

POLICY PRIORITY**GHANA**

How can cocoa farmers adapt to the twin-threat of climate change and unsustainable mining?

Climate change and unsustainable mining practices are serious joint threats to agricultural productivity in developing countries. There is a near consensus among experts that climate change is an existential threat to livelihoods and that policy interventions are urgently needed to help farmers adapt. There is also a growing appreciation of the link between unsustainable mining and agricultural productivity. What is least appreciated is the interaction between climate change and unsustainable mining practices, and optimal policy actions to bolster farmers' resilience.

The need for research to shed light on the nature of the twin-threat of climate change and unsustainable mining and the policy measures to address them is particularly urgent in the case of Ghana. Ghana is the second leading producer of cocoa and a major mineral resource-rich country. The sustainability of its growth path depends on crucially effective policy measures to enhance productivity, even in the face of climate change and unsustainable mining practices.

Policy challenge

Cocoa production is pivotal in the Ghanaian economy, employing 17% of the labour force ([GSS, 2023](#)) and contributing 7.6% to GDP ([GCMs, 2023](#)). However, the sector is bedevilled with challenges, including the combined effects of climate change and illegal mining, which led to a 34.7% dip in output in the 2021/2022 cross-season ([MoF, 2023](#)).

Following an IGC public forum in 2017, the Government of Ghana launched a three-pronged approach – law, technology and enforcement – to address the menace of illegal mining ([IGC-Ghana, 2017](#)). In a show of political commitment, the President even swore to put his presidency on the line to fight illegal mining ([Daily Graphic, 2027](#)). The indications are that these interventions have not yielded the desired dividends ([Ampaw et al., 2023](#)). On the climate change front, the government launched the [Green Ghana project](#). However, it is not clear how this and similar interventions will help secure the cocoa sector.

Data

- [COCOABOD](#): Annual reports on the cocoa value chain.
- [GMet climate data](#): Seasonal forecasts of precipitation and heat in Ghana.
- [Climate Research Unit \(CRU\)](#): High-resolution gridded dataset of mean weather variables.
- [GSS](#): Various datasets on the Ghanaian economy.

Stakeholders

Ghana Meteorological Agency (GMet); Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Forestry Commission; Ghana Cocoa Board; Ghana Chamber of Mines; Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources; Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution Programme (SMEP).