the greatest threat to the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It has enormous impact on the fundamentals required for our survival on earth, and that is why we have converged in Glasgow.

Ghana acknowledges the importance and effects of Climate Change, and the urgent need to combat it, and we acknowledge equally the importance of protecting our development. We believe that a balance must be struck and maintained between our social, economic and environmental imperatives.

Let us use this Summit as a turning point to create a more prosperous, greener and fairer world, which maintains the balance between the social, economic and environmental requirements of all nations of the earth, rich and poor. Success, in this endeavour, is the greatest inheritance we can leave for current and future generations."²

It was encouraging to see his Government, through the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, embark on the Green Ghana project where hundreds of thousands of Ghanaians were encouraged, at great cost, to plant trees.

At a time when Ghana is losing several hectares of forest cover a day in the hinterland to irresponsible mining, and major Ghanaian rivers have been contaminated beyond redemption, the least we should be dealing with is the ceding of a century old forest reserve for private use.

¹ <https://www.graphic.com.gh/features/opinion/president-akufo-addo-s-speech-at-cop26-full-address.html>



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We would like to remind Mr President that forest reserves are not only helping us by being the lungs of our country and preserving critical flora and fauna for current and future generations, but they are also becoming good money earners as participants in carbon credit exchanges³.

We at the Ghana Environmental Advocacy Group join fellow Ghanaians and urge the President to rescind the said Executive Instrument 144, explore alternative means of compensating the original owners of the land and do everything in his power to maintain and preserve the integrity of the entirety of Achimota Forest Reserve.

Yours faithfully,



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³ <https://ncx.com/ncx/>



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