

Ghana



2016 Country Review

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1	1
Country Overview	1
Country Overview	2
Key Data	3
Ghana	4
Africa	5
Chapter 2	7
Political Overview	7
History	8
Political Conditions	11
Political Risk Index	29
Political Stability	43
Freedom Rankings	59
Human Rights	71
Government Functions	73
Government Structure	75
Principal Government Officials	79
Leader Biography	80
Leader Biography	80
Foreign Relations	83
National Security	88
Defense Forces	89
Chapter 3	91
Economic Overview	91
Economic Overview	92
Nominal GDP and Components	94
Population and GDP Per Capita	96
Real GDP and Inflation	97
Government Spending and Taxation	98
Money Supply, Interest Rates and Unemployment	99
Foreign Trade and the Exchange Rate	100
Data in US Dollars	101
Energy Consumption and Production Standard Units	102

Energy Consumption and Production QUADS	104
World Energy Price Summary	105
CO2 Emissions	106
Agriculture Consumption and Production	107
World Agriculture Pricing Summary	110
Metals Consumption and Production	111
World Metals Pricing Summary	114
Economic Performance Index	115
Chapter 4	127
Investment Overview	127
Foreign Investment Climate	128
Foreign Investment Index	131
Corruption Perceptions Index	144
Competitiveness Ranking	156
Taxation	165
Stock Market	166
Partner Links	166
Chapter 5	167
Social Overview	167
People	168
Human Development Index	170
Life Satisfaction Index	174
Happy Planet Index	185
Status of Women	194
Global Gender Gap Index	198
Culture and Arts	208
Etiquette	208
Travel Information	210
Diseases/Health Data	220
Chapter 6	226
Environmental Overview	226
Environmental Issues	227
Environmental Policy	228
Greenhouse Gas Ranking	229
Global Environmental Snapshot	240
Global Environmental Concepts	252

International Environmental Agreements and Associations	266
Appendices	290
Bibliography	291

Chapter 1

Country Overview

Country Overview

GHANA

Formed from the merger of the British colony of the Gold Coast and the Togoland trust territory, in 1957, Ghana became the first sub-Saharan country in colonial Africa to gain its independence. In the years following independence, Ghana endured a period of political instability arising from corruption and mismanagement. In 1960, a new constitution changed Ghana from the parliamentary system to a republican form of government headed by a powerful president. In 1966 the president was deposed in a coup, heralding years of mostly-military rule. In 1981, Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings staged a second coup. He was formally elected president in 1992 when a constitution allowing for a multi-party system was approved in a referendum, ushering in a period of democracy. Ghana is rich in natural resources such as gold, diamonds, timber, and cocoa. Agriculture has traditionally been, and continues to be, the mainstay of the economy, with cocoa beans and cocoa products remaining dominant for exports. The discovery of major offshore oil reserves was announced in June 2007, and oil production is expected to start in 2011, which will likely bolster growth and fiscal revenues.

Key Data

Key Data	
Region:	Africa
Population:	26584666
Climate:	tropical -- warm and dry along the southeast coast ; hot and humid in the southwest; hot and dry in the north
Languages:	English (official); indigenous African languages (including Asante Twi, Akuapim Twi, Fante, Ewe, Ga-Adangme, Nzema, Dagbani, Dagaari, Kasem, Frafra, Buli, Kusaal, Sisaala, Gonja)
Currency:	1 new cedi (C) = 100 pesewas
Holiday:	Independence Day is 6 March (1957), Republic Day is 1 July
Area Total:	238540
Area Land:	230020
Coast Line:	539

Ghana

Country Map



Africa

Regional Map



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Chapter 2

Political Overview

History

The history of the Gold Coast before the last quarter of the fifteenth century is derived primarily from oral tradition that refers to migrations from the ancient kingdoms of the western Soudan (the area of Mauritania and Mali). The Gold Coast was renamed Ghana upon independence in 1957 due to indications that present-day inhabitants descended from migrants who moved south from the ancient Kingdom of Ghana.

The first contact between Europe and the Gold Coast dates from 1470, when a party of Portuguese landed. In 1482, the Portuguese built Elmina Castle as a permanent-trading base. Thomas Windham made the first recorded English trading voyage to the coast in 1553.

Gold was the principal trading commodity in the early colonial period. With the opening of European plantations in the New World during the 1500s, which suddenly expanded the demand for slaves in the Americas, trade in slaves soon overshadowed gold as the principal export of the area.

The Portuguese position on the Gold Coast remained secure for almost a century. During that time, Lisbon leased the right to establish trading posts to individuals or companies that sought to align themselves with the local chiefs and to exchange trade goods both for rights to conduct commerce and for slaves whom the chiefs could provide.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, adventurers -- first Dutch, and later English, Danish, and Swedish -- were granted licenses by their governments to trade overseas. On the Gold Coast, these European competitors built fortified trading stations and challenged the Portuguese. Sometimes they were also drawn into conflicts with local inhabitants as Europeans developed commercial alliances with local chiefs.

The principal early struggle was between the Dutch and the Portuguese. With the loss of Elmina in 1642 to the Dutch, the Portuguese left the Gold Coast permanently. Soon thereafter, both the Dutch and the British formed companies to advance their African ventures and to protect their coastal establishments. The Dutch West India Company operated throughout most of the eighteenth century. The British African Company of Merchants, founded in 1750, was the successor to several earlier organizations of this type.

Meanwhile, the local Akan political structure was distinguished as a form of pre-colonial African culture. When the Portuguese arrived in the 15th century (as noted above), the Akan state was generally small and headed by an elder from one of the seven clans of Akan society. Over time strong states grew, uniting the smaller states. The first of these powerful new states is thought to be Bono. By the end of the 17th century, Akwamy, Ashanti, Akyem, Denkyira and Fante states emerged. Through military prowess, the Ashanti continued to grow throughout the 18th century, absorbing other states until falling to British rule in the 19th century.

At that time, in 1821, the British government took control of the trading forts on the Gold Coast. In effect, the British Crown claimed authority over British forts on the Gold Coast via the governor of Sierra Leone. Although the British government allowed control of the Gold Coast settlements to revert to the British African Company of Merchants in the late 1820s, the exercise of limited judicial power on the coast was so effective that a parliamentary committee recommended that the British government permanently administer its settlements. It also recommended that treaties be negotiated with the coastal chiefs that would define Britain's relations with them. The government did so in 1843, the same year crown government was reinstated.

In 1844, Fanti chiefs in the area signed an agreement with the British that became the legal steppingstone to colonial status for the coastal area. In summary, a special treaty with the Fanti and other local chiefs was officialized and became known as the Bond of 1844. This document obliged local leaders to submit serious crimes, such as murder and robbery, to British jurisdiction and laid the legal foundation for subsequent British colonization of the coastal area. Additional coastal states as well as other states farther inland eventually signed the Bond, and British influence was accepted, strengthened, and expanded.

From 1826 to 1900, the British fought a series of campaigns against the firm Ashantis, whose kingdom was located inland. In 1902, they succeeded in establishing control over the Ashanti region. The British proclaimed Ashante a colony under the jurisdiction of the governor of the Gold Coast. With Asante subdued and annexed, British colonization of the region became a reality.

British Togoland, the fourth territorial element eventually to form the nation, was part of a former German colony administered by the United Kingdom from Accra under a League of Nations mandate. In December 1946, British Togoland became a United Nations Trust Territory, and in 1957, following a 1956 plebiscite, the United Nations agreed that the territory would become part of Ghana when the Gold Coast achieved independence.

The four territorial divisions were administered separately until 1946, when the British government ruled them as a single unit. In 1951, a constitution was promulgated that called for a greatly enlarged legislature composed principally of members elected by popular vote directly or indirectly.

An executive council was responsible for formulating policy, with most African members drawn from the legislature and including three ex officio members appointed by the governor.

A new constitution, approved on April 29, 1954, established a cabinet comprised of ministers drawn from a directly elected, all-African legislature. In the elections that followed, the Convention People's Party, or the CPP, led by Kwame Nkrumah, won the majority of seats in the new Legislative Assembly.

Kwame Nkrumah's role in Ghanaian development and the development of African socialism is still felt today. He was born in Nkroful in 1909 when it was still the British Gold Coast. His academic prowess earned him a college degree in 1939 from Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. He was a pillar in the world of African nationalist thought. His socialist treatise, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, focused on the continued exploitation of former colonies even after independence. The seminal term coined in the work -- neo-colonialism -- is still a mainstay in African political thought.

In May 1956, Prime Minister Nkrumah's Gold Coast government issued a paper containing proposals for Gold Coast independence. The British government stated it would agree to a firm date for independence if a reasonable majority for such a step were obtained in the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly after a general election. This election, held in 1956, returned the CPP to power with 71 of the 104 seats in the Legislative Assembly.

Ghana became an independent state on March 6, 1957, when the United Kingdom relinquished its control over the Colony of the Gold Coast and Ashanti, the Northern Territories Protectorate, and British Togoland.

In subsequent reorganizations, the country was divided into 10 regions, which currently are subdivided into 110 districts. The original Colony of the Gold Coast is now comprised of the Western, Central, Eastern and Greater Accra regions, with a small portion at the mouth of the Volta River assigned to the Volta region; the Ashanti area was divided into the Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo regions; the Northern territories into the Northern, Upper East, and Upper West regions; and British Togoland essentially is the same area as the Volta region.

After independence, the CPP government under Nkrumah sought to develop Ghana as a modern, semi-industrialized, unitary socialist state. The government emphasized political and economic organization, endeavoring to increase stability and productivity through labor, youth, farmers, cooperatives and other organizations integrated into the CPP. The government, according to Nkrumah, acted only as "the agent of the CPP" in seeking to accomplish these goals.

The CPP's control was challenged and criticized, and Prime Minister Nkrumah used the Preventive Detention Act (1958), which provided for detention without trial for up to five years

(later extended to 10 years), against his detractors.

On July 1, 1960, a new constitution was adopted, changing Ghana from a parliamentary system with a prime minister to a republican form of government headed by a powerful president. In early 1964, a constitutional referendum changed the country to a one-party state. The constitution of 1992 provides a basic charter for republican democratic government. It declares Ghana to be a unitary republic with sovereignty residing in the Ghanaian people. Intended to prevent future coups, dictatorial government, and a one-party state, it is designed to establish the concept of power sharing.

Note on History: In certain entries, open source content from the State Department Background Notes and Country Guides have been used. A full listing of sources is available in the Bibliography.

Political Conditions

Post-Independence to the 1970s

In the post-colonial period immediately after independence, Ghana was governed by Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah and the Convention People's Party, or the CPP. Although the government sought to develop Ghana as a modern, semi-industrialized, unitary socialist state, control by the Convention People's Party was challenged and criticized. As a result, Prime Minister Nkrumah used the Preventive Detention Act (1958) to detain his detractors.

Opposition to the government grew and on Feb. 24, 1966, the Ghanaian Army and police overthrew Prime Minister Nkrumah's regime. Nkrumah and all his ministers were dismissed; the Convention People's Party, or the CPP and National Assembly were dissolved; and the constitution was suspended. The new regime cited Nkrumah's flagrant abuse of individual rights and liberties, his regime's corrupt, oppressive and dictatorial practices, and the rapidly deteriorating economy as the principal reasons for its action.

The leaders of the coup d'etat established their new government around the National Liberation Council, or NLC, and pledged an early return to a duly constituted civilian government. Members of the judiciary and civil service remained at their posts and committees of civil servants were established to handle the administration of the country.

Ghana's government returned to civilian authority under the Second Republic in October 1969

after a parliamentary election in which the Progress Party, led by Kofi A. Busia, won 105 of the 140 seats. Until mid-1970, a presidential commission led by Brigadier A.A. Afrifa held the powers of the chief of state. In a special election on Aug. 31, 1970, Busia became prime minister.

Faced with mounting economic problems, Prime Minister Busia's government undertook a drastic devaluation of the currency in December 1971. The government's inability to control the subsequent inflationary pressures stimulated further discontent, and military officers seized power in a bloodless coup d'etat on Jan. 13, 1972.

The coup d'etat leaders, led by Col. I. K. Acheampong, formed the National Redemption Council, or NRC, to which they admitted other officers, the head of the police, and one civilian. The NRC promised improvements in the quality of life for all Ghanaians and based its programs on nationalism, economic development and self-reliance. In 1975, government reorganization resulted in the NRC's replacement by the Supreme Military Council, or SMC, also headed by then-Gen. Acheampong.

Unable to deliver on its promises, mismanagement and rampant corruption increasingly marked the NRC/SMC. In 1977, Gen. Acheampong brought forward the concept of union government, or UNIGOV, which would make Ghana a non-party state. Perceiving this as a ploy by Acheampong to retain power, professional groups and students launched strikes and demonstrations against the government in 1977 and 1978. The steady erosion in Acheampong's power led to his arrest in July 1978 by his chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Frederick Akuffo, who replaced him as head of state and leader of what became known as the SMC-2.

Akuffo abandoned UNIGOV and established a plan to return to constitutional and democratic government. A Constitutional Assembly was established, and political party activity was revived. Akuffo was unable to solve Ghana's economic problems, however, or to reduce the rampant corruption in which senior military officers played a major role. On June 4, 1979, his government was deposed in a violent coup d'etat by a group of junior and non-commissioned officers, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, also known as the AFRC, with Flight Lt. Jerry John Rawlings as its chairman.

The AFRC executed eight senior military officers, including former chiefs of state Acheampong and Akuffo; established special tribunals that, secretly and without due process, tried dozens of military officers, other government officials, and private individuals for corruption, sentencing them to long prison terms and confiscating their property and, through a combination of force and exhortation, attempted to rid Ghanaian society of corruption and profiteering. At the same time, the AFRC accepted, with a few amendments, the draft constitution that had been submitted; permitted the scheduled presidential and parliamentary elections to take place in June and July; promulgated the constitution; and handed over power to the newly elected president and parliament of the Third Republic on Sept. 24, 1979.

The 1979 constitution was modeled on those of Western democracies. It provided for the separation of powers between an elected president and a unicameral parliament; an independent judiciary headed by a Supreme Court, which protected individual rights; and other autonomous institutions, such as the Electoral Commissioner and the ombudsman. The new president, Hilla Limann, was a career diplomat from the north and the candidate of the People's National Party, or the PNP, the political heir of Nkrumah's Convention People's Party, or the CPP. Of the 140 members of parliament, 71 were PNP.

The 1980s

The People's National Party government established the constitutional institutions and generally respected democracy and individual human rights. It failed, however, to halt the continuing decline in the economy; corruption flourished; and the gap between rich and poor widened. On Dec. 31, 1981, Flight Lt. Rawlings and a small group of enlisted and former soldiers launched a coup d'etat that succeeded against little opposition in toppling President Limann.

Rawlings and his colleagues suspended the 1979 constitution, dismissed the president and his cabinet, dissolved the parliament, and proscribed existing political parties. They established the Provisional National Defense Council, PNDC, initially composed of seven members, with Rawlings as chairman, to exercise executive and legislative powers.

The existing judicial system was preserved, but alongside it the PNDC created the National Investigation Committee to root out corruption and other economic offenses; the anonymous Citizens' Vetting Committee to punish tax evasion; and public tribunals to try various crimes. The PNDC proclaimed its intent to allow the people to exercise political power through defense committees to be established in communities, workplaces, and in units of the armed forces and police. Under the PNDC, Ghana remained a unitary government.

The coup d'etat that brought Rawlings to power was considerably bloody, provoking international condemnation and domestic disquietude. It set the stage for a regime that ruled by fear rather than consensus. Yet in a very short time, Rawlings managed to transform his image from bloodthirsty leader of a junior officer coup to populist statesman. Western analysts continued to describe Rawlings' regime as autocratic and Western agencies scoring democratic tendencies, such as the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, continued to assign dramatically low scores. Yet, Rawlings managed to consolidate power and establish a civilian power base and even a popular following to complement his military support.

Rawlings' rapid success can be attributed to both structural and personal forces. His populist promise of change was a welcome message for Ghanaians after years of corruption and economic

backslide. He was, however, also a charismatic leader from an early age. While Rawlings' mother was Ghanaian, his father was Scottish. His family background also afforded him access to the wealth necessary for a superior education. He studied at Achimota College and Ghana's Teshie Military Academy before embarking on a brief but impressive career as a flight lieutenant. He capitalized on his leadership at a junior level to lead a coup supported by soldiers tired of upper-tier corruption. He used this same underdog approach to win the support of the people against the former political regime.

His changes to the political system were rapid and sweeping. In December 1982, the PNDC announced a plan to decentralize the government by granting more decision-making authority to the regions, the districts and local communities. The central government nonetheless maintained overall control by appointing regional and district secretaries who exercised executive powers and also chaired regional and district councils. Local councils, however, were expected progressively to take over the payment of salaries, with regions and districts assuming more powers from the national government. In 1984, the PNDC created a National Appeals Tribunal to hear appeals from the public tribunals; changed the Citizens' Vetting Committee into the Office of Revenue Collection; and replaced the existing system of defense committees with Committees for the Defense of the Revolution.

1983 was a critical year for the Rawlings regime. The decentralized People's Defense Committees began asserting a greater independence. Motivated by both idealism and frustration with the status quo, the viability of the state itself began to come into question. In the same year, Nigeria expelled one million Ghanaian expatriates, forcing a relocation crisis for the government. In response, Rawlings decided to enter into agreements with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund leading to \$500 million in foreign aid. This was a significant move for Ghana as the Bretton Woods (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) institutions rapidly required a reduction in the size of the civil service, a devaluation of the currency and a reduction in salaries in relation to the devaluation. This was also a major move for the rest of Africa. Rawlings was one of the first African leaders to sign on to a structural adjustment agreement with multilateral donors. The advocacy of donor aid by the leftist Rawlings helped pave the way for other African leaders to embark on their own structural adjustment programs.

In 1984, the PNDC created a National Commission on Democracy to study ways to establish participatory democracy in Ghana. The commission issued a "Blue Book" in July 1987 outlining modalities for district-level elections, which were held in late 1988 and early 1989, for newly created district assemblies. One-third of the assembly members were to be appointed by the government.

The 1990s

Under international and domestic pressure for a return to democracy, the PNDC allowed the establishment of a 258-member Consultative Assembly made up of members representing geographic districts as well as established civic or business organizations. The assembly was charged with drawing up a draft constitution to establish a Fourth Republic, using PNDC proposals. The PNDC accepted the final product without revision; it was put to a national referendum on April 28, 1992; and received 92 percent approval.

On May 18, 1992, the ban on party politics was lifted in preparation for multi-party elections. The PNDC and its supporters formed a new party, the NDC, or National Democratic Congress, to contest the elections. Presidential elections were held on Nov. 3 and parliamentary elections on Dec. 29 of that year. Members of the opposition boycotted the parliamentary elections, however. As a result, the 200-seat parliament emerging from this election included only 17 opposition party members and two independents.

The new 1992 constitution entered into force on Jan. 7, 1993, thus founding the Fourth Republic. On that day, Flight Lt. Jerry John Rawlings was inaugurated as president and members of parliament swore their oaths of office.

In 1996 Ghana held concurrent presidential and parliamentary elections. In the legislative elections, Rawlings' National Democratic Congress faced significant opposition. There were high hopes with the opposition, and especially the NPP, that even if they could not prevent an NDC majority in parliament, they could at least prevent the National Democratic Congress from holding a two-thirds majority. This would have been of critical importance, as the constitution requires a two-thirds vote if it is to be altered. In the end, however, the fractured nature of the New Patriotic Party and the People's Convention Party -- a socialist party also called PCP -- led to the National Democratic Congress's success. The National Democratic Congress won 133 of the parliament's 200 seats, but at 66.5 percent its majority was a razor's edge short of the critical two-thirds threshold.

Given the close vote, New Patriotic Party leaders complained that ruling party intimidation and fraud marked the elections. International observers, though anxious to see a better showing by the liberal New Patriotic Party disagreed and ruled the elections as "free and fair."

The 1996 presidential elections saw economic issues at the forefront of the campaign debate. The New Patriotic Party and the People's Convention Party joined to form a "Great Alliance" for the presidential campaign. John Agyekum Kufuor, the leader of the Great Alliance, criticized Rawlings' administration as a government of outsiders (nominally referring to the influence of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund). He also charged Rawlings with undemocratic practices and criticized his introduction of a value added tax on goods and services.

Rawlings' view of a comprehensive program for economic reform and rural development won a majority vote. He was re-elected with 57.4 percent of the ballots, to Kufuor's 39.6 percent. Edward Mahama's People's National Convention (PNC; also a socialist party) won only three

percent.

On March 26, 1999, in a by-election in Accra, the ruling National Democratic Convention party lost to the New Patriotic Party, or NPP. After the 1996 parliamentary election left the NDC one seat short of the two-thirds majority necessary to amend the constitution; winning the Accra seat would have given the it the one seat needed to obtain that super-majority.

From 2000 - 2005

On Dec. 7, 2000, Ghana held its first real multiparty presidential elections. Having served the maximum two terms since the installation of the 1992 constitution, President Rawlings was prohibited from running. He kept true to his word and did not enter his candidacy.

In the lead-up to the elections, Rawlings' National Democratic Convention was internally marred by corruption and scandals about its selection of candidates. Beyond party rhetoric, three members of the National Democratic Convention had to appear before the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice on June 12, 2000, to answer corruption charges. Even the long faithful Ashanti Regional Executive of the National Democratic Convention had distanced itself from the party over differences about whether to support incumbent National Democratic Convention leaders in parliament. The most important internal scandal, however, was that the National Democratic Convention decided to select its leaders not by primaries but by voting. The increased role this placed on party members in Accra led to disquietude in the provincial party offices. Further, a specific controversy erupted in June 2000 when Korley-Klottey was nominated for parliament by the National Democratic Convention. According to National Democratic Convention's chairman, Samuel Coleman, declaring one's candidacy publicly was insufficient. Aspiring parliamentarians were to notify constituency executives in writing for the approval and vetting of the National Executive. Their failure to do so led to the uncontested nomination of Korley-Klottey.

Despite the National Democratic Convention 's shortcomings, the New Patriotic Party and the People's National Convention faced their own battles to make gains in the executive and the legislature. Unlike 1996, there was no unity candidate so it seemed that the opposition would be split. The National Democratic Convention was not viewed as strong enough to win the presidency in a run-off election. However, the fear was that a deep enough split in the opposition could allow the National Democratic Convention to win the presidency without a run-off. Paramount to the campaign of the National Democratic Convention, the New Patriotic Party and the People's National Convention was the issue of economic growth.

A second fear of the opposition in the months leading up to the election was the institutional relationship between the state and the National Democratic Convention. The state is the sole body

responsible for the execution of the electoral process. Freedom International, an Accra-based non-governmental organization, released a statement on June 5 that the Electoral Commission and National Commission for Civic Education had not done enough to ensure free and fair elections. This institutional recalcitrance was seen as an National Democratic Convention ploy to garner power as the opposition struggled to create an image for itself. Freedom International further argued that political accusations from both the National Democratic Convention and the New Patriotic Party degenerated from political fervor into groundless political weapons, jeopardizing the avid participation of the informed voter.

Despite continued constitutional challenges in the courts, ongoing accusations of National Democratic Convention corruption, and questionable balloting in certain districts, the elections took place with relative calm. This was a landmark event in the history of Ghana as it was the first time in its 43-year history that the people chose a candidate in democratic elections. Many analysts in Ghana and abroad have since held up the elections as an African triumph to be replicated. United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, himself a Ghanaian, stated that "Ghana has demonstrated that democracy and its institutions continue to take root in Africa."

The candidates for president were George Hagan of the Convention People's Party, Dan Lartey of the Great Consolidated Popular Party, Professor John Evans Atta Mills of the National Democratic Congress, John Agyekum Kufuor of the New Patriotic Party, Augustus Gossie Tanoh of the National Reform Party, Dr. Edward Mahama of the People's National Convention, and Dr. Charles Wereko-Brobby of the United Ghana Movement. There was no majority winner. As a result, there were run-off elections on December 29, 2000 between the two lead candidates, Kufuor and Atta Mills.

On Dec. 30, 2000, the electoral commission announced that Kufuor won 3,576,771 votes (56.73 percent) to Atta Mills' 2,728,241 (43.27 percent) votes. The Organization of African Unity, United Nations, a United States-led observer team, and other international observer teams declared the elections to be free and fair, validating Kufuor's victory. There was little dissent to the results within Ghana. A number of the observers commended the government, the National Democratic Convention, and the Ghanaian people for holding such successful elections. In a post-hoc analysis international election observer Nicholas Hercules noted some inconsistencies in the electoral process but stated that "the collective weight of evidence supports the overwhelming claim that the election outcome reflected the will of the people."

Legislative elections were held on Jan. 3, 2001. Following the pattern of the presidential elections, Rawlings' National Democratic Congress took second place to the opposition New Patriotic Party. The New Patriotic Party won 99 seats, the National Democratic Congress won 92 seats, the People's Convention Party won five seats, the People's National Convention won three seats, and the Convention People's Party won one seat. The narrow margin of victory for the New Patriotic Party was, however, expected to present challenges to the party in passing its legislative agenda.

President John Agyekum Kufuor was sworn into office Jan. 7, 2001, thus succeeding Flight Lt. Jerry Rawlings as president. In the months that followed, the president went to great lengths to further institutionalize Ghana's democratization process and stabilize its economy. Speaking at the United Nations in September 2001, then Trade and Industry Minister Dr. Kofi Konadu Apraku stated that he believed the president held a lot of goodwill and support both at home and abroad. An invitation to join British Prime Minister Tony Blair in London in late September 2001 and positive comments from United States Secretary of State Colin Powell certainly seemed to support the assertion that President Kufuor was viewed highly abroad.

At home, President Kufuor continued to win over the population. In August 2001, he championed a National Reconciliation Commission to address Ghanaian human rights abuses, and he appeared to have given significant leeway to the press, supporting his Attorney General Dr. Nana Akufo-Addo's goal of writing a Freedom of Information Act. Beyond the press freedoms, this was an important conciliatory move within the party as Akufo-Addo was once a challenger for the presidency on President Kufuor's New Patriotic Party ticket. In July 2001, the president demonstrated his popularity in the Eastern Region through a quick region tour. Even in the Volta region, where President Kufuor has never been popular, there appeared at least a remote chance the he could win the region in 2004 if the economy improved.

It seemed that Ghanaian politics was looking more and more progressive and democratic. The judiciary remained so independent of the executive that it, in fact, had not undergone staff or appointment changes since the presidential and legislative elections. However, there was also been a dark side. Identity politics appeared to have emerged with increased party in-fighting, especially in the rudderless National Democratic Congress.

The cabinet underwent its first reshuffle on Oct. 12, 2001, just nine months after the president took office. Attorney General Akufo-Addo apparently was appeased for the time being and stated that he did not believe he would run against the president for his party's bid in 2004, but he blithely stated "to be honest, my mind hasn't gone nearly that far." Perhaps more importantly, the president has yet to reconcile his relationship with former president Jerry Rawlings. After taking office, the new administration banned the long-established June 4 holiday celebrating Rawlings' coup d'etat. Rawlings held a rally on that day and gave a speech in protest. Political analysts in Ghana seem to feel the alleged differences between the former and current leader are much ado about nothing. Yet, with Rawlings being hailed a hero merely for adhering to the constitution, and a small but significant group of society decrying him as an African Pinochet, there is still a lot of fence mending to be done.

With the success of political liberalization came the pre-conditions for economic growth. Whereas once Ghana was held up by the international donor community as an example of successful growth, mid-2000 saw a freefall of the cedi and an accompanying decline in the standard of living

for the average Ghanaian. Prospects for growth hung on the country's ability to continue its program of economic liberalization. There was some evidence to suggest that the slowdown in Ghanaian economic growth was been tied to the inability of private entrepreneurs to positively respond to the government's Structural Adjustment Program, or SAP, as they have perceived the existing institutional environment as uncertain. The elections were a positive step towards legitimating government institutions and assuring institutional transparency. Whether this would translate into assuredness in the private sector was yet to be seen.

President Kufuor faced a significant economic challenge in his remaining years in office. Throughout most of the 1990s Ghana was seen by the international community as an example of positive economic reform and subsequent growth. However, in 1999-2000 the economy stagnated. Inflation rose, exports dropped, and the public sector stagnated. The GDP started to slide.

In 2001, the government of President Kufuor took significant steps. It devalued the cedi by 1.7 percent and improved revenue collection dramatically. A new relationship with donors was established and, as of October 2001, the economy appeared to have stabilized. While this was an admirable task for a government and legislature not one year in office, it did not appear to satisfy the Ghanaian thirst for economic development. For the Ghanaian people to consider the New Patriotic Party a success in 2004, the president would have to show significant economic improvement.

In early 2002, President Kufuor announced the government would be more assertive in the development programs undertaken with foreign partners. In keeping with promises to usher in Ghana's "Golden Age of Business," President Kufuor also announced a number of measures to strengthen the economy for the future: 1) the government will promote the development of the textile, garment and industrial starch from cassava industries to supplement Ghana's exports that are currently heavily dependent on cocoa and gold, 2) to raise the price of cocoa by 11 percent, and 3) a plan to develop the bamboo and rattan industry.

Due to Ghana's economic improvement, in February 2002, the IMF and World Bank awarded a debt relief package for Ghana. The package was to distribute US\$3.7 billion over a duration of 20 years.

In March 2002, inter-clan violence in the Yendi district in the north of the country resulted in the deaths of 30 and the displacement of thousands. The clash was between two clans of the Dagbon kingdom. The two clans, the Adanis and Abudus, who have been sharing power for nearly 100 years, waged a battle in which many sub-chiefs were killed, King Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II was beheaded, and the 600-year old palace was destroyed. The district was under a state of emergency and curfew until it was lifted in August 2004. A peace process mediated by traditional leaders from across the country has been ongoing. The government was criticized for its inaction during the violence as no soldiers or police intervened. Ghanaian leaders are cautious as tensions

could flare up again when the king is buried. The king has lain in state since 2002 as tradition dictates that he can not be buried until the palace is rebuilt.

Then, in May 2002, President Kufor established a reconciliation commission charged with examining human rights violations that occurred during the period of military rule. The commission commenced hearings in early 2003.

Ghana was selected in July 2003 as one the first African countries to be examined under the "Peer Review Mechanism" of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The "Peer Review Mechanism" was put into effect at a NEPAD summit in Abuja, Nigeria, in November 2002 and was designed as a system for the promotion of good governance in African countries. Ghana was one of fifteen countries that volunteered to be examined under the review system, which may well reap aid benefits if the process goes smoothly. In essence, proactive steps oriented toward the improvement of political and economic governance, as well as the advocacy of institutional transparency, could result in possible aid benefits from international instruments and developed countries.

In mid-2003, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone decorated 785 Ghanaian peacekeepers with medals of honor. The medals were given to the peacekeepers to honor Ghanaians' service with the mission. Ghana's contributions to United Nations peacekeeping efforts dates back to 1960 and has included missions in 22 hotspots globally.

In June 2003, the government announced the establishment of the National Health Insurance Council. The council would be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the government's proposed health plan. Under the plan, Ghanaians would no longer have to pay fees upon visiting health clinics. In July, the government announced that a levy of 2.5 percent would be introduced on certain goods to pay for the program. Goods and services such as raw food products, utilities, education, and medical services would not be subject to the levy.

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dates back to 1960 and has included missions in 22 hotspots globally.

In December 2003, the Ghanaian Electoral Commission created 30 new seats for parliament bringing the total up to 230. The breakdown of additional seats by region is as follows: Upper East Region, 1; Upper West Region, 2; Northern Region, 3; Brong Ahafo, 3; Ashanti, 6; Eastern, 2; Volta, 3; Greater Accra, 5; Central, 2; Western, 3. The seats were to be filled in the 2004 elections. The Electoral Commission ruled that the constituencies would be reviewed every seven years or following a national census.

In January 2004, opposition parties called for a public fund to be used for campaigning. The Electoral Commission held forums in 2003 to determine public opinion on the matter and found general support for the idea. However, there was no follow-through on the idea. Opposition parties complained that the ruling party's access to governmental facilities gave them an unfair advantage in elections.

In the run-up to the December 2004 elections, the Electoral Commission began an ambitious program to re-register all voters. The program was an attempt to purge fraudulent voters from the register. The program began in March and was quickly seen as insufficient for the enormous task. Officials complained of a lack of funds and materials, including forms and cameras, as well as general disorganization. The addition of an additional 30 seats in parliament resulted in confusion over the boundaries of the new constituencies. Some officials went on strike demanding more pay. When it was announced that the registration campaign was complete, 10.7 million people were on the rolls. This was approximately 300,000 voters less than the rolls created in 1995.

In April 2004, it was announced that six opposition parties had formed a coalition to defeat the New Patriotic Party in the December elections. The Grand Coalition was reportedly comprised of the Convention People's Party, the People's National Convention, the Great Consolidated Popular Party, the National Democratic Congress, the National Reform Party and the Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere Party. The National Reform Party said in May that it was not joining the alliance but would be cooperating with the coalition on ensuring media access, security and fair monitoring of the pending elections.

Several parties announced their presidential candidates in May 2004. The candidates were as follows: John Evans Atta Mills, National Democratic Congress; George Opesika Aggudey, Convention People's Party; Dan Lartey, Great Consolidated Popular Party. The New Patriotic Party announced that President Kufuor would seek a third term.

On Dec. 7, 2004, the elections were held. Turnout was high with over 85 percent participation. International observers from the Commonwealth, the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), the United Nations, the Economic Community of the West African States (ECOWAS) and the government of Canada monitored the polls. As well, there were observers from the Ghana

Centre for Democratic Development and the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers. Despite a smattering of violence leading up to the election, which included the deaths of two people in the northern part of the country, it was regarded by international and domestic monitors and observers as a generally fair, orderly and transparent election.

In the presidential poll, President Kufor was re-elected for a second term with 53.4 percent of the votes cast. John Atta Mills took 43.7 percent of the votes cast. Others contesting the election secured less than two percent respectively.

Kufor had campaigned under the slogan, "So far, so good," arguing that his first term in office had resulted in greater economic stability, as demonstrated by a growth rate of over five percent. Atta Mills, who was seeking to succeed former President Jerry John Rawlings with a win for their party, called for a "better Ghana" and made note of the rising prices of school fees, gas and utilities.

At the parliamentary level, 230 seats -- an increase from 200 seats in the previous election -- were at stake. The election results gave the majority of seats -- 128 -- to President Kufor's New Patriotic Party. The National Democratic Congress, as part of the aforementioned alliance, obtained 94 seats. The remaining 10 seats went to others. The People's National Convention and the Convention People's Party respectively won four and three seats. One independent candidate was also elected.

Meanwhile, in October 2004, a number of both former and current military personnel were detained. This action was taken because the individuals detained were suspected of planning to destabilize the government ahead of elections set for later in the year.

In the spring of 2005, thousands of refugees from Togo arrived in Ghana, in the aftermath of the political violence taking hold of that West African country at that time.

Special Entry: International Aid

On June 11, 2005, at a pre-G8 summit meeting in London, world leaders agreed to write off \$40 billion in debt owed by the world's poorest countries. Under the plan, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Fund would write off 100 percent of the money owed to them by 18 countries. In about a year to 18 months, another nine countries would also benefit from debt relief. Then, eleven other countries would be eligible for such relief, provided that they successfully dealt with corruption and met targets for good governance. With those additional two phases, the entire plan would involve \$55 billion in debt relief.

The countries benefiting immediately from the plan expressed gratitude that they would no longer

be saddled with debilitating debt and that they could, instead, work toward economic development. Anti-poverty activists also expressed support for the plan but said that more countries should also be able to benefit.

With the plan for debt relief agreed upon, British Prime Minister Tony Blair traveled to Moscow on June 12, 2005, for another meeting in a series of pre-G8 summit talks with world leaders. On the agenda were matters such as African aid and development, as well as transnational measures to deal with climate change. The United Kingdom, which holds the presidency of the G8 grouping of the world's eight wealthiest countries, was hoping to advance a significant increase in developmental aid to help benefit the world's most impoverished countries, especially in Africa.

Editor's Note: Twenty-seven countries, which are eligible for debt relief under the HIPC (highly-indebted poor countries initiative), are listed following, with the 18 countries qualifying for immediate debt relief identified by asterisk: Benin*, Bolivia*, Burkina Faso*, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana*, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana*, Honduras*, Madagascar*, Malawi, Mali*, Mauritania*, Mozambique*, Nicaragua*, Niger*, Rwanda*, Sao Tome, Senegal*, Sierra Leone, Tanzania*, Uganda*, and Zambia*

Recent Developments:

In April 2006, President Kufor enacted a cabinet shuffle. Of particular significance was his decision to appoint Nana Addo-Dankwa Akufo-Addo as a realigned minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and NEPAD (The acronym for the New Partnership for African Development). Minister retaining their portfolios included Defense Minister Kwame Addo-Kufuor, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning Kwadwo Baah-Wiredu, Minister of Tourism and Diasporan Relations Jake Obetsebi-Lampsey and Minister of Transportation Richard Anane. Meanwhile, the president also formed a new ministry of aviation and promoted some deputy ministers by giving them more responsibility. The new cabinet also involved the absence of Yaw Osafo-Mafo, who until the shuffle was announced, had held the ministerial portfolio for Education, Youth and Sports, Dan Botwe, who had held the portfolio for Information, Ayikoi Otoo, who had been until then the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, as well as Kofi Konadu Apraku, who, until these changes were made, had been the Minister of State, Regional Cooperation and NEPAD. The change also involved the elimination of some cabinet positions.

There was some speculation that the cabinet shuffle had been spurred -- at least in part -- by the president's desire to recalibrate the cabinet in a way that would reflect greater efficiency, while tackling the problem of corruption. Still, that latter proposition could hardly be regarded as a radical objective since Transport Minister Anane held on to his post despite being investigated for corruption and conflict of interest. As such, business analysts in Africa have suggested that if reform was being advanced, it is was with limited zeal, entailed the protection of certain allies, and

effectively diluted President Kufor's message of "zero tolerance" as regards corruption.

International relations and development assistance took center stage two months later when Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao was visiting Ghana and promised to lend the African country about \$66m to fund various development projects. Wen Jiabao was traveling in Africa in a bid to explore new export markets for China's economy and as well as further energy and mineral supplies.

March 2007 saw Ghana mark five decades -- 50 years -- of independence from the United Kingdom. The first part of 2007 also brought optimism to the country after off-shore oil was discovered. Ghana's President Kufuor responded to the news of the oil discovery by saying that Ghana was now on course to becoming an "African tiger." Late in 2007, President Kufor said that the country's off-shore oil reserves totalled about three billion barrels.

Special Entry: Elections of 2008

There are two elections to be held in Ghana in 2008 as follows --

Presidential

Summary:

Ghana will hold a presidential election in December 2008 from 9:00am until 11:59pm.

Backgrounder:

Ghana held their last presidential election on December 7, 2004 in which John Agyekum Kufuor secured over 56 percent of the votes to win the presidency. John Agyekum Kufuor is a member of the New Patriotic Party.

Parliamentary

Summary:

Ghana will hold a parliamentary election in December 2008 from 9:00am until 11:59pm.

Backgrounder:

Ghana held their last parliamentary election on December 7, 2004. The parliament is unicameral with 230 members serving four-year terms. The results of the last election are: New Patriotic Party (NPP) won 129 seats, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) won 90 seats, the People's

National Convention (PNC) won 4 seats, and the Convention People's Party (CPP) won 3 seats. Each member is elected by a majority vote.

Election Results:

According to the European Union (EU) Election Observer Mission, the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ghana went off smoothly. Nikolay Mladenow, the EU-EOM Chief Observer, said during a news conference in Accra that the general conduct of the election as being "peaceful, competitive and transparent."

In the race for the presidency, Nana Akufo-Addo, from the country's ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP), won 49.1 percent of the vote, while John Atta Mills, of the main opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC), garnered 47.9 percent of the vote share. The five other parties and independent candidate won only 2.95 per cent of the votes. With no candidate receiving more than 50 percent of the vote in the presidential race, the Ghanaian Electoral Commission said that Ghana would hold a presidential run-off on December 28, 2008 with the two main vote-getters as the contenders. Both parties -- NPP and NDC -- were in consultations with smaller parties as they sought to shore up support for the run-off election at the end of the month.

The results of the parliamentary elections were not immediately available, according to the Ghanaian Electoral Commission. That said, preliminary results indicated a very complicated composition in parliament with smaller parties poised to play a significant role. The unofficial results showed that the opposition NDC increased its share of seats in parliament to 113 seats, while the NPP decreased its share of seats to 108. The Convention People's Party (CPP) had a poor performance and now only had one seat, while the People's National Convention (PNC) decreased its share of seats by half to only two seats. There were also four independents who had once belonged to the NPP and were expected to align with its membership. Two seats were undeclared but leaning toward the NDC. Regardless of how the official tally turned out, there was no one party with decisive dominance in parliament.

Ghanaians vote in presidential run-off

In a climate of tough security, millions of Ghanaians in late December 2008 voted for a new president in a run-off election, following an inconclusive first round earlier in the month. The contest was between the two top vote-getters in the first round -- Nana Akufo-Addo of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) and John Evans Atta Mills of the main opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC).

In the first round, Akufo-Addo had 4,159,439 votes, representing 49.13 per cent, while Prof. John Evans Atta-Mills of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) obtained 4,056,634, representing

47.92 per cent. Other candidates made up the rest of the vote share and their supporters were expected to decide the second round result, and ultimately, the presidency.

Early results of the run-off suggested that John Evans Atta Mills, candidate of the main opposition NDC, had the lead. With results from 197 of the 230 constituencies declared by the electoral commission officials, Mills had 50.97 per cent of the votes, compared to 49.03 per cent for Akufo-Addo, candidate of the ruling NPP.

A spokesperson from the Mills camp issued an early claim of victory. "We have people on the ground and we know Prof. Mills has secured the mandate of the people," said Koku Anyidoho of the Mills Campaign office. But Mustapha Hamid of the Akufo-Addo Campaign made a competing claim that his candidate would secure victory.

Indeed, the eventual results from 229 out of the 230 constituencies gave Mills 50.13 per cent of total valid votes cast, while Akufo-Addo garnered 49.87 per cent. With less than one percent separating the two, the vote in the second round promised to be so close as to be decided in the Tain constituency. Tain became crucial to the 2008 presidential race because the difference between the two candidates was so minute that voters in Tain, who could not go to the polls during the presidential run-off on December 28, 2008, would determine the winner.

Meanwhile, the Coalition of Domestic Observers (CODEO) condemned acts of intimidation and violence, as well as cited incidences of ballot stuffing and disorder, that characterized voting in the run-off election.

With this climate of electoral insecurity at stake, and with voters were still to cast their ballots in the Tain constituency, the NPP, said it was trying to get the Electoral Commission to call off the election in Tain constituency. A spokesperson for the party explained that "conditions were not good for a free and fair election." As well, the lawyer of the party, Atta Akyea, said he had filed a writ at the High Court to stop the election in the constituency. He warned that that the Electoral Commission would be in contempt if it went ahead with the election but the country's Electoral Commission said it had not heard of any such action and that it was satisfied with the security situation.

Accordingly, voting began in the Tain constituency in Ghana despite claims by the NPP that it was boycotting the vote because of alleged insecurity. Ultimately, John Atta Mills of the NDC won 50.23 percent of the votes against 49.77 percent for the New Patriotic Party's candidate Nana Akufo-Addo with less than half a percentage point separating the vote count for the two candidates.

Note: The new president was inaugurated on January 7, 2009, in accordance with the Constitution.

Update:

In late May 2010, ethnic conflict and disputes over land in the northern Ghana gave way to violence, leading thousands of Ghanaians to flee to neighboring northern Togo. The dissonance was not a new phenomenon, having been going on for several years. Indeed, as far back as the mid-1990s, land disputes in the region degenerated into ethnic conflict, ultimately leading to the deaths of about 1,000 people and the displacement of 150,000 others. Now in 2010, there were fears of a similar scenario erupting again.

Refugee camps were established to house the Ghanaians trying to flee the crossfire of violence in Tandjoure in northern Togo. In an effort to offer assistance, Security Minister Colonel Mohammed Atcha Titikpina of Togo said during a visit to one such camp: "We have come in the name of the government of Togo to express our sympathies and solidarity with our [Ghanaian] brothers and sisters." He continued, "Our immediate task is to find the resources to provide these refugees with emergency relief supplies, security, feeding, clothing and temporary rehabilitation structures."

Note that at the close of 2010, Ghana saw the start of offshore oil production.

On July 24, 2012, President John Atta Mills of Ghana was reported to have died at a military hospital in the country's capital city of Accra. A statement from the Interior Ministry read as follows: "It is with a heavy heart ... that we announce the sudden and untimely death of the president of the Republic of Ghana." While authorities and media in Ghana did not specify the cause of Atta Mills' death, the president was known to have been suffering from a number of ailments. Atta Mills became president of Ghana following the 2008 elections.

Now, with his death in 2012, he would be succeeded by his deputy -- Vice President John Dramani Mahama. To that end, Mahama was sworn into office as the new president of Ghana in a peaceful transition of power. He would serve at the helm of Ghana as the head of state until the next elections, which was set for December 2012. With an eye on maintaining the country's stability, incoming President Mahama said: "I wish Ghanaians to be assured that all is well. We are going to maintain the peace, unity and stability that Ghana is noted for."

In 2012, attention was on the presidential and parliamentary elections that were set to be held at the close of the year.

Primer on 2012 General Elections in Ghana

Presidential and parliamentary elections were set to be held in Ghana in December 2012.

At the presidential level, the president is both the chief of state and head of government. Typically, the president is elected by popular vote for four-year terms and is eligible for a second term. The last election in 2008 brought to power John Evans Atta Mills. But in July 2012, Atta Mills died from medical complication, paving the way for his deputy -- Vice President John Dramani Mahama -- to assume the highest post in Ghana. For his part, Mahama was sworn into office as the new president of Ghana in a peaceful transition of power. He would serve at the helm of Ghana as the head of state until the next elections, which was set for December 2012, as noted here.

The main presidential candidates included the following: President John Dramani Mahama of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), Abu Sakara Foster of the Convention People's Party (CPP), Hassan Ayariga of the People's National Convention (PNC), Papa Kwesi Nduom of the Progressive People's Party (PPP), Akwasi Addai of the United Front Party (UFP), Henry Lartey of the Great Consolidated Popular Party (GCPP) and the independent candidate, Joseph Osei-Yeboah.

Also at stake in December 2012 would be the composition of the unicameral parliament of Ghana. Composed of more than 200 members, members are elected by direct popular vote from single-seat constituencies to serve four-year terms. The previous elections were held in 2008, and as scheduled, these elections would be held in 2012.

The main parties contesting the 2012 elections were expected to be the National Democratic Congress (NDC), which won the most seats in 2008, as well as the New Patriotic Party (NPP) which also saw strong performance in 2008, as well as the People's National Convention (PNC) and the Convention People's Party (CPP).

Note:

Voting had been extended through Dec. 8, 2012 to compensate for the fact that there were technical problems at polling stations. Of particular concern was the fact that biometric machines failed to identify voters, leaving many voters were unable to cast ballots on Dec. 7, 2012.

Late on Dec. 8, 2012 after the polls finally closed, Ghana's main opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) declared its own victory, declaring that it had won the presidential election with 51.03 percent of votes. At a press briefing, spokesperson for the NPP said that its presidential candidate, Nana Addo Dankwa Akfuo-Addo, secured 51.03 percent against incumbent President John Dramani Mahama, whom he said garnered 45.50 percent of the vote. That result was contrary to the news from local media outfits, which reported that the presidential race was a very tight one. Media outfits indicated that Mahama and Akfuo-Addo were running in a dead heat to the finish, with Mahama slightly closer to reaching the 50 percent majority needed to avoid contesting a second election round. Meanwhile, a spokesperson from the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) said that party was having a good election performance and was on track to win the most seats in parliament.

By Dec. 9, 2012, it was announced that Mahama was re-elected president of Ghana. According to the Electoral Commission, Mahama secured 50.7 percent of the vote while his closest rival, Akufo-Addo, took 47.74 percent. The opposition NPP alleged that the election was manipulated, however, the Election Commission said there was no compelling evidence to support that view.

Note: The next elections in Ghana were scheduled to be held in 2016.

-- January 2015

Written by Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief, CountryWatch.com; see Bibliography for research sources.

Political Risk Index

Political Risk Index

The **Political Risk Index** is a proprietary index measuring the level of risk posed to governments, corporations, and investors, based on a myriad of political and economic factors. The [Political Risk Index](#) is calculated using an established methodology by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on varied criteria* including the following consideration: political stability, political representation, democratic accountability, freedom of expression, security and crime, risk of conflict, human development, jurisprudence and regulatory transparency, economic risk, foreign investment considerations, possibility of sovereign default, and corruption. Scores are assigned from 0-10 using the aforementioned criteria. A score of 0 marks the highest political risk, while a score of 10 marks the lowest political risk. Stated differently, countries with the lowest scores pose the greatest political risk. A score of 0 marks the most dire level of political risk and an ultimate nadir, while a score of 10 marks the lowest possible level of political risk, according to this proprietary index. Rarely will there be scores of 0 or 10 due to the reality that countries contain complex landscapes; as such, the index offers a range of possibilities ranging from lesser to greater risk.

Country	Assessment
Afghanistan	2
Albania	4
Algeria	6
Andorra	9
Angola	4
Antigua	8
Argentina	4
Armenia	4-5
Australia	9.5
Austria	9.5
Azerbaijan	4
Bahamas	8.5
Bahrain	6
Bangladesh	3.5
Barbados	8.5-9

Belarus	3
Belgium	9
Belize	8
Benin	5
Bhutan	5
Bolivia	5
Bosnia-Herzegovina	4
Botswana	7
Brazil	7
Brunei	7
Bulgaria	6
Burkina Faso	4
Burma (Myanmar)	4.5
Burundi	3
Cambodia	4
Cameroon	5
Canada	9.5
Cape Verde	6

Central African Republic	3
Chad	4
Chile	9
China	7
China: Hong Kong	8
China: Taiwan	8
Colombia	7
Comoros	5
Congo DRC	3
Congo RC	4
Costa Rica	8
Cote d'Ivoire	4.5
Croatia	7
Cuba	4-4.5
Cyprus	5
Czech Republic	8
Denmark	9.5
Djibouti	4.5

Dominica	7
Dominican Republic	6
East Timor	5
Ecuador	6
Egypt	5
El Salvador	7
Equatorial Guinea	4
Eritrea	3
Estonia	8
Ethiopia	4
Fiji	5
Finland	9
Fr.YugoslavRep.Macedonia	5
France	9
Gabon	5
Gambia	4
Georgia	5
Germany	9.5

Ghana	6
Greece	4.5-5
Grenada	8
Guatemala	6
Guinea	3.5
Guinea-Bissau	3.5
Guyana	4.5
Haiti	3.5
Holy See (Vatican)	9
Honduras	4.5-5
Hungary	7
Iceland	8.5-9
India	7.5-8
Indonesia	6
Iran	3.5-4
Iraq	2.5-3
Ireland	8-8.5
Israel	8

Italy	7.5
Jamaica	6.5-7
Japan	9
Jordan	6.5
Kazakhstan	6
Kenya	5
Kiribati	7
Korea, North	1
Korea, South	8
Kosovo	4
Kuwait	7
Kyrgyzstan	4.5
Laos	4.5
Latvia	7
Lebanon	5.5
Lesotho	6
Liberia	3.5
Libya	2

Liechtenstein	9
Lithuania	7.5
Luxembourg	9
Madagascar	4
Malawi	4
Malaysia	8
Maldives	4.5
Mali	4
Malta	8
Marshall Islands	6
Mauritania	4.5-5
Mauritius	7
Mexico	6.5
Micronesia	7
Moldova	5
Monaco	9
Mongolia	5
Montenegro	6

Morocco	6.5
Mozambique	4.5-5
Namibia	6.5-7
Nauru	6
Nepal	4
Netherlands	9.5
New Zealand	9.5
Nicaragua	5
Niger	4
Nigeria	4.5
Norway	9.5
Oman	7
Pakistan	3.5
Palau	7
Panama	7.5
Papua New Guinea	5
Paraguay	6.5-7
Peru	7
Philippines	6

Philippines	6
Poland	8
Portugal	7.5
Qatar	7.5
Romania	5.5
Russia	5.5
Rwanda	5
Saint Kitts and Nevis	8
Saint Lucia	8
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	8
Samoa	7
San Marino	9
Sao Tome and Principe	5.5
Saudi Arabia	6
Senegal	6
Serbia	5
Seychelles	7
Sierra Leone	4.5

Singapore	9
Slovak Republic (Slovakia)	8
Slovenia	8
Solomon Islands	6
Somalia	2
South Africa	7
Spain	7.5
Sri Lanka	5
Sudan	3.5
Suriname	5
Swaziland	5
Sweden	9.5
Switzerland	9.5
Syria	2
Tajikistan	4.5
Tanzania	6
Thailand	6.5
Togo	4.5

Tonga	7
Trinidad and Tobago	8
Tunisia	6
Turkey	7
Turkmenistan	4.5
Tuvalu	7
Uganda	6
Ukraine	3.5-4
United Arab Emirates	7
United Kingdom	9
United States	9.5
Uruguay	8
Uzbekistan	4
Vanuatu	7
Venezuela	4
Vietnam	5
Yemen	3
Zambia	4.5

Zimbabwe	3
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*Methodology

The [Political Risk Index](#) is calculated by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on the combined scoring of varied criteria as follows --

1. political stability (record of peaceful transitions of power, ability of government to stay in office and carry out policies as a result of productive executive-legislative relationship, perhaps with popular support vis a vis risk of government collapse)
2. political representation (right of suffrage, free and fair elections, multi-party participation, and influence of foreign powers)
3. democratic accountability (record of respect for political rights, human rights, and civil liberties, backed by constitutional protections)
4. freedom of expression (media freedom and freedom of expression, right to dissent or express political opposition, backed by constitutional protections)
5. security and crime (the degree to which a country has security mechanisms that ensures safety of citizens and ensures law and order, without resorting to extra-judicial measures)
6. risk of conflict (the presence of conflict; record of coups or civil disturbances; threat of war; threats posed by internal or external tensions; threat or record of terrorism or insurgencies)
7. human development (quality of life; access to education; socio-economic conditions; systemic concern for the status of women and children)
8. jurisprudence and regulatory transparency (the impartiality of the legal system, the degree of transparency within the regulatory system of a country and the durability of that structure)
9. economic conditions (economic stability, investment climate, degree of nationalization of industries, property rights, labor force development)
10. corruption (the degree of corruption in a country and/or efforts by the government to address graft and other irregularities)

Editor's Note:

As of 2015, the current climate of upheaval internationally -- both politically and economically -- has affected the ratings for several countries across the world.

North Korea, [Afghanistan](#), [Somalia](#), and [Zimbabwe](#) -- retain their low rankings.

Several Middle Eastern and North African countries, such as [Tunisia](#), [Egypt](#), [Libya](#), [Syria](#), [Iraq](#) and [Yemen](#) were downgraded in recent years due to political instability occurring in the "season of unrest" sweeping the region since 2011 and continuing today. The worst downgrades affected [Syria](#) where civil war is at play, along with the rampage of terror being carried out by Islamist terrorists who have also seized control over part of Syrian territory. [Iraq](#) has been further downgraded due to the rampage of Islamist terrorists and their takeover of wide swaths of Iraqi territory. [Libya](#) has also been downgraded further due to its slippage into failed state status; at issue in [Libya](#) have been an ongoing power struggle between rival militias. [Yemen](#) continues to hold steady with a poor ranking due to continued unrest at the hands of Houthi rebels, secessionists, al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, and Islamic State. Its landscape has been further complicated by the fact that it is now the site of a proxy war between [Iran](#) and [Saudi Arabia](#). Conversely, [Tunisia](#) and [Egypt](#) have seen slight upgrades as these countries stabilize.

In Africa, [Zimbabwe](#) continues to be one of the bleak spots of the world with the Mugabe regime effectively destroying the country's once vibrant economy, and miring [Zimbabwe](#) with an exceedingly high rate of inflation, debilitating unemployment, devolving public services, and critical food shortages; rampant crime and political oppression round out the landscape. [Somalia](#) also sports a poor ranking due to the continuing influence of the terror group, al-Shabab, which was not operating across the border in [Kenya](#). On the upside, [Nigeria](#), which was ineffectively dealing with the threat posed by the terror group, Boko Haram, was making some strides on the national security front with its new president at the helm. [Mali](#) was slightly upgraded due to its efforts to return to constitutional order following the 2012 coup and to neutralize the threat of separatists and Islamists. But the [Central African Republic](#) was downgraded due to the takeover of the government by Muslim Seleka rebels and a continued state of lawlessness in that country. South [Sudan](#) -- the world's newest nation state -- has not been officially included in this assessment; however, it can be unofficially assessed to be in the vicinity of "3" due to its manifold political and economic challenges. [Burkina Faso](#), [Burundi](#) and [Guinea](#) have been downgraded due to political unrest, with [Guinea](#) also having to deal with the burgeoning Ebola crisis.

In Europe, [Ukraine](#) was downgraded due to the unrest facing that country following its Maidan revolution that triggered a pro-Russian uprising in the eastern part of the country. [Russia](#) was also implicated in the Ukrainian crisis due to its intervention on behalf of pro-Russian separatists, as well as its annexation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea. Strains on the infrastructure of southern and eastern European countries, such as [Serbia](#), [Croatia](#), and [Hungary](#), due to an influx of

refugees was expected to pose social and economic challenges, and slight downgrades were made accordingly. So too, a corruption crisis for the Romanian prime minister has affected the ranking of that country. Meanwhile, the rankings for [Spain](#), [Portugal](#), [Ireland](#), and [Italy](#) were maintained due to debt woes and the concomitant effect on the euro zone. [Greece](#), another euro zone nation, was earlier downgraded due to its sovereign debt crisis; however, no further downgrade was added since the country was able to successfully forge a bailout rescue deal with creditor institutions. Cyprus' exposure to Greek banks yielded a downgrade in its case.

In Asia, [Nepal](#) was downgraded in response to continuous political instability and a constitutional crisis that prevails well after landmark elections were held. Both [India](#) and [China](#) retain their rankings; [India](#) holds a slightly higher ranking than [China](#) due to its record of democratic representation and accountability. Increasing violence and political instability in [Pakistan](#) resulted in a downgrade for this country's already low rating. Meanwhile, [Singapore](#) retained its strong rankings due to its continued effective stewardship of the economy and political stability.

In the Americas, ongoing political and economic woes, as well as crime and corruption have affected the rankings for [Mexico](#), [Guatemala](#), and [Brazil](#). [Argentina](#) was downgraded due to its default on debt following the failure of talks with bond holders. [Venezuela](#) was downgraded due to its mix of market unfriendly policies and political oppression. For the moment, the [United States](#) maintains a strong ranking along with [Canada](#), and most of the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean; however, a renewed debt ceiling crisis could cause the [United States](#) to be downgraded in a future edition. Finally, a small but significant upgrade was attributed to [Cuba](#) due to its recent pro-business reforms and its normalization of ties with the United States.

Source:

Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief, CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

2015

Political Stability

Political Stability

The **Political Stability Index** is a proprietary index measuring a country's level of stability, standard of good governance, record of constitutional order, respect for human rights, and overall strength of democracy. The [Political Stability Index](#) is calculated using an established methodology* by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on a given country's record of peaceful transitions of power, ability of a government to stay in office and carry out its policies vis a vis risk credible risks of government collapse. Threats include coups, domestic violence and instability, terrorism, etc. This index measures the dynamic between the quality of a country's government and the threats that can compromise and undermine stability. Scores are assigned from 0-10 using the aforementioned criteria. A score of 0 marks the lowest level of political stability and an ultimate nadir, while a score of 10 marks the highest level of political stability possible, according to this proprietary index. Rarely will there be scores of 0 or 10 due to the reality that countries contain complex landscapes; as such, the index offers a range of possibilities ranging from lesser to greater stability.

Country	Assessment
Afghanistan	2
Albania	4.5-5
Algeria	5
Andorra	9.5
Angola	4.5-5
Antigua	8.5-9
Argentina	7
Armenia	5.5
Australia	9.5

Austria	9.5
Azerbaijan	5
Bahamas	9
Bahrain	6
Bangladesh	4.5
Barbados	9
Belarus	4
Belgium	9
Belize	8
Benin	5
Bhutan	5
Bolivia	6
Bosnia-Herzegovina	5
Botswana	8.5
Brazil	7
Brunei	8
Bulgaria	7.5
Burkina Faso	4

Burma (Myanmar)	4.5
Burundi	4
Cambodia	4.5-5
Cameroon	6
Canada	9.5
Cape Verde	6
Central African Republic	3
Chad	4.5
Chile	9
China	7
China: Hong Kong	8
China: Taiwan	8
Colombia	7.5
Comoros	5
Congo DRC	3
Congo RC	5
Costa Rica	9.5
Cote d'Ivoire	3.5

Croatia	7.5
Cuba	4.5
Cyprus	8
Czech Republic	8.5
Denmark	9.5
Djibouti	5
Dominica	8.5
Dominican Republic	7
East Timor	5
Ecuador	7
Egypt	4.5-5
El Salvador	7.5-8
Equatorial Guinea	4.5
Eritrea	4
Estonia	9
Ethiopia	4.5
Fiji	5
Finland	9

Fr. Yugoslav Rep. Macedonia	6.5
France	9
Gabon	5
Gambia	4.5
Georgia	5
Germany	9.5
Ghana	7
Greece	6
Grenada	8.5
Guatemala	7
Guinea	3.5-4
Guinea-Bissau	4
Guyana	6
Haiti	3.5-4
Holy See (Vatican)	9.5
Honduras	6
Hungary	7.5
Iceland	9

India	8
Indonesia	7
Iran	3.5
Iraq	2.5
Ireland	9.5
Israel	8
Italy	8.5-9
Jamaica	8
Japan	9
Jordan	6
Kazakhstan	6
Kenya	5
Kiribati	8
Korea, North	2
Korea, South	8.5
Kosovo	5.5
Kuwait	7
Kyrgyzstan	5

Laos	5
Latvia	8.5
Lebanon	5.5
Lesotho	5
Liberia	3.5-4
Libya	2
Liechtenstein	9
Lithuania	9
Luxembourg	9.5
Madagascar	4
Malawi	5
Malaysia	8
Maldives	4.5-5
Mali	4.5-5
Malta	9
Marshall Islands	8
Mauritania	6
Mauritius	8

Mexico	6.5-7
Micronesia	8
Moldova	5.5
Monaco	9.5
Mongolia	6.5-7
Montenegro	8
Morocco	7
Mozambique	5
Namibia	8.5
Nauru	8
Nepal	4.5
Netherlands	9.5
New Zealand	9.5
Nicaragua	6
Niger	4.5
Nigeria	4.5
Norway	9.5
Oman	7

Pakistan	3
Palau	8
Panama	8.5
Papua New Guinea	6
Paraguay	8
Peru	7.5
Philippines	6
Poland	9
Portugal	9
Qatar	7
Romania	7
Russia	6
Rwanda	5
Saint Kitts and Nevis	9
Saint Lucia	9
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	9
Samoa	8
San Marino	9.5

Sao Tome and Principe	7
Saudi Arabia	6
Senegal	7.5
Serbia	6.5
Seychelles	8
Sierra Leone	4.5
Singapore	9.5
Slovak Republic (Slovakia)	8.5
Slovenia	9
Solomon Islands	6.5-7
Somalia	2
South Africa	7.5
Spain	9
Sri Lanka	5
Sudan	3
Suriname	5
Swaziland	5
Sweden	9.5

Switzerland	9.5
Syria	2
Tajikistan	4.5
Tanzania	6
Thailand	6
Togo	5
Tonga	7
Trinidad and Tobago	8
Tunisia	5
Turkey	7.5
Turkmenistan	5
Tuvalu	8.5
Uganda	6
Ukraine	3.5-4
United Arab Emirates	7
United Kingdom	9
United States	9
Uruguay	8.5

Uzbekistan	4
Vanuatu	8.5
Venezuela	4.5-5
Vietnam	4.5
Yemen	2.5
Zambia	5
Zimbabwe	3

*Methodology

The Political Stability Index is calculated by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on the combined scoring of varied criteria as follows --

1. record of peaceful transitions of power (free and fair elections; adherence to political accords)
2. record of democratic representation, presence of instruments of democracy; systemic accountability
3. respect for human rights; respect for civil rights
4. strength of the system of jurisprudence, adherence to constitutional order, and good governance
5. ability of a government to stay in office and carry out its policies vis a vis risk credible risks of government collapse (i.e. government stability versus a country being deemed "ungovernable")
6. threat of coups, insurgencies, and insurrection
7. level of unchecked crime and corruption
8. risk of terrorism and other threats to national security

9. relationship with regional powers and international community; record of bilateral or multilateral cooperation

10. degree of economic strife (i.e. economic and financial challenges)

Editor's Note:

As of 2015, the current climate of upheaval internationally -- both politically and economically -- has affected the ratings for several countries across the world. The usual suspects -- North Korea, [Afghanistan](#), and [Somalia](#) -- retain their low rankings. The reclusive and ultra-dictatorial North Korean regime, which has terrified the world with its nuclear threats, has exhibited internal instability. Of note was a cut-throat purge of hundreds of high ranking officials deemed to be a threat to Kim Jung-un. Despite their attempts to recover from years of lawlessness, war, and warlordism, both [Afghanistan](#) and [Somalia](#) continue to be beset by terrorism and turmoil. In [Afghanistan](#), while international forces have seen success in the effort against the terror group, al-Qaida, the other Islamist extremist group, the Taliban, continues to carry out a vicious insurgency using terrorism. In [Somalia](#), while the government attempts to do the nation's business, the terror group, al-Shabab continues to make its presence known not only in [Somalia](#), but across the border into [Kenya](#) with devastating results/ Also in this category is [Iraq](#), which continues to be rocked by horrific violence and terrorism at the hands of Islamic State, which has taken over wide swaths of Iraqi territory.

Syria, [Libya](#), and [Yemen](#) have been added to this unfortunate echelon of the world's most politically unstable countries. [Syria](#) has been mired by the twin hazards of 1. a civil war as rebels oppose the Assad regime; and 2. the rampage of terror being carried out by Islamic State, which also seized control over vast portions of Syrian territory. Meanwhile, the post-Qaddhafi landscape of [Libya](#) has devolved into chaos as rival militias battle for control -- the elected government of the country notwithstanding. Rounding out this grim triad is [Yemen](#), which was dealing with a Houthi rebellion, secessionists in the south, as well as the threat of terrorism from al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula as well as Islamic State, while also being the site of a proxy war between Shi'a [Iran](#) and Sunni [Saudi Arabia](#).

Meanwhile, several Middle Eastern and North African countries, such as [Tunisia](#), [Egypt](#), and [Bahrain](#) were downgraded in recent years due to political instability occurring in the "season of unrest" sweeping the region since 2011 and continuing today. All three of these countries have stabilized in recent years and have been upgraded accordingly. In [Bahrain](#), the landscape had calmed. In [Egypt](#), the secular military-backed government has generated criticism for its crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood; however, the country had ratified the presidency via democratic elections and were on track to hold parliamentary elections as the country moved along the path of democratization. Perhaps the most impressive story was coming out of [Tunisia](#) -- the

country whose Jasmine Revolution sparked the entire Arab Spring -- and where after a few years of strife, a new progressive constitution was passed into law and a secular government had been elected to power. [Tunisia](#), [Egypt](#), and [Bahrain](#) have seen slight upgrades as these countries stabilize.

In Africa, the [Central African Republic](#) was downgraded the previous year due to the takeover of the government by Muslim Seleka rebels. Although the country has been trying to emerge from this crisis, the fact of the matter was that it was difficult to halt the precipitous decline into lawlessness in that country. [Zimbabwe](#) has maintained its consistently poor ranking due to the dictatorial regime of Mugabe, who continues to hold a tight grip on power, intimidates the opposition, squashes dissent, and oppresses the white farmer population of the country. Moving in a slightly improved direction is [Nigeria](#), which has sported abysmal ratings due to the government's fecklessness in dealing with the threat posed by the Islamist terror group, Boko Haram. Under its newly-elected government, there appears to be more of a concerted effort to make national security a priority action item. [Mali](#) was also slightly upgraded due to its efforts to return to constitutional order following the 2012 coup and to neutralize the threat of separatists and Islamists. Political instability has visited [Burkina Faso](#) and [Burundi](#) as the leaders of those countries attempted to side-step constitutional limits to hold onto power. In [Burundi](#), an attempted coup ensued but quelled, and the president won a (questionable) new term in office; unrest has since punctuated the landscape. In [Burkina Faso](#), the political climate has turned stormy as a result of a successful coup that ended the rule of the president, and then a putsch against the transitional government. These two African countries have been downgraded as a result.

It should be noted that the African country of South [Sudan](#) -- the world's newest nation state -- has not been officially included in this assessment; however, it can be unofficially assessed to be in the vicinity of "3" due to its manifold political and economic challenges. [Guinea](#) has endured poor rankings throughout, but was slightly downgraded further over fears of social unrest and the Ebola heath crisis.

In Europe, [Ukraine](#) was downgraded due to the unrest facing that country following its Maidan revolution that triggered a pro-Russian uprising in the eastern part of the country. [Russia](#) was also implicated in the Ukrainian crisis due to its intervention on behalf of pro-Russian separatists, as well as its annexation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea. [Serbia](#) and [Albania](#) were slightly downgraded due to eruptions of unrest, while [Romania](#) was slightly downgraded on the basis of corruption charges against the prime minister. [Spain](#), [Portugal](#), [Ireland](#), and [Italy](#) were downgraded due to debt woes and the concomitant effect on the euro zone. [Greece](#), another euro zone nation, was downgraded the previous year due to its sovereign debt crisis; however, the country successfully forged a rescue deal with international creditors and stayed within the Euro zone. Greek voters rewarded the hitherto unknown upstart party at the polls for these efforts. As a result, [Greece](#) was actually upgraded slightly as it proved to the world that it could endure the political and economic storms. Meanwhile, [Germany](#), [France](#), [Switzerland](#), the [United Kingdom](#),

the [Netherlands](#), and the Scandinavian countries continue to post impressive ranking consistent with these countries' strong records of democracy, freedom, and peaceful transfers of power.

In Asia, [Nepal](#) was downgraded in response to continuous political instability well after landmark elections that prevails today. [Cambodia](#) was very slightly downgraded due to post-election instability that has resulted in occasional flares of violence. Despite the "trifecta of tragedy" in [Japan](#) in 2011 -- the earthquake, the ensuing tsunami, and the resulting nuclear crisis -- and the appreciable destabilization of the economic and political terrain therein, this country has only slightly been downgraded. Japan's challenges have been assessed to be transient, the government remains accountable, and there is little risk of default. Both [India](#) and [China](#) retain their rankings; [India](#) holds a slightly higher ranking than [China](#) due to its record of democratic representation and accountability. Increasing violence and political instability in [Pakistan](#) resulted in a downgrade for this country's already low rating.

In the Americas, [Haiti](#) retained its downgraded status due to ongoing political and economic woes. [Mexico](#) was downgraded due to its alarming rate of crime. [Guatemala](#) was downgraded due to charges of corruption, the arrest of the president, and uncertainty over the outcome of elections. [Brazil](#) was downgraded due to the corruption charges erupting on the political landscape, the stalling of the economy, and the increasingly loud calls for the impeachment of President Rousseff. [Argentina](#) was downgraded due to its default on debt following the failure of talks with bond holders. [Venezuela](#) was downgraded due to the fact that the country's post-Chavez government is every bit as autocratic and nationalistic, but even more inclined to oppress its political opponents. [Colombia](#) was upgraded slightly due to efforts aimed at securing a peace deal with the FARC insurgents. A small but significant upgrade was attributed to [Cuba](#) due to its recent pro-business reforms and its normalization of ties with the United States. Meanwhile, the [United States](#), [Canada](#), [Costa Rica](#), [Panama](#), and most of the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean retain their strong rankings due to their records of stability and peaceful transfers of power.

In the Pacific, [Fiji](#) was upgraded due to its return to constitutional order and democracy with the holding of the first elections in eight years.

In Oceania, [Maldives](#) has been slightly downgraded due to the government's continued and rather relentless persecution of the country's former pro-democracy leader - former President Nasheed.

Source:

Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief, CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

2015

Freedom Rankings

Freedom Rankings

Freedom in the World

Editor's Note: This ranking by Freedom House quantifies political freedom and civil liberties into a single combined index on each sovereign country's level of freedom and liberty. The initials "PR" and "CL" stand for Political Rights and Civil Liberties, respectively. The number 1 represents the most free countries and the number 7 represents the least free. Several countries fall in the continuum in between. The freedom ratings reflect an overall judgment based on survey results.

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Status	Trend Arrow
Afghanistan	6 ?	6	Not Free	
Albania*	3	3	Partly Free	
Algeria	6	5	Not Free	
Andorra*	1	1	Free	
Angola	6	5	Not Free	
Antigua and Barbuda*	3 ?	2	Free	

Argentina*	2	2	Free	
Armenia	6	4	Partly Free	
Australia*	1	1	Free	
Austria*	1	1	Free	
Azerbaijan	6	5	Not Free	
Bahamas*	1	1	Free	
Bahrain	6 ?	5	Not Free ?	
Bangladesh*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Barbados*	1	1	Free	
Belarus	7	6	Not Free	
Belgium*	1	1	Free	
Belize*	1	2	Free	
Benin*	2	2	Free	
Bhutan	4	5	Partly Free	
Bolivia*	3	3	Partly Free	
Bosnia-Herzegovina*	4	3	Partly Free	
Botswana*	3 ?	2	Free	
Brazil*	2	2	Free	

Brunei	6	5	Not Free	
Bulgaria*	2	2	Free	
Burkina Faso	5	3	Partly Free	
Burma	7	7	Not Free	
Burundi*	4	5	Partly Free	↑
Cambodia	6	5	Not Free	↓
Cameroon	6	6	Not Free	
Canada*	1	1	Free	
Cape Verde*	1	1	Free	
Central African Republic	5	5	Partly Free	
Chad	7	6	Not Free	
Chile*	1	1	Free	
China	7	6	Not Free	
Colombia*	3	4	Partly Free	
Comoros*	3	4	Partly Free	
Congo (Brazzaville)	6	5	Not Free	↓
Congo (Kinshasa)	6	6	Not Free	↓
Costa Rica*	1	1	Free	

Cote d'Ivoire	6	5	Not Free	
Croatia*	1 ?	2	Free	
Cuba	7	6	Not Free	
Cyprus*	1	1	Free	
Czech Republic*	1	1	Free	
Denmark*	1	1	Free	
Djibouti	5	5	Partly Free	
Dominica*	1	1	Free	
Dominican Republic*	2	2	Free	↓
East Timor*	3	4	Partly Free	
Ecuador*	3	3	Partly Free	
Egypt	6	5	Not Free	
El Salvador*	2	3	Free	
Equatorial Guinea	7	7	Not Free	
Eritrea	7	7 ?	Not Free	
Estonia*	1	1	Free	
Ethiopia	5	5	Partly Free	↓
Fiji	6	4	Partly Free	

Finland*	1	1	Free	
France*	1	1	Free	
Gabon	6	5 ?	Not Free ?	
The Gambia	5	5 ?	Partly Free	
Georgia	4	4	Partly Free	
Germany*	1	1	Free	
Ghana*	1	2	Free	
Greece*	1	2	Free	
Grenada*	1	2	Free	
Guatemala*	4 ?	4	Partly Free	
Guinea	7	6 ?	Not Free	
Guinea-Bissau*	4	4	Partly Free	
Guyana*	2	3	Free	
Haiti*	4	5	Partly Free	
Honduras	4 ?	4 ?	Partly Free	
Hungary*	1	1	Free	
Iceland*	1	1	Free	
India*	2	3	Free	

Indonesia*	2	3	Free	
Iran	6	6	Not Free	↓
Iraq	5 ?	6	Not Free	
Ireland*	1	1	Free	
Israel*	1	2	Free	
Italy*	1	2	Free	
Jamaica*	2	3	Free	
Japan*	1	2	Free	
Jordan	6 ?	5	Not Free ?	
Kazakhstan	6	5	Not Free	↓
Kenya	4	4 ?	Partly Free	
Kiribati*	1	1	Free	
Kosovo	5 ?	4 ?	Partly Free ?	
Kuwait	4	4	Partly Free	
Kyrgyzstan	6 ?	5 ?	Not Free ?	
Laos	7	6	Not Free	
Latvia*	2	1	Free	
Lebanon	5	3 ?	Partly Free	

Lesotho*	3 ?	3	Partly Free ?	
Liberia*	3	4	Partly Free	
Libya	7	7	Not Free	
Liechtenstein*	1	1	Free	
Lithuania*	1	1	Free	
Luxembourg*	1	1	Free	
Macedonia*	3	3	Partly Free	↑
Madagascar	6 ?	4 ?	Partly Free	
Malawi*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Malaysia	4	4	Partly Free	
Maldives*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Mali*	2	3	Free	
Malta*	1	1	Free	↓
Marshall Islands*	1	1	Free	
Mauritania	6	5	Not Free	
Mauritius*	1	2	Free	
Mexico*	2	3	Free	
Micronesia*	1	1	Free	

Moldova*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Monaco*	2	1	Free	
Mongolia*	2	2	Free	↑
Montenegro*	3	2 ?	Free ?	
Morocco	5	4	Partly Free	↓
Mozambique	4 ?	3	Partly Free	
Namibia*	2	2	Free	
Nauru*	1	1	Free	
Nepal	4	4	Partly Free	
Netherlands*	1	1	Free	
New Zealand*	1	1	Free	
Nicaragua*	4	4 ?	Partly Free	
Niger	5 ?	4	Partly Free	
Nigeria	5	4	Partly Free	↓
North Korea	7	7	Not Free	↓
Norway*	1	1	Free	
Oman	6	5	Not Free	
Pakistan	4	5	Partly Free	

Palau*	1	1	Free	
Panama*	1	2	Free	
Papua New Guinea*	4	3	Partly Free	
Paraguay*	3	3	Partly Free	
Peru*	2	3	Free	
Philippines	4	3	Partly Free	↓
Poland*	1	1	Free	
Portugal*	1	1	Free	
Qatar	6	5	Not Free	
Romania*	2	2	Free	
Russia	6	5	Not Free	↓
Rwanda	6	5	Not Free	
Saint Kitts and Nevis*	1	1	Free	
Saint Lucia*	1	1	Free	
Saint Vincent and Grenadines*	2	1	Free	
Samoa*	2	2	Free	
San Marino*	1	1	Free	
Sao Tome and Principe*	2	2	Free	

Saudi Arabia	7	6	Not Free	
Senegal*	3	3	Partly Free	
Serbia*	2 ?	2	Free	
Seychelles*	3	3	Partly Free	
Sierra Leone*	3	3	Partly Free	
Singapore	5	4	Partly Free	
Slovakia*	1	1	Free	↓
Slovenia*	1	1	Free	
Solomon Islands	4	3	Partly Free	
Somalia	7	7	Not Free	
South Africa*	2	2	Free	
South Korea*	1	2	Free	
Spain*	1	1	Free	
Sri Lanka*	4	4	Partly Free	
Sudan	7	7	Not Free	
Suriname*	2	2	Free	
Swaziland	7	5	Not Free	
Sweden*	1	1	Free	

Switzerland*	1	1	Free	↓
Syria	7	6	Not Free	
Taiwan*	1 ?	2 ?	Free	
Tajikistan	6	5	Not Free	
Tanzania	4	3	Partly Free	
Thailand	5	4	Partly Free	
Togo	5	4 ?	Partly Free	
Tonga	5	3	Partly Free	
Trinidad and Tobago*	2	2	Free	
Tunisia	7	5	Not Free	
Turkey*	3	3	Partly Free	↓
Turkmenistan	7	7	Not Free	
Tuvalu*	1	1	Free	
Uganda	5	4	Partly Free	
Ukraine*	3	2	Free	
United Arab Emirates	6	5	Not Free	
United Kingdom*	1	1	Free	
United States*	1	1	Free	

Uruguay*	1	1	Free	
Uzbekistan	7	7	Not Free	
Vanuatu*	2	2	Free	
Venezuela	5 ?	4	Partly Free	
Vietnam	7	5	Not Free	↓
Yemen	6 ?	5	Not Free ?	
Zambia*	3	4 ?	Partly Free	
Zimbabwe	6 ?	6	Not Free	

Methodology:

PR and CL stand for political rights and civil liberties, respectively; 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free rating. The ratings reflect an overall judgment based on survey results.

? ? up or down indicates a change in political rights, civil liberties, or status since the last survey.

↑ ↓ up or down indicates a trend of positive or negative changes that took place but that were not sufficient to result in a change in political rights or civil liberties ratings of 1-7.

* indicates a country's status as an electoral democracy.

Source:

This data is derived from the latest edition of Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2010 edition.

Available at URL: <http://www.freedomhouse.org>

Updated:

Reviewed in 2015

Human Rights

Overview of Human Rights in Ghana

Ghana is a constitutional democracy. The government's human rights record has improved over the years, but there are still some problem areas that need to be addressed.

Use of excessive force by security agencies has led to cases of severe injuries and even deaths in recent years. There are also reports that the police regularly beat suspects while in custody to force confessions, even if they -- the suspects -- are known to be innocent.

Prison conditions are often inhumane and life-threatening. Prolonged pre-trial detention, especially for political prisoners, is common as well.

Journalists who try to report stories containing views contrary to those of the government sometimes face arrest, detention, and in some cases, even threats of violence and death. Human rights activists face the same treatment.

There are restrictions on the freedoms of assembly, speech and press.

Other concerns include widespread corruption and a trend toward vigilante justice.

Societal discrimination and violence against disabled persons, homosexuals, people with HIV/AIDS, and ethnic minorities have been noted.

Child labor and trafficking of children are concerns as well.

During the past year, the government took steps to improve its human rights record in terms of passing laws and legislation, especially in the area of human trafficking, but implementation of these laws is still lagging behind.

Human Development Index (HDI) Rank:

See full listing of the Human Development Index located in the Social Overview of this report for this country's current rank.

Human Poverty Index Rank:

62nd out of 103

Gini Index:

39.6

Life Expectancy at Birth (years):

61 years

Unemployment Rate:

20%

Population living on \$1 a day (%):

44.8%

Population living on \$2 a day (%):

78.5%

Population living beneath the Poverty Line (%):

31.4%

Internally Displaced People:

N/A

Note-44,000 refugees are currently seeking asylum in Ghana

Total Crime Rate (%):

N/A

Health Expenditure (% of GDP):

Public: 2.3%

% of GDP Spent on Education:

3.2%

Human Rights Conventions Party to:

- International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Conventions on the Rights of the Child
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
- International Convention on the Protection of All Migrants and Members of Their Families
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

*Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index that measures the level of well-being in 177 nations in the world. It uses factors such as poverty, literacy, life-expectancy, education, gross domestic product, and purchasing power parity to assess the average achievements in each nation. It has been used in the United Nation's Human Development Report since 1993.

*Human Poverty Index Ranking is based on certain indicators used to calculate the Human Poverty Index. Probability at birth of not surviving to age 40, adult literacy rate, population without sustainable access to an improved water source, and population below income poverty line are the indicators assessed in this measure.

*The Gini Index measures inequality based on the distribution of family income or consumption. A value of 0 represents perfect equality (income being distributed equally), and a value of 100 perfect inequality (income all going to one individual).

*The calculation of the total crime rate is the % of the total population which has been effected by property crime, robbery, sexual assault, assault, or bribery (corruption) related occurrences.

Government Functions

Constitution

The constitution that established the Fourth Republic provides a basic charter for republican democratic government. It declares Ghana to be a unitary republic with sovereignty residing in the Ghanaian people. Intended to prevent future coups, dictatorial government, and a one-party state, it is designed to establish the concept of power sharing. The document reflects lessons learned from the abrogated constitutions of 1957, 1960, 1969 and 1979, and incorporates provisions and institutions drawn from British and American constitutional models. One controversial provision of the constitution indemnifies members and appointees of the Provisional National Defense Council or PNDC from liability for any official act or omission during the years of PNDC rule. The constitution calls for a system of checks and balances, with power shared among a president, a unicameral parliament, a council of state and an independent judiciary.

Executive Authority

Executive authority is established in the office of the presidency, together with the president's Council of Ministers. The president is head of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the armed forces, and also appoints the vice president and ministers of state. The president and vice president elected on the same ticket by popular vote for four-year terms (eligible for a second term). The Council of State serves as cabinet; the president nominates members subject to approval by Parliament. According to the constitution, more than half of the ministers of state must be appointed from among members of parliament.

Following Article 60.6 of the Ghanaian constitution, if "the President dies, resigns or is removed from office, the Vice-President shall assume office as President for the unexpired term of office of the President with effect from the date of the death, resignation or removal of the President."

Legislative Authority

Legislative functions are vested in parliament, which consists of a unicameral 230-member body plus the speaker. To become law, legislation must have the assent of the president, who has a qualified veto over all bills except those to which a vote of urgency is attached. Members of parliament are popularly elected by universal adult suffrage for terms of four years, except in wartime, when terms may be extended for not more than 12 months at a time beyond the four years.

Judicial Authority

The legal system is based on English common law and customary law. The structure and the power of the judiciary are independent of the two other branches of government. The Supreme Court has broad powers of judicial review. It is authorized by the constitution to rule on the constitutionality of any legislation or executive action at the request of any aggrieved citizen. The hierarchy of courts derives largely from British juridical forms. The hierarchy, called the Superior Court of Judicature, is composed of the Supreme Court of Ghana, the Court of Appeal, the High Court of Justice, regional tribunals, and such lower courts or tribunals as parliament may establish. The courts have jurisdiction over all civil and criminal matters.

Government Structure

Names:

conventional long form:

Republic of Ghana

conventional short form:

Ghana

former:

Gold Coast

Type:

Constitutional democracy; multi-party, presidential regime

Executive Branch:

Chief on state and head of government:

President John Dramani Mahama (since July 2012 succeeding Atta Mills who died in office). Mahama succeeded John Atta Mills (elected in 2008/2009 elections and inaugurated on Jan. 7, 2009; died in office as sitting president on July 24, 2012). Note that a presidential election was set for Dec. 7, 2012 in which the president was re-elected to power; see Election Primer below for details.

The president is both the chief of state and head of government. Typically, the president is elected by popular vote for four-year terms (eligible for a second term).

Note on deceased chief of state and head of government:

On July 24, 2012, President John Atta Mills of Ghana was reported to have died at a military hospital in the country's capital city of Accra. A statement from the Interior Ministry read as follows: "It is with a heavy heart ... that we announce the sudden and untimely death of the president of the Republic of Ghana." While authorities and media in Ghana did not specify the cause of Atta Mills' death, the president was known to have been suffering from a number of ailments. Atta Mills became president of Ghana following the 2008 elections. Now, with his death in 2012, he would be succeeded by his deputy -- Vice President John Dramani Mahama. To that end, Mahama was sworn into office as the new president of Ghana in a peaceful transition of power. He would serve at the helm of Ghana as the head of state until the next elections, which was set for December 2012. With an eye on maintaining the country's stability, incoming President Mahama said: "I wish Ghanaians to be assured that all is well. We are going to maintain the peace, unity and stability that Ghana is noted for." Mahama was elected to this post in 2012.

Cabinet:

Council of Ministers; president nominates ministers subject to the approval of parliament

2012 Elections:

Election held on Dec. 7, 2012. Results were as follows -- John Dramani MAHAMA elected president; percent of vote - John Dramani MAHAMA 50.7%, Nana Addo Dankwa AKUFO-ADDO 47.7%, other 1.6%. See Primer below for full details.

Legislative Branch:

Unicameral Parliament:

275 members; elected by direct popular vote from single-seat constituencies to serve four-year terms

2012 Elections:

Elections held on Dec. 7, 2012. Results were as follows -- percent of vote by party - NPP 47.5%, NDC 46.4%, PNC 0.6%, independent 2.5%, other 3.0%; seats by party - NDC 151, NPP 120, PNC 1, independent 3. See Primer below for full details.

Primer on 2012 General Elections in Ghana:

(Dec. 7, 2012)

Presidential and parliamentary elections were set to be held in Ghana in December 2012.

At the presidential level, the president is both the chief of state and head of government. Typically, the president is elected by popular vote for four-year terms and is eligible for a second term. The

last election in 2008 brought to power John Evans Atta Mills. But in July 2012, Atta Mills died from medical complication, paving the way for his deputy -- Vice President John Dramani Mahama -- to assume the highest post in Ghana. For his part, Mahama was sworn into office as the new president of Ghana in a peaceful transition of power. He would serve at the helm of Ghana as the head of state until the next elections, which was set for December 2012, as noted here.

The main presidential candidates included the following: President John Dramani Mahama of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), Abu Sakara Foster of the Convention People's Party (CPP), Hassan Ayariga of the People's National Convention (PNC), Papa Kwesi Nduom of the Progressive People's Party (PPP), Akwasi Addai of the United Front Party (UFP), Henry Lartey of the Great Consolidated Popular Party (GCPP) and the independent candidate, Joseph Osei-Yeboah.

Also at stake in December 2012 would be the composition of the unicameral parliament of Ghana. Composed of more than 200 members, members are elected by direct popular vote from single-seat constituencies to serve four-year terms. The previous elections were held in 2008, and as scheduled, these elections would be held in 2012.

The main parties contesting the 2012 elections were expected to be the National Democratic Congress (NDC), which won the most seats in 2008, as well as the New Patriotic Party (NPP) which also saw strong performance in 2008, as well as the People's National Convention (PNC) and the Convention People's Party (CPP).

Note:

Voting had been extended through Dec. 8, 2012 to compensate for the fact that there were technical problems at polling stations. Of particular concern was the fact that biometric machines failed to identify voters, leaving many voters were unable to cast ballots on Dec. 7, 2012.

Late on Dec. 8, 2012 after the polls finally closed, Ghana's main opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) declared its own victory, declaring that it had won the presidential election with 51.03 percent of votes. At a press briefing, spokesperson for the NPP said that its presidential candidate, Nana Addo Dankwa Akfuo-Addo, secured 51.03 percent against incumbent President John Dramani Mahama, whom he said garnered 45.50 percent of the vote. That result was contrary to the news from local media outfits, which reported that the presidential race was a very tight one. Media outfits indicated that Mahama and Akfuo-Addo were running in a dead heat to the finish, with Mahama slightly closer to reaching the 50 percent majority needed to avoid contesting a second election round. Meanwhile, a spokesperson from the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) said that party was having a good election performance and was on track to win the most seats in parliament.

By Dec. 9, 2012, it was announced that Mahama was re-elected president of Ghana. According to the Electoral Commission, Mahama secured 50.7 percent of the vote while his closest rival, Akufo-Addo, took 47.74 percent. The opposition NPP alleged that the election was manipulated, however, the Election Commission said there was no compelling evidence to support that view.

Judicial Branch:

Supreme Court; Court of Appeal; High Court of Justice; regional tribunals; lower courts established by Parliament; courts have jurisdiction over all civil and criminal matters

Constitution:

Approved April 28, 1992; went into effect Jan. 7, 1993

Legal System:

Based on English common law and customary law; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Political Parties, Leaders, and Types:

Convention People's Party or CPP [Samia NKRUMAH]

National Democratic Congress or NDC [John Dramani MAHAMA]

New Patriotic Party or NPP [Paul AFOKO]

People's National Convention or PNC [Alhaji Amed RAMADAN]

note -

These four listed above are the most popular political parties as of December 2012; there are more than 20 registered parties

Administrative Divisions:

10 regions: Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, Central, Eastern, Greater Accra, Northern, Upper East, Upper West, Volta, Western

Principal Government Officials

Cabinet and Leadership of Ghana

Pres. John Dramani MAHAMA
Vice Pres. Kwesi AMISSAH-ARTHUR
Min. of Chieftaincy & Traditional Affairs Henry Seidu DAANAA
Min. of Communications Edward Omane BOAMAH
Min. of Defense Mark Owen WOYONGO
Min. of Education Naana Jane OPOKU-AGYEMAN
Min. of Employment & Labor Relations Nii Armah ASHIETEY
Min. of Energy & Petroleum Emmanuel Armah Kofi BUAH
Min. of Environment, Science, Technology, & Innovation Oteng ADJEI
Min. of Finance & Economic Planning Seth TERKPER
Min. of Fisheries & Aquaculture Development Nayon BILJO
Min. of Food & Agriculture Clement Kofi HUMADO
Min. of Foreign Affairs & Regional Integration Hanna TETTEH
Min. of Gender, Children, & Social Protection Nana Oye LITHUR
Min. of Health Hanny Sherry AYITTEY
Min. of Information & Media Relations Mahama AYARIGA
Min. of Interior Kwesi AHWOI
Min. of Justice & Attorney Gen. Marietta BREW-APPIAH-OPPONG
Min. of Lands & Natural Resources Inusah FUSEINI
Min. of Local Govt. & Rural Development Akwasi Opong FOSU
Min. of Parliamentary Affairs & Majority Leader Benjamin KUNBOUR
Min. of Roads & Highways Amin Amidu SULEMANI
Min. of Tourism, Culture, & Creative Arts Elizabeth OFOSU-AGYARE
Min. of Trade & Industry Haruna IDDRISU
Min. of Transportation Dzifa ATTIVOR
Min. of Water Resources, Works, & Housing Collins DAUDA
Min. of Youth & Sports Elvis AFRIYIE-ANKRAH
Min. of State, Office of the Pres.
Min. of State, Office of the Pres.
Governor, Bank of Ghana Henry Kofi WAMPAH
Ambassador to the US
Permanent Representative to the UN, New York Kenneth Kweku KANDA

-- as of 2015

Leader Biography

Leader Biography

Note on President:

Executive Branch:

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Foreign Relations

General Relations

Ghana is active in the United Nations (U.N.) and many of its specialized agencies (including the World Trade Organization), the Non-aligned Movement, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Generally, it follows the consensus of the Non-aligned Movement and the OAU on economic and political issues not

directly affecting its own interests.

Ghana has been extremely active in international peacekeeping activities under U.N. auspices in Lebanon, Afghanistan, Rwanda, the Balkans, and Pakistan, in addition to an eight-year sub-regional initiative with its ECOWAS partners to develop and then enforce a ceasefire in Liberia. Ghana has also been active in ECOWAS' negotiations of a ceasefire in war-torn Sierra Leone. Ghana maintains friendly relations with many of the world's nation states, regardless of ideology.

In mid-2003, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone decorated 785 Ghanaian peacekeepers with medals of honor. The medals were given to the peacekeepers to honor Ghanaians' service with the mission. Ghana's contributions to United Nations peacekeeping efforts dates back to 1960 and has included missions in over 20 hotspots globally.

Regional Relations

ECOWAS

ECOWAS encourages economic, social, and cultural development in West Africa. Founded in 1975 by the Treaty of Lagos, ECOWAS began operation in 1977. Its 16 member states are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

ECOWAS is administered through a secretariat based in Lagos, Nigeria. Since its inception, ECOWAS has moved to liberalize trade by gradually reducing restrictions on the movement of goods, services and people between member states. It has also improved communications and transport within the region. Some member governments; however, have been slow to implement agreed-upon policies at a national level and to pay their contribution to community funds. ECOWAS played a significant military role in the region during the 1990s.

The organization set up mechanisms in 1990 to mediate disputes between its members, all of whom are pledged to mutual non-aggression. In the same year the ECOWAS Monitoring Group, or ECOMOG, a peacekeeping force, was sent to Liberia to try to mediate a year-old civil war. ECOWAS' efforts to finalize a peace settlement and establish a government acceptable to all Liberian factions failed initially, and fighting continued through 1993.

However, by the end of that year ECOWAS had helped to oversee the negotiation of a peace treaty and the setting up of a transitional government that took power in 1994. When fighting again erupted between factions in early 1996, ECOMOG forces occupied the Liberian capital of Monrovia.

Africa Union

At its July 2-11, 2001 meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, the Organization of African Unity officially approved the transformation of the Organization of African Unity into the new African Union. Former foreign minister of Cote d'Ivoire, Amara Essy, was elected the first Secretary-General of the Africa Union. United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, reacted with the statement that "This historic effort will require leadership, courage and willingness to depart from the ways of the past, if it is to do for Africa what the European Union has done for Europe."

The goal of the African Union is to be a continental body that will pave the way to a better life for all Africans. Where the OAU was criticized for its lack of action on economic and social fronts, the African Union is charged with development as its primary task. Following a model based on the European Union, the African Union is intended to bridge the economic gaps between African countries and thrust the continent onto the world economic stage as a single entity. The African Union Bill was based on a convergence of president Thabo Mbeki's African development plan, and the Plan Omega proposed by Senegalese president Abdoulaye Wade. It therefore adds to its economic mandate the political mandate that all of Africa should seek democratic consolidation.

There are significant criticisms to the new African Union, though. Some fear that too much faith is being placed in a document that makes more sense in theory than in practice. The strongest criticism, however, is that the Africa Union's largest force has been Libyan President Muammar al-Qadhafi.

The United States (U.S.) has made its objections to the Union clear no doubt due to a lack of trust in Qadhafi's motives. Many African leaders backed the Union even though they also demonstrated a lack of trust in Qadhafi's motives. Even at the opening of the meeting of the OAU leaders noted that Qadhafi failed to even mention Africa's founding fathers even though it was Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah who was the founder of pan-Africanism some forty years ago. Indeed, Qadhafi has backed groups that are markedly anti-pan-Africanist in his own country. Other comments challenged the controversial role Libyan nationals often play in sub-Saharan African countries. Yet the most controversial position of Qadhafi no doubt was his statement that "We cannot be neutral here. We are here for the Africans, not the Europeans. We are here for the blacks, not for the whites." With Louis Farrakhan, leader of the U.S.-based Nation of Islam movement, standing behind him, this statement was taken as an affront to increased western relations as opposed to the Union's goal of increasing economic ties with wealthier countries.

Other Important Relations

United States

The United States (U.S.) has enjoyed good relations with Ghana at the non-official, personal level

since Ghana's independence. Thousands of Ghanaians have been educated in the United States. Close relations are maintained between educational and scientific institutions, and cultural links, particularly between Ghanaians and African-Americans, are strong.

After a period of strained relations in the mid-1980s, U.S.-Ghanaian official relations are stronger than at any other time in recent memory. Ghanaian parliamentarians and other government officials have, through the U.S. International Visitor Program, acquainted themselves with U.S. congressional and state legislative practices and participated in programs designed to address other issues of interest.

The U.S. and Ghanaian militaries have cooperated in numerous joint training exercises, culminating with Ghanaian participation in the African Crisis Response Initiative, an international activity in which the U.S. is facilitating the development of an inter-operable peacekeeping capacity among African nations.

In addition, there is an active bilateral international military and educational training program. The office of the president of Ghana worked closely with the U.S. Embassy in Accra to establish an American Chamber of Commerce to continue to develop closer economic ties in the private sector.

The United States is among Ghana's principal trading partners. The Office of the President of Ghana worked closely with the U.S. Embassy in Accra to establish an American Chamber of Commerce to continue to develop closer economic ties in the private sector.

The American privately-owned VALCO aluminum smelter imports many of its supplies from, and exports almost all its aluminum ingots to the United States. With a replacement value of more than \$600 million, U.S. investments in Ghana form one of the largest stocks of foreign capital. VALCO (90 percent owned by Kaiser, and 10 percent by Reynolds) is by far the biggest investment.

Major U.S. companies operating in the country include ACS, CMS Energy, ExxonMobil, Coca Cola, S.C. Johnson, Ralston Purina, Star-Kist, A.H. Robins, Sterling, Pfizer, IBM, 3M, Motorola, Stewart & Stevenson, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and National Cash Register (NCR). Several U.S. firms recently made or are considering investments in Ghana, primarily in gold mining, wood products, and petroleum. U.S. mining giant Newmont entered Ghana's mining sector in 2004 and intends to invest up to \$1 billion. In late 1997, Nuevo Petroleum concluded an oil exploration agreement accounting for the last of Ghana's offshore mineral rights zones. Several other U.S. oil companies also are engaged in offshore exploration, but so far with little success.

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Petroleum PLC and Ghana National Petroleum Corp, or GNPC, reaped the rewards of their first joint exploration, making a significant deep-water oil find. This find is seen as an important indicator of Ghana's oil production potential. Two other U.S. oil companies, Sante Fe and Hunt, are also engaged in offshore exploration.

U.S. development assistance to Ghana in fiscal year 1999 was estimated to have risen to \$56.2 million, apportioned to small business enterprise, health, education and democracy/governance programs. Ghana was the first country in the world to accept Peace Corps volunteers, and the Peace Corps program in Ghana remains one of the organization's largest. Volunteers work in education and in various fields such as agro-forestry, small business development, health education and water sanitation, as well as youth development.

The U.S. continued to be a strong supporter of Ghana as it entered into elections in the year 2000. It funded direct democracy and governance support, civil society broadening and deepening (through the START program of IFES), and elections monitors. While the United States was a long-time ally of Jerry Rawlings it pledged to work with whoever won the 2000 elections, in fact welcoming the opportunity work with President Kufuor and the NPP. The success of the elections was viewed by the international community as a sign of institutional maturity and will likely add to Ghana's ability to attract both foreign aid and foreign private investment.

In 2003, the U.S. gave Ghana a substantial loan, which was aimed at developing the cocoa sector.

U.S. development assistance to Ghana in fiscal year 2005 totaled more than \$50 million, divided between small business enterprise, health, education, and democracy/governance programs.

Ghana was the first country in the world to accept Peace Corps volunteers, and the program remains one of the largest. Currently, there are more than 150 volunteers in Ghana. Almost half work in education, and the others in agro-forestry, small business development, health education, water sanitation, and youth development. Ghana continued negotiations in 2005 on an aid compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation. Ghana is a Millennium Challenge Account-eligible country. The government of Ghana and the Millennium Challenge Corporation currently are negotiating signature of a \$517 million Compact focusing on agro-business expansion.

China

International relations and development assistance took center stage in recent years when Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao was visiting Ghana and promised to lend the African country about \$66m to fund various development projects. Wen Jiabao was traveling in Africa in a bid to explore new export markets for China's economy and as well as further energy and mineral supplies.

Written by Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief at CountryWatch.com; see Bibliography for research sources.

National Security

External Threats

Internal conflicts in neighboring Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia have inundated Ghana with tens of thousands of refugees. Ghana is also struggling to deal with their own returning nationals who had worked in the neighboring countries and now are coming home to escape the conflict in other regions.

Crime

Ghana has a moderately high rate of crime. The U.S. Department of State reports the persistence of street crime throughout the country, including theft and armed robbery. Business fraud is also prevalent. Once generally confined to Nigeria, financial scams have spread to other countries in the region. The perpetrators often target foreigners. The con usually begins with an unsolicited e-mail that offers the recipient the promise of high returns on an investment. The hopeful victim is generally required to pay a series of advance fees before collecting any compensation. The criminals then keep the fees, without fulfilling their obligation to pay the duped investor. In addition to the more elaborate investment schemes, credit card fraud is pervasive. Finally, the drug trade has also taken root in Ghana. It is a major transshipment point for Southeast and Southwest Asian heroin. To a lesser extent, it serves as an interim destination for South American cocaine bound for the United States and Europe. Ghana is an illicit producer of cannabis and rampant corruption facilitates money laundering there. The rate of armed robberies is now on the rise. So much so, that the government says it is now assuming life threatening proportions.

Insurgencies

There are no armed insurgencies operating inside or outside of Ghana that threaten to undermine the authority of its central government. Rampant political instability has plagued Ghana throughout its post-colonial history, however. Formerly a conglomerate of British colonies, Ghana became a self-governing state in March 1957. A military coup ousted the nation's first president, Kwame

Nkrumah, in February 1966. Civilian rule returned to Ghana in October 1969. The military wrested control of the government again, however, in January 1972. Widespread demonstrations fostered a changing of the guard in 1978, as did two violent military coups in 1979 and 1981, ultimately bringing Jerry Rawlings to power. Under his authoritarian rule, Ghana's central government did not re-introduce a multi-party political system until May 1992. Rawlings won subsequent presidential elections in 1992 and 1996. John Kufuor won the 2000 presidential election, defeating Rawlings' former vice president, John Mills. His victory marked the first peaceful, democratic transition of power in Ghana's history as an independent nation. In 2004, John Kufuor was re-elected as president.

In addition to political instability, Ghana has suffered periodic outbreaks of ethnic violence. In March 2002, Ghana's government sent troops to the northern part of the country to contain a tribal conflict. Fighting between tribal leaders over land and other issues has caused instability in many regions in recent years.

Terrorism

Terrorism does not pose a specific threat to Ghana. Ghana is party to five of the twelve UN resolutions on International Terrorism.

Defense Forces

Military Data

Military Branches:

Army, Navy, Air Force

Eligible age to enter service:

18

Mandatory Service Terms:

No conscription

Manpower in general population-fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 4,136,406

females age 16-49: 4,220,761

Manpower reaching eligible age annually:

Male: 267,896

Female: 260,992

Military Expenditures-Percent of GDP:

0.56%

Chapter 3

Economic Overview

Economic Overview

Overview

Ghana is rich in natural resources such as gold, diamonds, timber, and cocoa. Agriculture has traditionally been, and continues to be, the mainstay of the economy, accounting for about 35 percent of GDP and employing about 55 percent of the workforce. Cocoa beans and cocoa products remain dominant for exports. Other major products for exports include gold and timber. The discovery of major offshore oil reserves was announced in June 2007, and oil production began in late 2010, and was expected to bolster growth and fiscal revenues.

Ghana's economy performed well over the past decade as a result of sound economic policies and structural reforms in a supportive global economic environment. Strong economic growth contributed to a substantial reduction in poverty. Although the economy was adversely affected by the global economic crisis with real GDP growth declining in 2009, it was cushioned by robust cocoa and gold export prices and favorable rainfalls. In early 2010 President John Atta Mills said his priorities were to bring down inflation as well as a targeted recovery from current account and budget deficits. Long anticipated oil production at Ghana's offshore Jubilee field began in mid-December 2010. By October of 2011, the International Monetary Fund was praising the country's reduction of its fiscal and external current account imbalances. Inflation was down to single digits, and the country's international reserves had surged to about \$5 billion compared with \$2 billion by the end of 2008. 2011 saw fiscal consolidation and monetary easing. Combined with the start of oil production, Ghana was expected to see double digit growth in 2011. In December 2011, Ghana passed a \$10.7 billion 2012 budget aimed at developing infrastructure, fueling economic growth and creating jobs. Overall for the year, Ghana's economic performance grew by double digits and inflation was lowered to single digits.

By May 2012, however, the International Monetary Fund was noting that risks to the country's macroeconomic stability were climbing. Despite buoyant exports, the current account deficit exceeded 9 percent of GDP in 2011 due to high import growth. A rapid depreciation of the cedi in the first five months of 2012 had begun to feed into domestic prices, while increasing the cost of imports. In July 2012, the sudden death of 68-year-old President John Atta Mills had observers worried that the country would see a messy political transition as in other African countries where coups were not uncommon. Analysts said the development could lead to another 5 to 10 percent depreciation in the Ghanaian currency, which had lost about 17 percent against the dollar already for the year. Investment bank Renaissance Capital warned that the heightened uncertainty could lead some foreign investors to adopt a "wait-and-see" attitude.

Overall, GDP growth for 2012 was robust, driven by oil revenues, the services sector and the strong export performance of cocoa and gold. The successful inauguration of President John Mahama in January 2013 indicated further consolidation of democracy. In July 2013, the country issued a second Eurobond – this one worth \$750 million – that aimed to refinance debt and pay for infrastructure. At the end of September 2013, debt totaled about 52 percent of GDP. Then, in November 2013, Ghana said it would target economic growth of 8 percent in 2014 while seeking to cut its budget deficit. President Mahama’s government has been under pressure to rein in its budget deficit. Earlier in the month, the parliament approved a 2.5 percent increase in the Value Added Tax to 15 percent in a move that raised the ire of some unions.

By September 2014, Ghana continued to face significant domestic and external vulnerabilities on the back of a large fiscal deficit, a slowdown in economic growth and rising inflation. The IMF projected that growth would decelerate in 2014, and inflation would reach an average of around 15 percent for the year. The currency weakened sharply through August, before recovering in September.

In September 2014, Fitch Ratings affirmed Ghana's Long-term foreign and local currency Issuer Default Ratings (IDR) at 'B' with negative outlooks. Fitch noted that Ghana’s government had begun talks with the IMF in mid-September over a fund program. However, Fitch expects negotiations to be protracted with a deal expected only in 2015. Over the medium term to 2015, the African Development Bank was more optimistic - projecting the economy would register robust growth, bolstered by improved oil and gas production, increased private-sector investment, improved public infrastructure development and sustained political stability.

The recent oil price crash has reduced by half Ghana’s 2015 anticipated oil revenue. As of 2015, the country’s biggest single economic issue was the lack of consistent electricity. It has been grappling with frequent power blackouts that have angered voters and hurt businesses. While the Mahama administration was taking steps to improve the situation, it was expected that it would be the third or fourth quarter of 2015 before any relief was visible. Ghana signed a \$920 million extended credit facility with the IMF in April 2015 to help it address its growing economic crisis. The IMF fiscal targets require Ghana to reduce the fiscal deficit by cutting subsidies, decreasing the bloated public sector wage bill, strengthening revenue administration, and increasing revenues. The challenge for Ghana will come as the Mahama administration approached the 2016 election cycle facing public dissatisfaction in the midst of economic austerity.

In August 2015, Ghana’s president said the economy needed to expand by more than eight percent a year to create jobs for its growing population, according to Reuters.

The government was on track to raise \$1.5 billion on bond markets in September 2015, some \$500 million more than originally planned, noted Finance Minister Seth Terkper.

Ghana's cedi currency has been impacted by global commodity market woes and increased

demand for imports. It lost about 30 percent against the dollar since the start of 2015, according to Thomson Reuters.

Economic Performance

Following an average growth of 6 percent from 2005 to 2007, real GDP accelerated in 2008. This reflected expansionary fiscal policies, combined with an upswing in private sector activity on the back of strong credit growth, robust remittances, and strong agricultural production. Tighter policies and lower remittances as a result of the global economic crisis led to slower growth in 2009. By 2010, it had climbed again. Meanwhile, inflation spiked in 2008, driven by rising world food and fuel prices and strong domestic demand, before declining slightly in 2010.

According to CountryWatch estimated calculations for 2014:

Real GDP growth rate was: 7.4 percent

The fiscal deficit/surplus as percent of GDP (%) was: -11.6 percent

Inflation was measured at: 16.2 percent

Updated in 2015

**Please note that the figures in our Economic Performance section are estimates or forecasts based on IMF-based data that are formulated using CountryWatch models of analysis.*

Supplementary Sources: The International Monetary Fund, African Development Bank and Reuters

Nominal GDP and Components

Nominal GDP and Components					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nominal GDP (LCU billions)	59.816	75.315	94.939	113.436	134.073
Nominal GDP Growth Rate (%)	29.917	25.911	26.056	19.483	18.192

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Consumption (LCU billions)	39.560	44.207	69.046	80.080	91.283
Government Expenditure (LCU billions)	9.955	15.732	15.606	18.101	20.633
Gross Capital Formation (LCU billions)	17.722	24.689	22.582	26.191	31.864
Exports of Goods & Services (LCU billions)	22.066	30.191	31.667	44.092	45.771
Imports of Goods & Services (LCU billions)	29.487	39.504	43.962	55.028	55.478

Population and GDP Per Capita

Population and GDP Per Capita					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Population, total (million)	24.304	24.926	25.563	26.216	26.886
Population growth (%)	2.553	2.559	2.556	2.554	2.556
Nominal GDP per Capita (LCU 1000s)	2,461.17	3,021.56	3,713.94	4,326.98	4,986.72

Real GDP and Inflation

Real GDP and Inflation					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Real Gross Domestic Product (LCU billions 2005 base)	27.809	30.040	32.763	33.549	34.693
Real GDP Growth Rate (%)	14.025	8.022	9.064	2.400	3.409
GDP Deflator (2005=100.0)	215.094	250.715	289.777	338.120	386.457
Inflation, GDP Deflator (%)	13.937	16.561	15.580	16.683	14.296

Government Spending and Taxation

Government Spending and Taxation					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Government Fiscal Budget (billions)	15.826	23.110	25.955	33.191	34.343
Fiscal Budget Growth Rate (percentage)	31.795	46.026	12.311	27.879	3.471
National Tax Rate Net of Transfers (%)	19.127	18.502	16.463	18.406	19.748
Government Revenues Net of Transfers (LCU billions)	11.441	13.935	15.630	20.879	26.477
Government Surplus(-) Deficit(+) (LCU billions)	-4.3850	-9.1750	-10.3250	-12.3120	-7.8660
Government Surplus(+) Deficit(-) (%GDP)	-7.3308	-12.1821	-10.8754	-10.8537	-5.8670

Money Supply, Interest Rates and Unemployment

Money Supply, Interest Rates and Unemployment					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Money and Quasi-Money (M2) (LCU billions)	18.273	22.867	27.326	32.655	38.596
Money Supply Growth Rate (%)	33.995	25.139	19.501	19.501	18.192
Lending Interest Rate (%)	10.853	11.198	11.069	11.214	14.808
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.847	5.218	5.200	5.173	4.722

Foreign Trade and the Exchange Rate

Foreign Trade and the Exchange Rate					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Official Exchange Rate (LCU/\$US)	1.512	1.796	1.986	2.938	3.558
Trade Balance NIPA (\$US billions)	-4.9086	-5.1860	-6.1911	-3.7226	-2.7278
Trade Balance % of GDP	-12.4065	-12.3655	-12.9505	-9.6401	-7.2397
Total Foreign Exchange Reserves (\$US billions)	5.914	5.835	5.588	5.351	4.229

Data in US Dollars

Data in US Dollars					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nominal GDP (\$US billions)	39.565	41.939	47.806	38.616	37.679
Exports (\$US billions)	14.596	16.812	15.946	15.010	12.863
Imports (\$US billions)	19.504	21.998	22.137	18.733	15.591

Energy Consumption and Production Standard Units

Energy Consumption and Production Standard Units					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum Consumption (TBPD)	68.741	78.008	75.000	77.166	79.506
Petroleum Production (TBPD)	77.698	78.673	98.448	103.504	108.639
Petroleum Net Exports (TBPD)	8.957	0.6651	23.448	26.339	29.132
Natural Gas Consumption (bcf)	29.311	15.185	15.185	14.641	15.976
Natural Gas Production (bcf)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Natural Gas Net Exports (bcf)	-29.3114	-15.1854	-15.1854	-14.6410	-15.9761
Coal Consumption (1000s st)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coal Production (1000s st)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coal Net Exports (1000s st)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Nuclear Production (bil kwh)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Hydroelectric Production (bil kwh)	7.485	7.990	8.349	8.700	9.135
Renewables Production (bil kwh)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

Energy Consumption and Production QUADS

Energy Consumption and Production QUADS					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum Consumption (Quads)	0.1468	0.1666	0.1601	0.1648	0.1698
Petroleum Production (Quads)	0.1659	0.1691	0.2109	0.2261	0.1854
Petroleum Net Exports (Quads)	0.0191	0.0026	0.0507	0.0613	0.0156
Natural Gas Consumption (Quads)	0.0299	0.0155	0.0155	0.0149	0.0163
Natural Gas Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Natural Gas Net Exports (Quads)	-0.0299	-0.0155	-0.0155	-0.0149	-0.0163
Coal Consumption (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coal Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coal Net Exports (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Nuclear Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Hydroelectric Production (Quads)	0.0748	0.0799	0.0835	0.0870	0.0913
Renewables Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

World Energy Price Summary

World Energy Price Summary					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum-WTI (\$/bbl)	95.054	94.159	97.943	93.112	48.709
Natural Gas-Henry Hub (\$/mmbtu)	3.999	2.752	3.729	4.369	2.614
Coal Thermal-Australian (\$/mt)	121.448	96.364	84.562	70.130	57.511

CO2 Emissions

CO2 Emissions					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum Based (mm mt C)	3.279	3.721	3.578	3.681	3.793
Natural Gas Based (mm mt C)	0.4756	0.2464	0.2464	0.2375	0.2592
Coal Based (mm mt C)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Total CO2 Emissions (mm mt C)	3.755	3.968	3.824	3.919	4.052

Agriculture Consumption and Production

Agriculture Consumption and Production					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Corn Total Consumption (1000 metric tons)	1,695.19	2,061.86	1,764.24	1,764.24	1,687.24
Corn Production (1000 metric tons)	1,680.86	1,943.97	1,757.29	1,788.95	1,667.32
Corn Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	-14.3263	-117.8900	-6.9549	24.711	-19.9223
Soybeans Total Consumption (1000 metric tons)	0.0182	0.0182	0.0182	0.0182	0.0182
Soybeans Production (1000 metric tons)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Soybeans Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	-0.0182	-0.0182	-0.0182	-0.0182	-0.0182
Rice Total					

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Consumption (1000 metric tons)	464.026	481.163	569.536	604.000	562.920
Rice Production (1000 metric tons)	464.288	481.126	569.274	603.763	594.671
Rice Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	0.2623	-0.0364	-0.2618	-0.2374	31.752
Coffee Total Consumption (metric tons)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coffee Production (metric tons)	532.178	580.042	683.529	576.900	543.728
Coffee Net Exports (metric tons)	532.178	580.042	683.529	576.900	543.728
Cocoa Beans Total Consumption (metric tons)	2,631.48	293,426.40	309,289.00	268,691.35	244,018.76
Cocoa Beans Production (metric tons)	707,792.90	912,761.28	886,319.39	956,348.91	968,986.12
Cocoa Beans Net Exports (metric tons)	705,161.42	619,334.88	577,030.39	687,657.56	724,967.36
Wheat Total					

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Consumption (1000 metric tons)	325.030	190.109	261.255	245.244	214.403
Wheat Production (1000 metric tons)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Wheat Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	-325.0300	-190.1090	-261.2550	-245.2438	-214.4035

World Agriculture Pricing Summary

World Agriculture Pricing Summary					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Corn Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	291.684	298.417	259.389	192.881	169.750
Soybeans Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	540.667	591.417	538.417	491.771	390.417
Rice Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	458.558	525.071	473.989	425.148	386.033
Coffee Pricing Summary (\$/kilogram)	5.976	4.111	3.076	4.424	3.526
Cocoa Beans Pricing Summary (\$/kilogram)	2.980	2.392	2.439	3.062	3.135
Wheat Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	316.264	313.242	312.248	284.895	203.177

Metals Consumption and Production

Metals Consumption and Production					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Copper Consumption (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Copper Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Copper Net Exports (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Zinc Consumption (1000 mt)	2.572	160.300	186.084	116.319	116.319
Zinc Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Zinc Exports (1000 mt)	-2.5720	-160.3000	-186.0840	-116.3187	-116.3187
Lead Consumption (1000 mt)	1.319	0.3840	0.0090	0.5707	0.5707
Lead Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Lead Exports (1000 mt)	-1.3190	-0.3840	-0.0090	-0.5707	-0.5707
Tin Consumption (1000 mt)	3.892	3.892	3.892	3.892	3.892
Tin Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Tin Exports (1000 mt)	-3.8920	-3.8920	-3.8920	-3.8920	-3.8920
Nickel Consumption (1000 mt)	2.053	2.053	2.053	2.053	2.053
Nickel Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Nickel Exports (1000 mt)	-2.0526	-2.0526	-2.0526	-2.0526	-2.0526
Gold Consumption (kg)	93,208.68	93,208.68	93,208.68	97,084.35	89,333.02
Gold Production (kg)	89,825.37	93,661.26	97,540.18	105,055.95	105,331.90
Gold Exports (kg)	-3383.3181	452.581	4,331.50	7,971.60	15,998.89
Silver Consumption (mt)	4,899.00	4,684.93	4,684.93	4,470.86	3,849.73
Silver Production (mt)	5,495.82	5,622.18	5,675.60	5,683.02	5,210.19

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Silver Exports (mt)	596.822	937.250	990.670	1,212.16	1,360.47

World Metals Pricing Summary

World Metals Pricing Summary					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Copper (\$/mt)	8,828.19	7,962.35	7,332.10	6,863.40	5,510.46
Zinc (\$/mt)	2,193.90	1,950.41	1,910.26	2,160.97	1,931.68
Tin (\$/mt)	26,053.68	21,125.99	22,282.80	21,898.87	16,066.63
Lead (\$/mt)	2,400.81	2,064.64	2,139.79	2,095.46	1,787.82
Nickel (\$/mt)	22,910.36	17,547.55	15,031.80	16,893.38	11,862.64
Gold (\$/oz)	1,569.21	1,669.52	1,411.46	1,265.58	1,160.66
Silver (\$/oz)	35.224	31.137	23.850	19.071	15.721

Economic Performance Index

Economic Performance Index

The Economic Performance rankings are calculated by CountryWatch's editorial team, and are based on criteria including sustained economic growth, monetary stability, current account deficits, budget surplus, unemployment and structural imbalances. Scores are assessed from 0 to 100 using this aforementioned criteria as well as CountryWatch's proprietary economic research data and models.

	Bank stability risk	Monetary/ Currency stability	Government Finances	Empl./ Unempl.	Econ.GNP growth or decline/ forecast
	0 - 100	0 - 100	0 - 100	0 - 100	%
North Americas					
Canada	92	69	35	38	3.14%
United States	94	76	4	29	3.01%
Western Europe					
Austria	90	27	30	63	1.33%
Belgium	88	27	19	23	1.15%
Cyprus	81	91	16	80	-0.69%
Denmark	97	70	45	78	1.20%
Finland	89	27	41	33	1.25%

France	87	27	18	27	1.52%
Germany	86	27	22	21	1.25%
Greece	79	27	5	24	-2.00%
Iceland	90	17	2	34	-3.04%
Italy	85	27	37	24	0.84%
Ireland	92	27	11	10	-1.55%
Luxembourg	99	27	28	66	2.08%
Malta	77	27	41	51	0.54%
Netherlands	91	27	26	74	1.30%
Norway	98	44	10	76	1.08%
Portugal	77	27	13	20	0.29%
Spain	83	27	9	3	-0.41%
Sweden	94	72	54	32	1.23%
Switzerland	97	86	55	77	1.53%
United Kingdom	85	12	9	37	1.34%
Central and Eastern Europe					
Albania	44	60	33	6	2.30%
Armenia	45	59	49	30	1.80%

Azerbaijan	56	4	84	99	2.68%
Belarus	59	21	83	98	2.41%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	34	68	69	N/A	0.50%
Bulgaria	58	75	88	49	0.20%
Croatia	69	68	94	9	0.18%
Czech Republic	80	89	29	70	1.67%
Estonia	72	90	66	92	0.80%
Georgia	36	60	53	56	2.00%
Hungary	70	66	26	54	-0.16%
Latvia	67	100	65	44	-3.97%
Lithuania	65	91	87	79	-1.65%
Macedonia (FYR)	53	69	56	2	2.03%
Moldova	23	36	81	67	2.50%
Poland	74	74	38	12	2.72%
Romania	62	56	70	62	0.75%
Russia	73	18	90	8	4.00%
Serbia	48	49	52	5	1.97%

Montenegro	39	27	73	1	-1.70%
Slovak Republic	80	62	30	14	4.06%
Slovenia	81	27	36	65	1.12%
Ukraine	41	11	57	N/A	3.68%
Africa					
Algeria	57	18	96	7	4.55%
Angola	49	1	97	N/A	7.05%
Benin	19	91	20	N/A	3.22%
Botswana	68	58	76	N/A	6.33%
Burkina Faso	16	91	13	N/A	4.41%
Burundi	2	91	6	N/A	3.85%
Cameroon	26	91	91	N/A	2.58%
Cape Verde	52	87	4	N/A	4.96%
Central African Republic	9	91	32	N/A	3.18%
Chad	22	91	89	N/A	4.42%
Congo	52	87	87	N/A	12.13%
Côte d'Ivoire	25	91	82	28	2.98%
Dem. Republic					

Congo	4	91	47	N/A	5.44%
Djibouti	31	76	50	N/A	4.47%
Egypt	37	20	24	69	5.01%
Equatorial Guinea	82	91	85	N/A	0.94%
Eritrea	1	3	1	18	1.81%
Ethiopia	6	45	8	N/A	6.96%
Gabon	64	91	96	N/A	5.36%
Gambia	8	48	86	N/A	4.82%
Ghana	9	11	69	N/A	4.50%
Guinea	10	7	91	N/A	3.03%
Guinea-Bissau	5	91	46	N/A	3.47%
Kenya	20	41	59	N/A	4.11%
Lesotho	13	40	12	N/A	2.98%
Liberia	12	73	74	N/A	5.92%
Libya	73	2	94	N/A	5.22%
Madagascar	4	22	24	N/A	-1.02%
Malawi	7	25	55	N/A	5.96%
Mali	20	91	82	N/A	5.12%

Mauritania	15	13	93	N/A	4.58%
Mauritius	65	52	56	55	4.10%
Morocco	37	72	48	26	3.23%
Mozambique	12	23	71	N/A	6.45%
Namibia	40	39	62	N/A	1.70%
Niger	10	91	21	N/A	4.41%
Nigeria	30	6	61	N/A	6.98%
Rwanda	21	40	68	N/A	5.39%
Sao Tome & Principe	1	61	100	N/A	3.40%
Senegal	24	91	63	N/A	3.44%
Seychelles	60	67	97	N/A	4.01%
Sierra Leone	5	10	39	N/A	4.77%
Somalia	2	38	59	N/A	3.19%
South Africa	61	37	70	N/A	2.59%
Sudan	16	5	73	N/A	5.52%
Swaziland	32	44	79	N/A	1.09%
Tanzania	15	45	32	N/A	6.17%
Togo	8	91	92	N/A	2.56%

Tunisia	50	61	44	39	4.00%
Uganda	11	17	54	N/A	5.59%
Zambia	29	20	49	N/A	5.84%
Zimbabwe	0	8	16	N/A	2.24%
South and Central America					
Argentina	66	3	80	36	3.50%
Belize	47	76	80	N/A	1.00%
Bolivia	32	51	61	81	3.99%
Brazil	71	47	78	11	5.50%
Chile	78	25	92	73	4.72%
Columbia	47	52	34	47	2.25%
Costa Rica	60	42	39	57	3.45%
Ecuador	43	76	75	64	2.51%
El Salvador	35	76	67	N/A	1.04%
Guatemala	46	59	58	N/A	2.52%
Honduras	27	47	58	N/A	2.00%
Mexico	69	42	52	61	4.07%
Nicaragua	23	49	42	N/A	1.75%

Panama	66	76	72	45	5.00%
Paraguay	35	46	66	16	5.27%
Peru	59	66	75	22	6.33%
Suriname	58	26	81	59	4.02%
Uruguay	70	26	27	N/A	5.71%
Venezuela	55	1	28	13	-2.63%
Caribbean					
Antigua & Barbuda	72	76	15	N/A	-2.01%
Bahamas	74	76	45	87	-0.50%
Barbados	67	76	33	15	-0.50%
Bermuda	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cuba	45	76	18	95	0.25%
Dominica	53	76	65	N/A	1.40%
Dominican Republic	54	39	43	4	3.50%
Grenada	63	76	48	N/A	0.80%
Guyana	28	56	17	N/A	4.36%
Haiti	11	27	89	N/A	-8.50%
Jamaica	42	9	85	19	-0.28%

St Lucia	55	76	67	N/A	1.14%
St Vincent & Grenadines	49	76	95	N/A	0.50%
Trinidad & Tobago	82	37	77	72	2.13%
Middle East					
Bahrain	84	76	62	91	3.48%
Iran	51	19	40	58	3.01%
Iraq	48	9	8	N/A	7.27%
Israel	87	62	12	48	3.20%
Jordan	41	51	3	N/A	4.10%
Kuwait	96	4	99	N/A	3.10%
Lebanon	63	54	2	N/A	6.00%
Oman	76	16	88	N/A	4.71%
Qatar	99	16	83	N/A	18.54%
Saudi Arabia	76	8	98	N/A	3.70%
Syria	61	24	40	N/A	5.00%
Turkey	75	23	27	60	5.20%
United Arab Emirates	96	24	98	94	1.29%

Yemen	28	2	78	N/A	7.78%
Asia					
Afghanistan	17	70	74	N/A	8.64%
Bangladesh	13	43	25	N/A	5.38%
Bhutan	24	55	5	N/A	6.85%
Brunei	78	19	99	75	0.48%
Cambodia	18	67	42	N/A	4.77%
China	54	90	19	68	11.03%
Hong Kong	89	76	14	82	5.02%
India	31	38	34	35	8.78%
Indonesia	42	46	37	31	6.00%
Japan	88	89	6	71	1.90%
Kazakhstan	62	13	76	42	2.40%
Korea North	18	65	23	N/A	1.50%
Korea South	83	63	22	85	4.44%
Kyrgyz Republic	24	15	84	88	4.61%
Laos	17	54	7	N/A	7.22%
Macao	91	76	14	82	3.00%

Malaysia	68	65	44	90	4.72%
Maldives	44	55	17	N/A	3.45%
Mongolia	33	5	77	93	7.22%
Myanmar	3	41	72	N/A	5.26%
Nepal	3	14	25	N/A	2.97%
Pakistan	19	15	31	41	3.00%
Papua New Guinea	75	50	11	N/A	7.96%
Philippines	30	48	53	43	3.63%
Singapore	93	75	63	40	5.68%
Sri Lanka	38	22	10	N/A	5.50%
Taiwan	84	88	35	89	6.50%
Tajikistan	6	6	60	97	4.00%
Thailand	56	64	90	96	5.46%
Turkmenistan	51	53	68	N/A	12.00%
Uzbekistan	40	10	60	100	8.00%
Vietnam	25	12	20	N/A	6.04%
Pacific					
Australia	96	63	31	46	2.96%

Fiji	46	53	3	N/A	2.06%
Marshall Islands	27	76	46	N/A	1.08%
Micronesia (Fed. States)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Caledonia	96	73	51	52	2.00%
New Zealand	98	73	51	52	2.00%
Samoa	34	88	64	N/A	-2.77%
Solomon Islands	14	71	1	N/A	3.36%
Tonga	26	57	38	N/A	0.60%
Vanuatu	33	58	47	N/A	3.80%

Source:

CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

This material was produced in 2010; it is subject to updating in 2012.

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Chapter 4

Investment Overview

Foreign Investment Climate

Background

Well endowed with natural resources, Ghana has roughly twice the per capita output of the poorest countries in West Africa. Even so, Ghana remains heavily dependent on international financial and technical assistance. Gold and cocoa production and individual remittances are major sources of foreign exchange. Oil production is expected to expand in late 2010 or early 2011. The domestic economy continues to revolve around agriculture, which accounts for more than a third of GDP and employs more than half of the work force, mainly small landholders. Ghana signed a Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact in 2006, which aims to assist in transforming Ghana's agricultural sector. Ghana opted for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) program in 2002, and is also benefiting from the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative that took effect in 2006. Thematic priorities under its current Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy, which also provides the framework for development partner assistance, are: macroeconomic stability; private sector competitiveness; human resource development; and good governance and civic responsibility.

Foreign Investment Assessment

Openness to Foreign Investment

Ghana's Investment Act of 1994 encourages foreign investment. Foreign investors are not subject to differential treatment on taxes, prices, or access to foreign exchange, imports, and credit. Steps have been taken to remove a number of legal and administrative impediments to foreign investment.

The minimum required equity for foreign investors is US\$10,000 (in joint ventures) or US\$50,000 (for enterprises wholly-owned by a non-Ghanaian). Trading companies either wholly or partly owned by non-Ghanaians require minimum foreign equity of US\$300,000 and the firm must employ at least 10 Ghanaians. The higher minimum investment required in trading companies is meant to be a disincentive for foreigners to engage in this kind of activity.

The Ghana Investment Promotion Center (GIPC) was founded in 1994 and is responsible for the promotion of direct investment in Ghana. Investment in mining and petroleum exploration are regulated by the Minerals Commission and the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation

respectively. Portfolio investment is overseen by the Ghana Stock Exchange. The categories of business activity closed to foreign investment have been reduced to four: petty trading and hawking, operation of taxi and car hire services, lotteries and betting arrangements and the operation of beauty salons and barber shops.

When President John Kufuor came to power, his government tried to establish a more business-friendly environment and instituted a Ministry for Private Sector Development. The government also revised and improved the national Investment Promotion Center (discussed above) and began a process of identifying and removing bureaucratic hurdles to private sector development.

With respect to Ghana's privatization program, foreign investors comprise most of the bidders for these enterprises. Few local investors participate in this process except in partnership with foreign firms. There is no evidence that American investors are at a disadvantage in bidding for firms being privatized.

Transparency of Regulatory System

The government of Ghana has been moving toward liberalization and deregulation. The Ghana Investment Promotion Center (GIPC) Act of 1994 codified the government's desire to present foreign investors with a liberal foreign investment regulatory regime. Screening of foreign investment has been eliminated and the prerequisites for establishment of a business in Ghana are now quite minimal. The GIPC has established a one-stop-shop to eliminate the bureaucratic bottlenecks investors go through.

Labor Force

Total: 10.24 million estimated

By occupation: agriculture 60%, industry 15%, services 25%

Agriculture and Industry

Agriculture products: cocoa, rice, coffee, cassava (tapioca), peanuts, corn, shea nuts, bananas, timber

Industries: mining, lumbering, light manufacturing, aluminum smelting, food processing, cement, small commercial ship building

Import Commodities and Partners

Commodities: capital equipment, petroleum, foodstuffs

Partners: Nigeria 12.9%, China 9.1%, UK 7.1%, US 5.9%, Germany 4.7%, India 4.6%, France

4.4%

Export Commodities and Partners

Commodities: gold, cocoa, timber, tuna, bauxite, aluminum, manganese ore, diamonds

Partners: Netherlands 11.3%, UK 10.7%, France 7.6%, Germany 6.2%, Japan 5.3%, Italy 4.6%, Turkey 4.4%, US 4.3%

Telephone System

Telephones- main lines in use: 302,300

Telephones- mobile cellular: 799,900

General Assessment: poor to fair system; Internet accessible; many rural communities not yet connected; expansion of services is underway

Domestic: primarily microwave radio relay; wireless local loop has been installed

International: country code - 233; satellite earth stations - 4 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean); microwave radio relay link to Panafel system connects Ghana to its neighbors; fiber optic submarine cable (SAT-3/WASC) provides connectivity to Europe and Asia

Internet

Internet Hosts: 407

Internet users: 170,000

Roads, Airports, Ports and Harbors

Railways: 953 km

Highways: 46,176 km

Ports and harbors: Takoradi, Tema

Airports: 12; w/paved runways: 7

Legal System and Considerations

Ghana's legal system is based on English common law and customary law. It has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction.

Dispute Settlement

There have been no significant investment disputes in recent years involving U.S. or other foreign investors. Ghana's legal system is based on British common law. Lawsuits are allowed and usually begin in high court. The 1994 Investment Act addresses dispute settlement procedures and provides for arbitration when disputes cannot be settled by other means. In 1996, the Ghana Arbitration Center was established to strengthen the legal framework for protecting commercial and economic interests, in order to bolster potential investors' confidence in Ghana. Ghana does not currently have a bankruptcy statute.

Corruption Perception Ranking

See Corruption Perception index reported by Transparency International elsewhere in this report, from least to most corrupt countries.

Cultural Considerations

In Ghana, the western manner of greeting is acceptable here. However the oldest person in the room should be greeted first. It is also important to know that the use of the left hand is taboo in certain situations. For example, avoid using the left hand for giving or receiving food and gifts, and never wave with the left hand.

For More information see:

United States' State Department Commercial Guide

Foreign Investment Index

Foreign Investment Index

The Foreign Investment Index is a proprietary index measuring attractiveness to international investment flows. The Foreign Investment Index is calculated using an established methodology by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on a given country's economic stability (sustained economic growth, monetary stability, current account deficits, budget surplus), economic risk (risk of non-servicing of payments for goods or services, loans and trade-related finance, risk of sovereign default), business and investment climate (property rights, labor force and laws, regulatory transparency, openness to foreign investment, market conditions, and stability of government). Scores are assigned from 0-10 using the aforementioned criteria. A score of 0 marks the lowest level of foreign investment viability, while a score of 10 marks the highest level of foreign investment viability, according to this proprietary index.

Country	Assessment
Afghanistan	2
Albania	4.5
Algeria	6
Andorra	9
Angola	4.5-5
Antigua	8.5
Argentina	5
Armenia	5
Australia	9.5
Austria	9-9.5
Azerbaijan	5
Bahamas	9
Bahrain	7.5
Bangladesh	4.5
Barbados	9

Belarus	4
Belgium	9
Belize	7.5
Benin	5.5
Bhutan	4.5
Bolivia	4.5
Bosnia-Herzegovina	5
Botswana	7.5-8
Brazil	8
Brunei	7
Bulgaria	5.5
Burkina Faso	4
Burma (Myanmar)	4.5
Burundi	4
Cambodia	4.5
Cameroon	5
Canada	9.5
Cape Verde	6

Central African Republic	3
Chad	4
Chile	9
China	7.5
China: Hong Kong	8.5
China: Taiwan	8.5
Colombia	7
Comoros	4
Congo DRC	4
Congo RC	5
Costa Rica	8
Cote d'Ivoire	4.5
Croatia	7
Cuba	4.5
Cyprus	7
Czech Republic	8.5
Denmark	9.5
Djibouti	4.5

Dominica	6
Dominican Republic	6.5
East Timor	4.5
Ecuador	5.5
Egypt	4.5-5
El Salvador	6
Equatorial Guinea	4.5
Eritrea	3.5
Estonia	8
Ethiopia	4.5
Fiji	5
Finland	9
Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	5
France	9-9.5
Gabon	5.5
Gambia	5
Georgia	5
Germany	9-9.5

Ghana	5.5
Greece	5
Grenada	7.5
Guatemala	5.5
Guinea	3.5
Guinea-Bissau	3.5
Guyana	4.5
Haiti	4
Holy See (Vatican)	n/a
Hong Kong (China)	8.5
Honduras	5.5
Hungary	8
Iceland	8-8.5
India	8
Indonesia	5.5
Iran	4
Iraq	3
Ireland	8

Israel	8.5
Italy	8
Jamaica	5.5
Japan	9.5
Jordan	6
Kazakhstan	6
Kenya	5
Kiribati	5.5
Korea, North	1
Korea, South	9
Kosovo	4.5
Kuwait	8.5
Kyrgyzstan	4.5
Laos	4
Latvia	7
Lebanon	5
Lesotho	5.5
Liberia	3.5

Libya	3
Liechtenstein	9
Lithuania	7.5
Luxembourg	9-9.5
Madagascar	4.5
Malawi	4.5
Malaysia	8.5
Maldives	6.5
Mali	5
Malta	9
Marshall Islands	5
Mauritania	4.5
Mauritius	7.5-8
Mexico	6.5-7
Micronesia	5
Moldova	4.5-5
Monaco	9
Mongolia	5

Montenegro	5.5
Morocco	7.5
Mozambique	5
Namibia	7.5
Nauru	4.5
Nepal	4
Netherlands	9-9.5
New Zealand	9.5
Nicaragua	5
Niger	4.5
Nigeria	4.5
Norway	9-9.5
Oman	8
Pakistan	4
Palau	4.5-5
Panama	7
Papua New Guinea	5
Paraguay	6

Peru	6
Philippines	6
Poland	8
Portugal	7.5-8
Qatar	9
Romania	6-6.5
Russia	6
Rwanda	4
Saint Kitts and Nevis	8
Saint Lucia	8
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	7
Samoa	7
San Marino	8.5
Sao Tome and Principe	4.5-5
Saudi Arabia	7
Senegal	6
Serbia	6
Seychelles	5

Sierra Leone	4
Singapore	9.5
Slovak Republic (Slovakia)	8.5
Slovenia	8.5-9
Solomon Islands	5
Somalia	2
South Africa	8
Spain	7.5-8
Sri Lanka	5.5
Sudan	4
Suriname	5
Swaziland	4.5
Sweden	9.5
Switzerland	9.5
Syria	2.5
Tajikistan	4
Taiwan (China)	8.5
Tanzania	5

Thailand	7.5-8
Togo	4.5-5
Tonga	5.5-6
Trinidad and Tobago	8-8.5
Tunisia	6
Turkey	6.5-7
Turkmenistan	4
Tuvalu	7
Uganda	5
Ukraine	4.5-5
United Arab Emirates	8.5
United Kingdom	9
United States	9
Uruguay	6.5-7
Uzbekistan	4
Vanuatu	6
Venezuela	5
Vietnam	5.5

Yemen	3
Zambia	4.5-5
Zimbabwe	3.5

Editor's Note:

As of 2015, the global economic crisis (emerging in 2008) had affected many countries across the world, resulting in changes to their rankings. Among those countries affected were top tier economies, such as the [United Kingdom](#), [Iceland](#), [Switzerland](#) and [Austria](#). However, in all these cases, their rankings have moved back upward in the last couple of years as anxieties have eased. Other top tier countries, such as [Spain](#), [Portugal](#), [Ireland](#), and [Italy](#), suffered some effects due to debt woes and the concomitant effect on the euro zone. Greece, another euro zone nation, was also downgraded due to its sovereign debt crisis; however, Greece's position on the precipice of default incurred a sharper downgrade than the other four euro zone countries mentioned above. Cyprus' exposure to Greek bank yielded a downgrade in its case. Slovenia and [Latvia](#) have been slightly downgraded due to a mix of economic and political concerns but could easily be upgraded in a future assessment, should these concerns abate. Meanwhile, the crisis in eastern [Ukraine](#) fueled downgrades in that country and neighboring [Russia](#).

Despite the "trifecta of tragedy" in [Japan](#) in 2011 -- the earthquake, the ensuing tsunami, and the resulting nuclear crisis -- and the appreciable destabilization of the economic and political terrain therein, this country has only slightly been downgraded. Japan's challenges have been assessed to be transient, the government remains accountable, and there is little risk of default. Both [India](#) and [China](#) retain their rankings; [India](#) holds a slightly higher ranking than [China](#) due to its record of democratic representation and accountability.

There were shifts in opposite directions for [Mali](#) and [Nigeria](#) versus the [Central African Republic](#), [Burkina Faso](#), and [Burundi](#). [Mali](#) was slightly upgraded due to its efforts to return to constitutional order following the 2012 coup and to neutralize the threat of separatists and Islamists. Likewise, a new government in [Nigeria](#) generated a slight upgrade as the country attempts to confront corruption, crime, and terrorism. But the [Central African Republic](#) was downgraded due to the takeover of the government by Seleka rebels and the continued decline into lawlessness in that country. Likewise, the attempts by the leaders of [Burundi](#) and [Burkina Faso](#) to hold onto power by by-passing the constitution raised eyebrows and resulted in downgrades.

Political unrest in [Libya](#) and [Algeria](#) have contributed to a decision to marginally downgrade these

countries as well. [Syria](#) incurred a sharper downgrade due to the devolution into de facto civil war and the dire security threat posed by Islamist terrorists. [Iraq](#) saw a similar downgrade as a result of the takeover of wide swaths of territory and the threat of genocide at the hands of Islamist terrorists. [Yemen](#), likewise, has been downgraded due to political instability at the hands of secessionists, terrorists, Houthi rebels, and the intervention of external parties. Conversely, [Egypt](#) and [Tunisia](#) saw slight upgrades as their political environments stabilize.

At the low end of the spectrum, devolving security conditions and/or economic crisis have resulted in countries like [Pakistan](#), [Afghanistan](#), [Somalia](#), and [Zimbabwe](#) maintaining their low ratings.

The [United States](#) continues to retain its previous slight downgrade due to the enduring threat of default surrounding the debt ceiling in that country, matched by a conflict-ridden political climate. In the case of [Mexico](#), there is limited concern about default, but increasing alarm over the security situation in that country and the government's ability to contain it. In [Argentina](#), a default to bond holders resulted in a downgrade to that country. Finally, a small but significant upgrade was attributed to [Cuba](#) due to its recent pro-business reforms and its normalization of ties with the United States.

Source:

CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

2015

Corruption Perceptions Index

Corruption Perceptions Index

Transparency International: [Corruption Perceptions Index](#)

Editor's Note:

Transparency International's [Corruption Perceptions Index](#) is a composite index which ranks countries in terms of the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials. This index indicates the views of national and international business people and analysts about the levels of corruption in each country. The highest (and best) level of transparency is indicated by

the number, 10. The lower (and worse) levels of transparency are indicated by lower numbers.

Rank	Country/Territory	CPI 2009 Score	Surveys Used	Confidence Range
1	New Zealand	9.4	6	9.1 - 9.5
2	Denmark	9.3	6	9.1 - 9.5
3	Singapore	9.2	9	9.0 - 9.4
3	Sweden	9.2	6	9.0 - 9.3
5	Switzerland	9.0	6	8.9 - 9.1
6	Finland	8.9	6	8.4 - 9.4
6	Netherlands	8.9	6	8.7 - 9.0
8	Australia	8.7	8	8.3 - 9.0
8	Canada	8.7	6	8.5 - 9.0
8	Iceland	8.7	4	7.5 - 9.4
11	Norway	8.6	6	8.2 - 9.1
12	Hong Kong	8.2	8	7.9 - 8.5
12	Luxembourg	8.2	6	7.6 - 8.8
14	Germany	8.0	6	7.7 - 8.3
14	Ireland	8.0	6	7.8 - 8.4

16	Austria	7.9	6	7.4 - 8.3
17	Japan	7.7	8	7.4 - 8.0
17	United Kingdom	7.7	6	7.3 - 8.2
19	United States	7.5	8	6.9 - 8.0
20	Barbados	7.4	4	6.6 - 8.2
21	Belgium	7.1	6	6.9 - 7.3
22	Qatar	7.0	6	5.8 - 8.1
22	Saint Lucia	7.0	3	6.7 - 7.5
24	France	6.9	6	6.5 - 7.3
25	Chile	6.7	7	6.5 - 6.9
25	Uruguay	6.7	5	6.4 - 7.1
27	Cyprus	6.6	4	6.1 - 7.1
27	Estonia	6.6	8	6.1 - 6.9
27	Slovenia	6.6	8	6.3 - 6.9
30	United Arab Emirates	6.5	5	5.5 - 7.5
31	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	6.4	3	4.9 - 7.5
32	Israel	6.1	6	5.4 - 6.7
32	Spain	6.1	6	5.5 - 6.6

34	Dominica	5.9	3	4.9 - 6.7
35	Portugal	5.8	6	5.5 - 6.2
35	Puerto Rico	5.8	4	5.2 - 6.3
37	Botswana	5.6	6	5.1 - 6.3
37	Taiwan	5.6	9	5.4 - 5.9
39	Brunei Darussalam	5.5	4	4.7 - 6.4
39	Oman	5.5	5	4.4 - 6.5
39	Korea (South)	5.5	9	5.3 - 5.7
42	Mauritius	5.4	6	5.0 - 5.9
43	Costa Rica	5.3	5	4.7 - 5.9
43	Macau	5.3	3	3.3 - 6.9
45	Malta	5.2	4	4.0 - 6.2
46	Bahrain	5.1	5	4.2 - 5.8
46	Cape Verde	5.1	3	3.3 - 7.0
46	Hungary	5.1	8	4.6 - 5.7
49	Bhutan	5.0	4	4.3 - 5.6
49	Jordan	5.0	7	3.9 - 6.1
49	Poland	5.0	8	4.5 - 5.5

52	Czech Republic	4.9	8	4.3 - 5.6
52	Lithuania	4.9	8	4.4 - 5.4
54	Seychelles	4.8	3	3.0 - 6.7
55	South Africa	4.7	8	4.3 - 4.9
56	Latvia	4.5	6	4.1 - 4.9
56	Malaysia	4.5	9	4.0 - 5.1
56	Namibia	4.5	6	3.9 - 5.1
56	Samoa	4.5	3	3.3 - 5.3
56	Slovakia	4.5	8	4.1 - 4.9
61	Cuba	4.4	3	3.5 - 5.1
61	Turkey	4.4	7	3.9 - 4.9
63	Italy	4.3	6	3.8 - 4.9
63	Saudi Arabia	4.3	5	3.1 - 5.3
65	Tunisia	4.2	6	3.0 - 5.5
66	Croatia	4.1	8	3.7 - 4.5
66	Georgia	4.1	7	3.4 - 4.7
66	Kuwait	4.1	5	3.2 - 5.1
69	Ghana	3.9	7	3.2 - 4.6

69	Montenegro	3.9	5	3.5 - 4.4
71	Bulgaria	3.8	8	3.2 - 4.5
71	FYR Macedonia	3.8	6	3.4 - 4.2
71	Greece	3.8	6	3.2 - 4.3
71	Romania	3.8	8	3.2 - 4.3
75	Brazil	3.7	7	3.3 - 4.3
75	Colombia	3.7	7	3.1 - 4.3
75	Peru	3.7	7	3.4 - 4.1
75	Suriname	3.7	3	3.0 - 4.7
79	Burkina Faso	3.6	7	2.8 - 4.4
79	China	3.6	9	3.0 - 4.2
79	Swaziland	3.6	3	3.0 - 4.7
79	Trinidad and Tobago	3.6	4	3.0 - 4.3
83	Serbia	3.5	6	3.3 - 3.9
84	El Salvador	3.4	5	3.0 - 3.8
84	Guatemala	3.4	5	3.0 - 3.9
84	India	3.4	10	3.2 - 3.6
84	Panama	3.4	5	3.1 - 3.7

84	Thailand	3.4	9	3.0 - 3.8
89	Lesotho	3.3	6	2.8 - 3.8
89	Malawi	3.3	7	2.7 - 3.9
89	Mexico	3.3	7	3.2 - 3.5
89	Moldova	3.3	6	2.7 - 4.0
89	Morocco	3.3	6	2.8 - 3.9
89	Rwanda	3.3	4	2.9 - 3.7
95	Albania	3.2	6	3.0 - 3.3
95	Vanuatu	3.2	3	2.3 - 4.7
97	Liberia	3.1	3	1.9 - 3.8
97	Sri Lanka	3.1	7	2.8 - 3.4
99	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.0	7	2.6 - 3.4
99	Dominican Republic	3.0	5	2.9 - 3.2
99	Jamaica	3.0	5	2.8 - 3.3
99	Madagascar	3.0	7	2.8 - 3.2
99	Senegal	3.0	7	2.5 - 3.6
99	Tonga	3.0	3	2.6 - 3.3
99	Zambia	3.0	7	2.8 - 3.2

106	Argentina	2.9	7	2.6 - 3.1
106	Benin	2.9	6	2.3 - 3.4
106	Gabon	2.9	3	2.6 - 3.1
106	Gambia	2.9	5	1.6 - 4.0
106	Niger	2.9	5	2.7 - 3.0
111	Algeria	2.8	6	2.5 - 3.1
111	Djibouti	2.8	4	2.3 - 3.2
111	Egypt	2.8	6	2.6 - 3.1
111	Indonesia	2.8	9	2.4 - 3.2
111	Kiribati	2.8	3	2.3 - 3.3
111	Mali	2.8	6	2.4 - 3.2
111	Sao Tome and Principe	2.8	3	2.4 - 3.3
111	Solomon Islands	2.8	3	2.3 - 3.3
111	Togo	2.8	5	1.9 - 3.9
120	Armenia	2.7	7	2.6 - 2.8
120	Bolivia	2.7	6	2.4 - 3.1
120	Ethiopia	2.7	7	2.4 - 2.9
120	Kazakhstan	2.7	7	2.1 - 3.3

120	Mongolia	2.7	7	2.4 - 3.0
120	Vietnam	2.7	9	2.4 - 3.1
126	Eritrea	2.6	4	1.6 - 3.8
126	Guyana	2.6	4	2.5 - 2.7
126	Syria	2.6	5	2.2 - 2.9
126	Tanzania	2.6	7	2.4 - 2.9
130	Honduras	2.5	6	2.2 - 2.8
130	Lebanon	2.5	3	1.9 - 3.1
130	Libya	2.5	6	2.2 - 2.8
130	Maldives	2.5	4	1.8 - 3.2
130	Mauritania	2.5	7	2.0 - 3.3
130	Mozambique	2.5	7	2.3 - 2.8
130	Nicaragua	2.5	6	2.3 - 2.7
130	Nigeria	2.5	7	2.2 - 2.7
130	Uganda	2.5	7	2.1 - 2.8
139	Bangladesh	2.4	7	2.0 - 2.8
139	Belarus	2.4	4	2.0 - 2.8
139	Pakistan	2.4	7	2.1 - 2.7

139	Philippines	2.4	9	2.1 - 2.7
143	Azerbaijan	2.3	7	2.0 - 2.6
143	Comoros	2.3	3	1.6 - 3.3
143	Nepal	2.3	6	2.0 - 2.6
146	Cameroon	2.2	7	1.9 - 2.6
146	Ecuador	2.2	5	2.0 - 2.5
146	Kenya	2.2	7	1.9 - 2.5
146	Russia	2.2	8	1.9 - 2.4
146	Sierra Leone	2.2	5	1.9 - 2.4
146	Timor-Leste	2.2	5	1.8 - 2.6
146	Ukraine	2.2	8	2.0 - 2.6
146	Zimbabwe	2.2	7	1.7 - 2.8
154	Côte d'Ivoire	2.1	7	1.8 - 2.4
154	Papua New Guinea	2.1	5	1.7 - 2.5
154	Paraguay	2.1	5	1.7 - 2.5
154	Yemen	2.1	4	1.6 - 2.5
158	Cambodia	2.0	8	1.8 - 2.2
158	Central African Republic	2.0	4	1.9 - 2.2

158	Laos	2.0	4	1.6 - 2.6
158	Tajikistan	2.0	8	1.6 - 2.5
162	Angola	1.9	5	1.8 - 1.9
162	Congo Brazzaville	1.9	5	1.6 - 2.1
162	Democratic Republic of Congo	1.9	5	1.7 - 2.1
162	Guinea-Bissau	1.9	3	1.8 - 2.0
162	Kyrgyzstan	1.9	7	1.8 - 2.1
162	Venezuela	1.9	7	1.8 - 2.0
168	Burundi	1.8	6	1.6 - 2.0
168	Equatorial Guinea	1.8	3	1.6 - 1.9
168	Guinea	1.8	5	1.7 - 1.8
168	Haiti	1.8	3	1.4 - 2.3
168	Iran	1.8	3	1.7 - 1.9
168	Turkmenistan	1.8	4	1.7 - 1.9
174	Uzbekistan	1.7	6	1.5 - 1.8
175	Chad	1.6	6	1.5 - 1.7
176	Iraq	1.5	3	1.2 - 1.8
176	Sudan	1.5	5	1.4 - 1.7

178	Myanmar	1.4	3	0.9 - 1.8
179	Afghanistan	1.3	4	1.0 - 1.5
180	Somalia	1.1	3	0.9 - 1.4

Methodology:

As noted above, the highest (and best) level of transparency with the least perceived corruption is indicated by the number, 10. The lower (and worse) levels of transparency are indicated by lower numbers.

According to Transparency International, the [Corruption Perceptions Index](#) (CPI) table shows a country's ranking and score, the number of surveys used to determine the score, and the confidence range of the scoring.

The rank shows how one country compares to others included in the index. The CPI score indicates the perceived level of public-sector corruption in a country/territory.

The CPI is based on 13 independent surveys. However, not all surveys include all countries. The surveys used column indicates how many surveys were relied upon to determine the score for that country.

The confidence range indicates the reliability of the CPI scores and tells us that allowing for a margin of error, we can be 90% confident that the true score for this country lies within this range.

Note:

Kosovo, which separated from the Yugoslav successor state of [Serbia](#), is not listed above. No calculation is available for [Kosovo](#) at this time, however, a future corruption index by Transparency International may include the world's newest country in its tally. Taiwan has been listed above despite its contested status; while Taiwan claims sovereign status, [China](#) claims ultimate jurisdiction over Taiwan. Hong Kong, which is also under the rubric of Chinese sovereignty, is listed above. Note as well that Puerto Rico, which is a [United States](#) domain, is also included in the list above. These inclusions likely have to do with the size and fairly autonomous status of their economies.

Source:

Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index; available at URL: <http://www.transparency.org>

Updated:

Uploaded in 2011 using most recent ranking available; reviewed in 2015.

Competitiveness Ranking

Competitiveness Ranking

Editor's Note:

The Global Competitiveness Report's competitiveness ranking is based on the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), which was developed for the World Economic Forum. The GCI is based on a number of competitiveness considerations, and provides a comprehensive picture of the competitiveness landscape in countries around the world. The competitiveness considerations are: institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education, higher education and training, goods market efficiency, labour market efficiency, financial market development, technological readiness, market size, business sophistication, and innovation. The rankings are calculated from both publicly available data and the Executive Opinion Survey.

Country/Economy	GCI 2010 Rank	GCI 2010 Score	GCI 2009 Rank	Change 2009-2010
Switzerland	1	5.63	1	0
Sweden	2	5.56	4	2
Singapore	3	5.48	3	0
United States	4	5.43	2	-2
Germany	5	5.39	7	2

Japan	6	5.37	8	2
Finland	7	5.37	6	-1
Netherlands	8	5.33	10	2
Denmark	9	5.32	5	-4
Canada	10	5.30	9	-1
Hong Kong SAR	11	5.30	11	0
United Kingdom	12	5.25	13	1
Taiwan, China	13	5.21	12	-1
Norway	14	5.14	14	0
France	15	5.13	16	1
Australia	16	5.11	15	-1
Qatar	17	5.10	22	5
Austria	18	5.09	17	-1
Belgium	19	5.07	18	-1
Luxembourg	20	5.05	21	1
Saudi Arabia	21	4.95	28	7
Korea, Rep.	22	4.93	19	-3
New Zealand	23	4.92	20	-3

Israel	24	4.91	27	3
United Arab Emirates	25	4.89	23	-2
Malaysia	26	4.88	24	-2
China	27	4.84	29	2
Brunei Darussalam	28	4.75	32	4
Ireland	29	4.74	25	-4
Chile	30	4.69	30	0
Iceland	31	4.68	26	-5
Tunisia	32	4.65	40	8
Estonia	33	4.61	35	2
Oman	34	4.61	41	7
Kuwait	35	4.59	39	4
Czech Republic	36	4.57	31	-5
Bahrain	37	4.54	38	1
Thailand	38	4.51	36	-2
Poland	39	4.51	46	7
Cyprus	40	4.50	34	-6
Puerto Rico	41	4.49	42	1

Spain	42	4.49	33	-9
Barbados	43	4.45	44	1
Indonesia	44	4.43	54	10
Slovenia	45	4.42	37	-8
Portugal	46	4.38	43	-3
Lithuania	47	4.38	53	6
Italy	48	4.37	48	0
Montenegro	49	4.36	62	13
Malta	50	4.34	52	2
India	51	4.33	49	-2
Hungary	52	4.33	58	6
Panama	53	4.33	59	6
South Africa	54	4.32	45	-9
Mauritius	55	4.32	57	2
Costa Rica	56	4.31	55	-1
Azerbaijan	57	4.29	51	-6
Brazil	58	4.28	56	-2
Vietnam	59	4.27	75	16

Slovak Republic	60	4.25	47	-13
Turkey	61	4.25	61	0
Sri Lanka	62	4.25	79	17
Russian Federation	63	4.24	63	0
Uruguay	64	4.23	65	1
Jordan	65	4.21	50	-15
Mexico	66	4.19	60	-6
Romania	67	4.16	64	-3
Colombia	68	4.14	69	1
Iran	69	4.14	n/a	n/a
Latvia	70	4.14	68	-2
Bulgaria	71	4.13	76	5
Kazakhstan	72	4.12	67	-5
Peru	73	4.11	78	5
Namibia	74	4.09	74	0
Morocco	75	4.08	73	-2
Botswana	76	4.05	66	-10
Croatia	77	4.04	72	-5

Guatemala	78	4.04	80	2
Macedonia, FYR	79	4.02	84	5
Rwanda	80	4.00	n/a	n/a
Egypt	81	4.00	70	-11
El Salvador	82	3.99	77	-5
Greece	83	3.99	71	-12
Trinidad and Tobago	84	3.97	86	2
Philippines	85	3.96	87	2
Algeria	86	3.96	83	-3
Argentina	87	3.95	85	-2
Albania	88	3.94	96	8
Ukraine	89	3.90	82	-7
Gambia, The	90	3.90	81	-9
Honduras	91	3.89	89	-2
Lebanon	92	3.89	n/a	n/a
Georgia	93	3.86	90	-3
Moldova	94	3.86	n/a	n/a
Jamaica	95	3.85	91	-4

Serbia	96	3.84	93	-3
Syria	97	3.79	94	-3
Armenia	98	3.76	97	-1
Mongolia	99	3.75	117	18
Libya	100	3.74	88	-12
Dominican Republic	101	3.72	95	-6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	102	3.70	109	7
Benin	103	3.69	103	0
Senegal	104	3.67	92	-12
Ecuador	105	3.65	105	0
Kenya	106	3.65	98	-8
Bangladesh	107	3.64	106	-1
Bolivia	108	3.64	120	12
Cambodia	109	3.63	110	1
Guyana	110	3.62	104	-6
Cameroon	111	3.58	111	0
Nicaragua	112	3.57	115	3
Tanzania	113	3.56	100	-13

Ghana	114	3.56	114	0
Zambia	115	3.55	112	-3
Tajikistan	116	3.53	122	6
Cape Verde	117	3.51	n/a	n/a
Uganda	118	3.51	108	-10
Ethiopia	119	3.51	118	-1
Paraguay	120	3.49	124	4
Kyrgyz Republic	121	3.49	123	2
Venezuela	122	3.48	113	-9
Pakistan	123	3.48	101	-22
Madagascar	124	3.46	121	-3
Malawi	125	3.45	119	-6
Swaziland	126	3.40	n/a	n/a
Nigeria	127	3.38	99	-28
Lesotho	128	3.36	107	-21
Côte d'Ivoire	129	3.35	116	-13
Nepal	130	3.34	125	-5
Mozambique	131	3.32	129	-2

Mali	132	3.28	130	-2
Timor-Leste	133	3.23	126	-7
Burkina Faso	134	3.20	128	-6
Mauritania	135	3.14	127	-8
Zimbabwe	136	3.03	132	-4
Burundi	137	2.96	133	-4
Angola	138	2.93	n/a	n/a
Chad	139	2.73	131	-8

Methodology:

The competitiveness rankings are calculated from both publicly available data and the Executive Opinion Survey, a comprehensive annual survey conducted by the World Economic Forum together with its network of Partner Institutes (leading research institutes and business organizations) in the countries covered by the Report.

Highlights according to WEF --

- The [United States](#) falls two places to fourth position, overtaken by [Sweden](#) and [Singapore](#) in the rankings of the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2010-2011
- The People's Republic of [China](#) continues to move up the rankings, with marked improvements in several other Asian countries
- [Germany](#) moves up two places to fifth place, leading the Eurozone countries
- [Switzerland](#) tops the rankings

Source:

World Economic Forum; available at URL: <http://www.weforum.org>

Updated:

2011 using most recent ranking available; reviewed in 2015.

Taxation

Corporate taxes

Corporate income is 28 percent on taxable income.

Capital gains

There is a 10 percent tax applied on capital gains on caproperty sale.

Social security contributions

Social security contributions are applied at 12.5 percent on gross salaries

National reconstruction contributions

National reconstruction contributions are applied on 1.5 percent on taxable income.

Indirect tax

Value added tax (VAT) is applied at 15 percent on most goods and services.

Stock Market

The Ghana Stock Exchange had 22 listed companies by the end of the 1990's. While cocoa, banking and brewing enterprises are prominent, the Ashanti Goldfields greatly determines the course of market fluctuations.

Partner Links

Partner Links

Chapter 5

Social Overview

People

Population

Ghana's population, totalling over 24 million, is concentrated along the coast, in the northern areas near the border with Cote d'Ivoire, the principal cities of Accra and Kumasi, and cocoa-producing areas. The country has, on average, a population density of about 52 people per square kilometer. About 45 percent under 15 years old.

Ethnicity

Most Ghanaians descended from migrating tribes that probably came down the Volta River valley at the beginning of the 13th century. Today, there are approximately 100 ethno-linguistic groups, all further subdivided into numerous cultural and linguistic units. Major ethnic groups include Akan, Moshi-Dagomba/Dagbani, Ewe, Ga, Gurma, and Yoruba. Europeans and other non-African groups make up a small minority, as do Africans from neighboring countries.

Language

English is the official language used in government, large-scale business, national media and school beyond primary level. Indigenous African languages include Akan (Asante Twi and Akuapim Twi), Fante, Ewe, Ga-Adangme, Nzema, Dagbani, Dagaari, Kasem, Frafra, Buli, Kusaal, Sisaala, and Gonja. Most indigenous languages belong either to Kwa or to the Gur subfamily of the Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, and Volta-Congo linguistic families. Hausa, a language from Nigeria, is also used in radio and television broadcasting.

Religion

The largest groups of religious adherents in Ghana are Christians, while animists and Muslims are also significantly represented. There is complete freedom of religion in Ghana.

The indigenous Akan thought was remarkably parallel to Western thought even before they merged to form the modern Akan identity. The person exists in a trinity of the "okra" (soul), the "sunsum" (spirit), and the "honam" (body). This trinity includes a hierarchy of universal causation. There is free will of the individual, but with a determinism guided by ethics and morality. While some scholars have remarked on the cleavage between Akan and Western thought based on Akan beliefs in witchcraft, others have in fact celebrated its comparable utility. Following from this, scholars argue that Akan witchcraft gives the otherwise predetermined individual the medium for exploring a critique of new forms of economic individuals in present day Ghana. In this way, witchcraft in fact assists Akan thought in reconciling the local economy with the global market.

Health and Welfare

At 61 years of age (59.78 years for males, 62.25 years for females), life expectancy in Ghana is slightly above the sub-Saharan African average. The infant mortality rate is 51.43 deaths per 1,000 live births. Literacy is estimated to be around 57.9 percent, although this number obfuscates some degree of gender variance. Literacy is 66.4 percent among males and 49.8 percent among females.

Note that percent of GDP in this country is spent on 5.4 educational expenditures; 10.6 percent of GDP is spent on health expenditures.

The degree of risk of infectious diseases is very high in Ghana. Food or waterborne diseases include bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever; vectorborne diseases include malaria; water contact diseases include schistosomiasis; respiratory diseases include meningococcal meningitis; animal contact disease include rabies. As well, the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza has been identified in this country although it poses only a negligible risk.

HIV/AIDS has not been as much of a crisis in Ghana as it has been in many other sub-Saharan African countries. About one percent of prenatal women were infected in 1990. There has been a slow but steady increase to three percent over a decade later in 2005. Clinic patients with other sexually transmitted diseases also showed a marked increase from nine percent in 1990 to 27 percent in 1998. Prevalence in sex workers increased from 37.5 percent in 1989 to 72.6 percent in 1997. These increases have given rise to concerns that the disease is starting to take a greater hold of the population.

Human Development

One notable indicator used to measure a country's quality of life is the Human Development Index

(HDI), which is compiled annually since 1990 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The HDI is a composite of several indicators, which measure a country's achievements in three main arenas of human development: longevity, knowledge and education, as well as economic standard of living. In a ranking of 169 countries, the HDI places Ghana in the low human development category, at 130th place.

Note: Although the concept of human development is complicated and cannot be properly captured by values and indices, the HDI, which is calculated and updated annually, offers a wide-ranging assessment of human development in certain countries, not based solely upon traditional economic and financial indicators.

Written by Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief at CountryWatch.com; see Bibliography for research sources.

Human Development Index

Human Development Index

Human Development Index (Ranked Numerically)

The [Human Development Index](#) (HDI) is used to measure quality of life in countries across the world. The HDI has been compiled since 1990 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on a regular basis. The HDI is a composite of several indicators, which measure a country's achievements in three main arenas of human development: longevity, education, and economic standard of living. Although the concept of human development is complicated and cannot be properly captured by values and indices, the HDI offers a wide-ranging assessment of human development in certain countries, not based solely upon traditional economic and financial indicators. For more information about the methodology used to calculate the HDI, please see the "Source Materials" in the appendices of this review.

Very High Human Development	High Human Development	Medium Human Development	Low Human Development
1. Norway	43. Bahamas	86. Fiji	128. Kenya
2. Australia	44. Lithuania	87. Turkmenistan	129. Bangladesh

3. New Zealand	45. Chile	88. Dominican Republic	130. Ghana
4. United States	46. Argentina	89. China	131. Cameroon
5. Ireland	47. Kuwait	90. El Salvador	132. Myanmar (Burma)
6. Liechtenstein	48. Latvia	91. Sri Lanka	133. Yemen
7. Netherlands	49. Montenegro	92. Thailand	134. Benin
8. Canada	50. Romania	93. Gabon	135. Madagascar
9. Sweden	51. Croatia	94. Suriname	136. Mauritania
10. Germany	52. Uruguay	95. Bolivia	137. Papua New Guinea
11. Japan	53. Libya	96. Paraguay	138. Nepal
12. South Korea	54. Panama	97. Philippines	139. Togo
13. Switzerland	55. Saudi Arabia	98. Botswana	140. Comoros
14. France	56. Mexico	99. Moldova	141. Lesotho
15. Israel	57. Malaysia	100. Mongolia	142. Nigeria
16. Finland	58. Bulgaria	101. Egypt	143. Uganda
17. Iceland	59. Trinidad and Tobago	102. Uzbekistan	144. Senegal
18. Belgium	60. Serbia	103. Micronesia	145. Haiti

19. Denmark	61. Belarus	104. Guyana	146. Angola
20. Spain	62. Costa Rica	105. Namibia	147. Djibouti
21. Hong King	63. Peru	106. Honduras	148. Tanzania
22. Greece	64. Albania	107. Maldives	149. Cote d'Ivoire
23. Italy	65. Russian Federation	108. Indonesia	150. Zambia
24. Luxembourg	66. Kazakhstan	109. Kyrgyzstan	151. Gambia
25. Austria	67. Azerbaijan	110. South Africa	152. Rwanda
26. United Kingdom	68. Bosnia and Herzegovina	111. Syria	153. Malawi
27. Singapore	69. Ukraine	112. Tajikistan	154. Sudan
28. Czech Republic	70. Iran	113. Vietnam	155. Afghanistan
29. Slovenia	71. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	114. Morocco	156. Guinea
30. Andorra	72. Mauritius	115. Nicaragua	157. Ethiopia
31. Slovakia	73. Brazil	116. Guatemala	158. Sierra Leone
32. United Arab Emirates	74. Georgia	117. Equatorial Guinea	159. Central African Republic
33. Malta	75. Venezuela	118. Cape Verde	160. Mali

34. Estonia	76. Armenia	119. India	161. Burkina Faso
35. Cyprus	77. Ecuador	120. East Timor	162. Liberia
36. Hungary	78. Belize	121. Swaziland	163. Chad
37. Brunei	79. Colombia	122. Laos	164. Guinea-Bissau
38. Qatar	80. Jamaica	123. Solomon Islands	165. Mozambique
39. Bahrain	81. Tunisia	124. Cambodia	166. Burundi
40. Portugal	82. Jordan	125. Pakistan	167. Niger
41. Poland	83. Turkey	126. Congo RC	168. Congo DRC
42. Barbados	84. Algeria	127. Sao Tome and Principe	169. Zimbabwe
	85. Tonga		

Methodology:

For more information about the methodology used to calculate the HDI, please see the "Source Materials" in the appendices of this Country Review.

Reference:

As published in United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report 2010.

Source:

United Nations Development Programme's [Human Development Index](http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/) available at URL: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/>

Updated:

Uploaded in 2011 using ranking available; reviewed in 2015

Life Satisfaction Index

Life Satisfaction Index

Life Satisfaction Index

Created by Adrian G. White, an Analytic Social Psychologist at the University of Leicester, the "Satisfaction with Life Index" measures subjective life satisfaction across various countries. The data was taken from a metastudy (see below for source) and associates the notion of subjective happiness or life satisfaction with qualitative parameters such as health, wealth, and access to basic education. This assessment serves as an alternative to other measures of happiness that tend to rely on traditional and quantitative measures of policy on quality of life, such as GNP and GDP. The methodology involved the responses of 80,000 people across the globe.

Rank	Country	Score
1	Denmark	273.4
2	Switzerland	273.33
3	Austria	260
4	Iceland	260
5	The Bahamas	256.67
6	Finland	256.67

7	Sweden	256.67
8	Iran	253.33
9	Brunei	253.33
10	Canada	253.33
11	Ireland	253.33
12	Luxembourg	253.33
13	Costa Rica	250
14	Malta	250
15	Netherlands	250
16	Antiguaand Barbuda	246.67
17	Malaysia	246.67
18	New Zealand	246.67
19	Norway	246.67
20	Seychelles	246.67
21	Saint Kitts and Nevis	246.67
22	United Arab Emirates	246.67
23	United States	246.67
24	Vanuatu	246.67

25	Venezuela	246.67
26	Australia	243.33
27	Barbados	243.33
28	Belgium	243.33
29	Dominica	243.33
30	Oman	243.33
31	Saudi Arabia	243.33
32	Suriname	243.33
33	Bahrain	240
34	Colombia	240
35	Germany	240
36	Guyana	240
37	Honduras	240
38	Kuwait	240
39	Panama	240
40	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	240
41	United Kingdom	236.67
42	Dominican Republic	233.33

43	Guatemala	233.33
44	Jamaica	233.33
45	Qatar	233.33
46	Spain	233.33
47	Saint Lucia	233.33
48	Belize	230
49	Cyprus	230
50	Italy	230
51	Mexico	230
52	Samoa	230
53	Singapore	230
54	Solomon Islands	230
55	Trinidad and Tobago	230
56	Argentina	226.67
57	Fiji	223.33
58	Israel	223.33
59	Mongolia	223.33
60	São Tomé and Príncipe	223.33

61	El Salvador	220
62	France	220
63	Hong Kong	220
64	Indonesia	220
65	Kyrgyzstan	220
66	Maldives	220
67	Slovenia	220
68	Taiwan	220
69	East Timor	220
70	Tonga	220
71	Chile	216.67
72	Grenada	216.67
73	Mauritius	216.67
74	Namibia	216.67
75	Paraguay	216.67
76	Thailand	216.67
77	Czech Republic	213.33
78	Philippines	213.33

79	Tunisia	213.33
80	Uzbekistan	213.33
81	Brazil	210
82	China	210
83	Cuba	210
84	Greece	210
85	Nicaragua	210
86	Papua New Guinea	210
87	Uruguay	210
88	Gabon	206.67
89	Ghana	206.67
90	Japan	206.67
91	Yemen	206.67
92	Portugal	203.33
93	Sri Lanka	203.33
94	Tajikistan	203.33
95	Vietnam	203.33
96	Bhutan	200

97	Comoros	196.67
98	Croatia	196.67
99	Poland	196.67
100	Cape Verde	193.33
101	Kazakhstan	193.33
102	South Korea	193.33
103	Madagascar	193.33
104	Bangladesh	190
105	Republic of the Congo	190
106	The Gambia	190
107	Hungary	190
108	Libya	190
109	South Africa	190
110	Cambodia	186.67
111	Ecuador	186.67
112	Kenya	186.67
113	Lebanon	186.67
114	Morocco	186.67

115	Peru	186.67
116	Senegal	186.67
117	Bolivia	183.33
118	Haiti	183.33
119	Nepal	183.33
120	Nigeria	183.33
121	Tanzania	183.33
122	Benin	180
123	Botswana	180
124	Guinea-Bissau	180
125	India	180
126	Laos	180
127	Mozambique	180
128	Palestinian Authority	180
129	Slovakia	180
130	Myanmar	176.67
131	Mali	176.67
132	Mauritania	176.67

133	Turkey	176.67
134	Algeria	173.33
135	Equatorial Guinea	173.33
136	Romania	173.33
137	Bosnia and Herzegovina	170
138	Cameroon	170
139	Estonia	170
140	Guinea	170
141	Jordan	170
142	Syria	170
143	Sierra Leone	166.67
144	Azerbaijan	163.33
145	Central African Republic	163.33
146	Republic of Macedonia	163.33
147	Togo	163.33
148	Zambia	163.33
149	Angola	160
150	Djibouti	160

151	Egypt	160
152	Burkina Faso	156.67
153	Ethiopia	156.67
154	Latvia	156.67
155	Lithuania	156.67
156	Uganda	156.67
157	Albania	153.33
158	Malawi	153.33
159	Chad	150
160	Côte d'Ivoire	150
161	Niger	150
162	Eritrea	146.67
163	Rwanda	146.67
164	Bulgaria	143.33
165	Lesotho	143.33
166	Pakistan	143.33
167	Russia	143.33
168	Swaziland	140

169	Georgia	136.67
170	Belarus	133.33
171	Turkmenistan	133.33
172	Armenia	123.33
173	Sudan	120
174	Ukraine	120
175	Moldova	116.67
176	Democratic Republic of the Congo	110
177	Zimbabwe	110
178	Burundi	100

Commentary:

European countries, such as [Denmark](#), [Iceland](#), [Finland](#), [Sweden](#), [Switzerland](#), [Austria](#) resided at the top of the ranking with highest levels of self-reported life satisfaction. Conversely, European countries such as [Latvia](#), [Lithuania](#), [Moldova](#), [Belarus](#) and [Ukraine](#) ranked low on the index. African countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, [Zimbabwe](#) and [Burundi](#) found themselves at the very bottom of the ranking, and indeed, very few African countries could be found in the top 100. [Japan](#) was at the mid-way point in the ranking, however, other Asian countries such as [Brunei](#) and [Malaysia](#) were in the top tier, while [Pakistan](#) was close to the bottom with a low level of self-identified life satisfaction. As a region, the Middle East presented a mixed bag with Saudi Arabians reporting healthy levels of life satisfaction and Egyptians near the bottom of the ranking. As a region, Caribbean countries were ranked highly, consistently demonstrating high levels of life satisfaction. The findings showed that health was the most crucial determining factor in life satisfaction, followed by prosperity and education.

Source:

White, A. (2007). A Global Projection of Subjective Well-being: A Challenge To Positive Psychology? *Psychtalk* 56, 17-20. The data was extracted from a meta-analysis by Marks, Abdallah, Simms & Thompson (2006).

Uploaded:

Based on study noted above in "Source" ; reviewed in 2015

Happy Planet Index

Happy Planet Index

The Happy Planet Index (HPI) is used to measure human well-being in conjunction with environmental impact. The HPI has been compiled since 2006 by the New Economics Foundation. The index is a composite of several indicators including subjective life satisfaction, life expectancy at birth, and ecological footprint per capita.

As noted by NEFA, the HPI "reveals the ecological efficiency with which human well-being is delivered." Indeed, the index combines environmental impact with human well-being to measure the environmental efficiency with which, country by country, people live long and happy lives. The countries ranked highest by the HPI are not necessarily the ones with the happiest people overall, but the ones that allow their citizens to live long and fulfilling lives, without negatively impacting this opportunity for either future generations or citizens of other countries. Accordingly, a country like the [United States](#) will rank low on this list due to its large per capital ecological footprint, which uses more than its fair share of resources, and will likely cause planetary damage.

It should be noted that the HPI was designed to be a counterpoint to other well-established indices of countries' development, such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which measures overall national wealth and economic development, but often obfuscates the realities of countries with stark variances between the rich and the poor. Moreover, the objective of most of the world's people is not to be wealthy but to be happy. The HPI also differs from the [Human Development Index](#) (HDI), which measures quality of life but not ecology, since it [HPI] also includes sustainability as a key indicator.

Rank	Country	HPI
1	Costa Rica	76.1
2	Dominican Republic	71.8
3	Jamaica	70.1
4	Guatemala	68.4
5	Vietnam	66.5
6	Colombia	66.1
7	Cuba	65.7
8	El Salvador	61.5
9	Brazil	61.0
10	Honduras	61.0
11	Nicaragua	60.5
12	Egypt	60.3
13	Saudi Arabia	59.7
14	Philippines	59.0
15	Argentina	59.0
16	Indonesia	58.9

17	Bhutan	58.5
18	Panama	57.4
19	Laos	57.3
20	China	57.1
21	Morocco	56.8
22	Sri Lanka	56.5
23	Mexico	55.6
24	Pakistan	55.6
25	Ecuador	55.5
26	Jordan	54.6
27	Belize	54.5
28	Peru	54.4
29	Tunisia	54.3
30	Trinidad and Tobago	54.2
31	Bangladesh	54.1
32	Moldova	54.1
33	Malaysia	54.0
34	Tajikistan	53.5

35	India	53.0
36	Venezuela	52.5
37	Nepal	51.9
38	Syria	51.3
39	Burma	51.2
40	Algeria	51.2
41	Thailand	50.9
42	Haiti	50.8
43	Netherlands	50.6
44	Malta	50.4
45	Uzbekistan	50.1
46	Chile	49.7
47	Bolivia	49.3
48	Armenia	48.3
49	Singapore	48.2
50	Yemen	48.1
51	Germany	48.1
52	Switzerland	48.1

53	Sweden	48.0
54	Albania	47.9
55	Paraguay	47.8
56	Palestinian Authority	47.7
57	Austria	47.7
58	Serbia	47.6
59	Finland	47.2
60	Croatia	47.2
61	Kyrgyzstan	47.1
62	Cyprus	46.2
63	Guyana	45.6
64	Belgium	45.4
65	Bosnia and Herzegovina	45.0
66	Slovenia	44.5
67	Israel	44.5
68	South Korea	44.4
69	Italy	44.0
70	Romania	43.9

71	France	43.9
72	Georgia	43.6
73	Slovakia	43.5
74	United Kingdom	43.3
75	Japan	43.3
76	Spain	43.2
77	Poland	42.8
78	Ireland	42.6
79	Iraq	42.6
80	Cambodia	42.3
81	Iran	42.1
82	Bulgaria	42.0
83	Turkey	41.7
84	Hong Kong	41.6
85	Azerbaijan	41.2
86	Lithuania	40.9
87	Djibouti	40.4
88	Norway	40.4

89	Canada	39.4
90	Hungary	38.9
91	Kazakhstan	38.5
92	Czech Republic	38.3
93	Mauritania	38.2
94	Iceland	38.1
95	Ukraine	38.1
96	Senegal	38.0
97	Greece	37.6
98	Portugal	37.5
99	Uruguay	37.2
100	Ghana	37.1
101	Latvia	36.7
102	Australia	36.6
103	New Zealand	36.2
104	Belarus	35.7
105	Denmark	35.5
106	Mongolia	35.0

107	Malawi	34.5
108	Russia	34.5
109	Chad	34.3
110	Lebanon	33.6
111	Macedonia	32.7
112	Republic of the Congo	32.4
113	Madagascar	31.5
114	United States	30.7
115	Nigeria	30.3
116	Guinea	30.3
117	Uganda	30.2
118	South Africa	29.7
119	Rwanda	29.6
120	Democratic Republic of the Congo	29.0
121	Sudan	28.5
122	Luxembourg	28.5
123	United Arab Emirates	28.2
124	Ethiopia	28.1

125	Kenya	27.8
126	Cameroon	27.2
127	Zambia	27.2
128	Kuwait	27.0
129	Niger	26.9
130	Angola	26.8
131	Estonia	26.4
132	Mali	25.8
133	Mozambique	24.6
134	Benin	24.6
135	Togo	23.3
136	Sierra Leone	23.1
137	Central African Republic	22.9
138	Burkina Faso	22.4
139	Burundi	21.8
140	Namibia	21.1
141	Botswana	20.9
142	Tanzania	17.8

143	Zimbabwe	16.6
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Source: *This material is derived from the Happy Planet Index issued by the New Economics Foundation (NEF).*

Methodology: *The methodology for the calculations can be found at URL: <http://www.happyplanetindex.org/>*

Status of Women

Overview

While women in Ghana are recognized under the Constitution as having equal rights with men in all aspects of life, in practice this is not the norm. Women continue to contend with discriminatory laws and practices in employment, family matters; they also encounter problems of access to resources such as land, labor, capital and technology.

Education in Ghana is seen as a privilege and not a right for most women. According to a recent Ghana Living Standards survey, 44.1 percent women, as opposed to 21.1 percent of men, have no formal education. More girls than boys withdraw or "drop out" of school at all levels of education. Since formal sector employment requires secondary or higher levels of education, the high withdrawal rate for girls automatically places them at a disadvantage in the economic sector. Therefore, a cycle of dependency upon men develops, since women do not have the skills that would allow them to procure the higher paying jobs. As such, women cannot afford to live independently.

Meanwhile, Ghanaian society expects women to marry much earlier than men. Ghanaian society also expects women to have children by a certain age. If a marriage does not produce children, the woman is often to blame is socially stigmatized by her community

Women in Ghana are also at a high risk of dying from pregnancy related causes. The national maternal mortality rate is estimated at 540 deaths per 100,000 live births. This is compared to the

average of 10 per 100,000 live births in most developed nations. The social and economic costs to the survivors are enormous, as the women who die from childbirth are often in their most active period of economic activity as well.

Women in Ghana are at a disadvantage in protecting themselves from sexually transmitted diseases especially HIV/AIDS. More the 90 percent of all HIV/AIDS cases in Ghana are found in people between the ages of 15 and 49. Of these cases, over two-thirds are female. Women, due to their economic deficiencies, are often forced to use sex as payment for various opportunities. While most women would like to have protected sex, it is often not a choice that is presented to them.

Domestic violence is considered by society as a private matter and therefore many women are reluctant to press charges against their abusers. Violence against women is often influenced by societal attitudes and traditions in which men are seen as naturally superior to women and thus they have the right to control women's actions and behaviors. Women are at the mercy of their male family members who decide what is an acceptable behavior, and what is a punishable offence.

Finally, women are relegated to the background when it comes to the political sector. Women account for less than 10 percent of people in public office. There make up approximately 10 percent of the membership in parliament and only four percent of the membership of district assemblies. Since there are no quota or affirmative action policies in place, women are left to their own devices to obtain entry into parliament or the district assemblies.

Gender Related Development Index (GDI) Rank:

104th out of 140

Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) Rank:

79th out of 80

Female Population:

11.0 million

Female Life Expectancy at birth:

62.25 years

Total Fertility Rate:

4.4

Maternal Mortality Ratio:

540

Total Number of Women Living with HIV/AIDS:

150,000-210,000

Ever Married Women, Ages 15-19 (%):

16%

Mean Age at Time of Marriage:

21

Contraceptive Use Among Married Women, Any Method (%):

25%

Female Adult Literacy Rate:

49.8%

Combined Female Gross enrollment ratio for Primary, Secondary and Tertiary schools:

43%

Female-Headed Households (%):

34%

Economically Active Females (%):

79.8%

Female Contributing Family Workers (%):

N/A

Female Estimated Earned Income:

\$1,915

Seats in Parliament held by women (%):

Lower or Single House: 10%

Upper House or Senate: N/A

Year Women Received the Right to Vote:

1954

Year Women Received the Right to Stand for Election:

1954

*The Gender Development Index (GDI) is a composite index which measures the average achievement in a country. While very similar to the Human Development Index in its use of the same variables, the GDI adjusts the average achievement of each country in terms of life expectancy, enrollment in schools, income, and literacy in accordance to the disparities between males and females.

*The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) is a composite index measuring gender inequality in

three of the basic dimensions of empowerment; economic participation and decision-making, political participation and decision-making, and power over economic resources.

*Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is defined as the average number of babies born to women during their reproductive years. A TFR of 2.1 is considered the replacement rate; once a TFR of a population reaches 2.1 the population will remain stable assuming no immigration or emigration takes place. When the TFR is greater than 2.1 a population will increase and when it is less than 2.1 a population will eventually decrease, although due to the age structure of a population it will take years before a low TFR is translated into lower population.

*Maternal Mortality Rate is the number of deaths to women per 100,000 live births that resulted from conditions related to pregnancy and or delivery related complications.

*Economically Active Females are the share of the female population, ages 15 and above, whom supply, or are able to supply, labor for the production of goods and services.

*Female Contributing Family Workers are those females who work without pay in an economic enterprise operated by a relative living in the same household.

*Estimated Earned Income is measured according to Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) in US dollars.

Global Gender Gap Index

Global Gender Gap Index

Editor's Note:

The Global Gender Gap Index by the World Economic Forum ranks most of the world's countries in terms of the division of resources and opportunities among males and females. Specifically, the ranking assesses the gender inequality gap in these four arenas:

1. Economic participation and opportunity (salaries and high skilled employment participation levels)
2. Educational attainment (access to basic and higher level education)
3. Political empowerment (representation in decision-making structures)
4. Health and survival (life expectancy and sex ratio)

	2010 rank	2010 score	2010 rank among 2009 countries	2009 rank	2009 score	2008 rank	2008 score	2007 rank
Country								
Iceland	1	0.8496	1	1	0.8276	4	0.7999	4
Norway	2	0.8404	2	3	0.8227	1	0.8239	2
Finland	3	0.8260	3	2	0.8252	2	0.8195	3
Sweden	4	0.8024	4	4	0.8139	3	0.8139	1
New Zealand	5	0.7808	5	5	0.7880	5	0.7859	5
Ireland	6	0.7773	6	8	0.7597	8	0.7518	9
Denmark	7	0.7719	7	7	0.7628	7	0.7538	8
Lesotho	8	0.7678	8	10	0.7495	16	0.7320	26
Philippines	9	0.7654	9	9	0.7579	6	0.7568	6
Switzerland	10	0.7562	10	13	0.7426	14	0.7360	40
Spain	11	0.7554	11	17	0.7345	17	0.7281	10
South Africa	12	0.7535	12	6	0.7709	22	0.7232	20
Germany	13	0.7530	13	12	0.7449	11	0.7394	7

Belgium	14	0.7509	14	33	0.7165	28	0.7163	19
United Kingdom	15	0.7460	15	15	0.7402	13	0.7366	11
Sri Lanka	16	0.7458	16	16	0.7402	12	0.7371	15
Netherlands	17	0.7444	17	11	0.7490	9	0.7399	12
Latvia	18	0.7429	18	14	0.7416	10	0.7397	13
United States	19	0.7411	19	31	0.7173	27	0.7179	31
Canada	20	0.7372	20	25	0.7196	31	0.7136	18
Trinidad and Tobago	21	0.7353	21	19	0.7298	19	0.7245	46
Mozambique	22	0.7329	22	26	0.7195	18	0.7266	43
Australia	23	0.7271	23	20	0.7282	21	0.7241	17
Cuba	24	0.7253	24	29	0.7176	25	0.7195	22
Namibia	25	0.7238	25	32	0.7167	30	0.7141	29
Luxembourg	26	0.7231	26	63	0.6889	66	0.6802	58
Mongolia	27	0.7194	27	22	0.7221	40	0.7049	62
Costa Rica	28	0.7194	28	27	0.7180	32	0.7111	28
Argentina	29	0.7187	29	24	0.7211	24	0.7209	33
Nicaragua	30	0.7176	30	49	0.7002	71	0.6747	90

Barbados	31	0.7176	31	21	0.7236	26	0.7188	n/a
Portugal	32	0.7171	32	46	0.7013	39	0.7051	37
Uganda	33	0.7169	33	40	0.7067	43	0.6981	50
Moldova	34	0.7160	34	36	0.7104	20	0.7244	21
Lithuania	35	0.7132	35	30	0.7175	23	0.7222	14
Bahamas	36	0.7128	36	28	0.7179	n/a	n/a	n/a
Austria	37	0.7091	37	42	0.7031	29	0.7153	27
Guyana	38	0.7090	38	35	0.7108	n/a	n/a	n/a
Panama	39	0.7072	39	43	0.7024	34	0.7095	38
Ecuador	40	0.7072	40	23	0.7220	35	0.7091	44
Kazakhstan	41	0.7055	41	47	0.7013	45	0.6976	32
Slovenia	42	0.7047	42	52	0.6982	51	0.6937	49
Poland	43	0.7037	43	50	0.6998	49	0.6951	60
Jamaica	44	0.7037	44	48	0.7013	44	0.6980	39
Russian Federation	45	0.7036	45	51	0.6987	42	0.6994	45
France	46	0.7025	46	18	0.7331	15	0.7341	51
Estonia	47	0.7018	47	37	0.7094	37	0.7076	30
Chile	48	0.7013	48	64	0.6884	65	0.6818	86

Macedonia, FYR	49	0.6996	49	53	0.6950	53	0.6914	35
Bulgaria	50	0.6983	50	38	0.7072	36	0.7077	25
Kyrgyz Republic	51	0.6973	51	41	0.7058	41	0.7045	70
Israel	52	0.6957	52	45	0.7019	56	0.6900	36
Croatia	53	0.6939	53	54	0.6944	46	0.6967	16
Honduras	54	0.6927	54	62	0.6893	47	0.6960	68
Colombia	55	0.6927	55	56	0.6939	50	0.6944	24
Singapore	56	0.6914	56	84	0.6664	84	0.6625	77
Thailand	57	0.6910	57	59	0.6907	52	0.6917	52
Greece	58	0.6908	58	85	0.6662	75	0.6727	72
Uruguay	59	0.6897	59	57	0.6936	54	0.6907	78
Peru	60	0.6895	60	44	0.7024	48	0.6959	75
China	61	0.6881	61	60	0.6907	57	0.6878	73
Botswana	62	0.6876	62	39	0.7071	63	0.6839	53
Ukraine	63	0.6869	63	61	0.6896	62	0.6856	57
Venezuela	64	0.6863	64	69	0.6839	59	0.6875	55
Czech Republic	65	0.6850	65	74	0.6789	69	0.6770	64

Tanzania	66	0.6829	66	73	0.6797	38	0.7068	34
Romania	67	0.6826	67	70	0.6805	70	0.6763	47
Malawi	68	0.6824	68	76	0.6738	81	0.6664	87
Paraguay	69	0.6804	69	66	0.6868	100	0.6379	69
Ghana	70	0.6782	70	80	0.6704	77	0.6679	63
Slovak Republic	71	0.6778	71	68	0.6845	64	0.6824	54
Vietnam	72	0.6776	72	71	0.6802	68	0.6778	42
Dominican Republic	73	0.6774	73	67	0.6859	72	0.6744	65
Italy	74	0.6765	74	72	0.6798	67	0.6788	84
Gambia, The	75	0.6762	75	75	0.6752	85	0.6622	95
Bolivia	76	0.6751	76	82	0.6693	80	0.6667	80
Brueni Darussalem	77	0.6748	77	94	0.6524	99	0.6392	n/a
Albania	78	0.6726	78	91	0.6601	87	0.6591	66
Hungary	79	0.6720	79	65	0.6879	60	0.6867	61
Madagascar	80	0.6713	80	77	0.6732	74	0.6736	89
Angola	81	0.6712	81	106	0.6353	114	0.6032	110

Bangladesh	82	0.6702	82	93	0.6526	90	0.6531	100
Malta	83	0.6695	83	88	0.6635	83	0.6634	76
Armenia	84	0.6669	84	90	0.6619	78	0.6677	71
Brazil	85	0.6655	85	81	0.6695	73	0.6737	74
Cyprus	86	0.6642	86	79	0.6706	76	0.6694	82
Indonesia	87	0.6615	87	92	0.6580	93	0.6473	81
Georgia	88	0.6598	88	83	0.6680	82	0.6654	67
Tajikistan	89	0.6598	89	86	0.6661	89	0.6541	79
El Salvador	90	0.6596	90	55	0.6939	58	0.6875	48
Mexico	91	0.6577	91	98	0.6503	97	0.6441	93
Zimbabwe	92	0.6574	92	95	0.6518	92	0.6485	88
Belize	93	0.6536	93	87	0.6636	86	0.6610	94
Japan	94	0.6524	94	101	0.6447	98	0.6434	91
Mauritius	95	0.6520	95	96	0.6513	95	0.6466	85
Kenya	96	0.6499	96	97	0.6512	88	0.6547	83
Cambodia	97	0.6482	97	104	0.6410	94	0.6469	98
Malaysia	98	0.6479	98	100	0.6467	96	0.6442	92
Maldives	99	0.6452	99	99	0.6482	91	0.6501	99

Azerbaijan	100	0.6446	100	89	0.6626	61	0.6856	59
Senegal	101	0.6414	101	102	0.6427	n/a	n/a	n/a
Suriname	102	0.6407	102	78	0.6726	79	0.6674	56
United Arab Emirates	103	0.6397	103	112	0.6198	105	0.6220	105
Korea, Rep.	104	0.6342	104	115	0.6146	108	0.6154	97
Kuwait	105	0.6318	105	105	0.6356	101	0.6358	96
Zambia	106	0.6293	106	107	0.6310	106	0.6205	101
Tunisia	107	0.6266	107	109	0.6233	103	0.6295	102
Fiji	108	0.6256	108	103	0.6414	n/a	n/a	n/a
Guatemala	109	0.6238	109	111	0.6209	112	0.6072	106
Bahrain	110	0.6217	110	116	0.6136	121	0.5927	115
Burkina Faso	111	0.6162	111	120	0.6081	115	0.6029	117
India	112	0.6155	112	114	0.6151	113	0.6060	114
Mauritania	113	0.6152	113	119	0.6103	110	0.6117	111
Cameroon	114	0.6110	114	118	0.6108	117	0.6017	116
Nepal	115	0.6084	115	110	0.6213	120	0.5942	125
Lebanon*	116	0.6084	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Qatar	117	0.6059	116	125	0.5907	119	0.5948	109
Nigeria	118	0.6055	117	108	0.6280	102	0.6339	107
Algeria	119	0.6052	118	117	0.6119	111	0.6111	108
Jordan	120	0.6048	119	113	0.6182	104	0.6275	104
Ethiopia	121	0.6019	120	122	0.5948	122	0.5867	113
Oman	122	0.5950	121	123	0.5938	118	0.5960	119
Iran	123	0.5933	122	128	0.5839	116	0.6021	118
Syria	124	0.5926	123	121	0.6072	107	0.6181	103
Egypt	125	0.5899	124	126	0.5862	124	0.5832	120
Turkey	126	0.5876	125	129	0.5828	123	0.5853	121
Morocco	127	0.5767	126	124	0.5926	125	0.5757	122
Benin	128	0.5719	127	131	0.5643	126	0.5582	123
Saudi Arabia	129	0.5713	128	130	0.5651	128	0.5537	124
Côte d'Ivoire*	130	0.5691	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mali	131	0.5680	129	127	0.5860	109	0.6117	112
Pakistan	132	0.5465	130	132	0.5458	127	0.5549	126
Chad	133	0.5330	131	133	0.5417	129	0.5290	127
Yemen	134	0.4603	132	134	0.4609	130	0.4664	128

Belarus	n/a	n/a	n/a	34	0.7141	33	0.7099	23
Uzbekistan	n/a	n/a	n/a	58	0.6913	55	0.6906	41

*new country 2010

Commentary:

According to the report's index, Nordic countries, such as [Iceland](#), [Norway](#), [Finland](#), and [Sweden](#) have continued to dominate at the top of the ranking for gender equality. Meanwhile, [France](#) has seen a notable decline in the ranking, largely as a result of decreased number of women holding ministerial portfolios in that country. In the Americas, the [United States](#) has risen in the ranking to top the region, predominantly as a result of a decreasing wage gap, as well as higher number of women holding key positions in the current Obama administration. [Canada](#) has continued to remain as one of the top ranking countries of the Americas, followed by the small Caribbean island nation of Trinidad and Tobago, which has the distinction of being among the top three countries of the Americas in the realm of gender equality. [Lesotho](#) and South African ranked highly in the index, leading not only among African countries but also in global context. Despite [Lesotho](#) still lagging in the area of life expectancy, its high ranking was attributed to high levels of female participation in the labor force and female literacy. The [Philippines](#) and [Sri Lanka](#) were the top ranking countries for gender equality for Asia, ranking highly also in global context. The [Philippines](#) has continued to show strong performance in all strong performance on all four dimensions (detailed above) of the index. Finally, in the Arab world, the [United Arab Emirates](#) held the highest-rank within that region of the world; however, its placement near the bottom of the global list highlights the fact that Arab countries are generally poor performers when it comes to the matter of gender equality in global scope.

Source:

This data is derived from the latest edition of The Global Gender Gap Report by the World Economic Forum.

Available at URL:

<http://www.weforum.org/en/Communities/Women%20Leaders%20and%20Gender%20Parity/Gende>

Updated:

Based on latest available data as set forth in chart; reviewed in 2014

Culture and Arts

Content to come!

Etiquette

Dos and Taboos

1. The western manner of greeting is acceptable here, but to show goodwill be sure to smile. Until a familiar relationship is established, address Ghanaians with their title.
 2. The oldest persons should be greeted first.
 3. Avoid using the left hand for giving or receiving food and gifts. Never wave with the left hand.
 4. Remove hats when speaking to the elderly and respected persons.
 5. Should you be invited to meet a chief, expect a translator or linguist to mediate the conversation. Guests should never directly speak to the chief.
 6. Women should not smoke inside villages.
 7. Self-presentation and clothing is considered important in Ghana, so be sure to take care with one's choices in this regard. Note that Ghanaians associate clothing with wealth, so if one is wearing scanty clothing, it is likely that one will be thought of as very poor, regardless of the actuality.
 8. If you are going to dine at a Ghanaians house, do not bring gifts for the host or hostess. Send a
-

thank you note or gifts a few days later. A great way to show appreciation is to compliment the food and stay after dinner to converse with the host and guests.

Business Culture: Information for Business Travelers

Generally, Ghanaian business customs are similar to those of the West. English is the official language and is used in most business transactions. Most urban Ghanaians speak some English. The majority of Ghanaian businessmen wear business suits during working hours. Traditional attire is after work for social functions. A few men may be found in traditional attire during business hours. Many businesswomen often wear African attire during business hours and for social functions as well. Lightweight summer clothing is appropriate year round and the use of an umbrella is essential during the June to August rainy season, although Accra gets less rain than many parts of the country.

Businesses have reported being asked for "favours" in the past. It is easy to make friends in Ghana who can facilitate business transactions. In return, these friends may ask for favours, some of which may conflict with other foreign business ethics or laws. Visiting business visitors should make clear that companies operating abroad are subject to the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977.

With the exception of high-ranking officials such as government ministers, it is relatively easy to arrange calls on local businessmen and government officials. Through its Gold Key Service the Commercial Service can arrange appointments upon request.

Business cards are widely used in Ghana, so be sure to have an adequate supply. They range from the simple black and white, standard 2" x 3.5" cards, to colorful, oversized, multi-colored cards with fancy logos. It is a common practice to give a business card to most everyone you meet in a business setting, so bring plenty of them.

Sources: *United States Department of State Commercial Guides*

Travel Information

Please Note: This is a generalized travel guide and it is intended to coalesce several resources, which a traveler might find useful, regardless of a particular destination. As such, it does not include travel warnings for specific "hot spot" destinations.

For travel alerts and warnings, please see the United States Department of State's listings available at URL:

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html>

Please note that travel to the following countries, based on these warnings, is ill-advised, or should be undertaken with the utmost precaution:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Honduras, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Palestinian Territories of West Bank and Gaza, Philippines areas of Sulu Archipelago, Mindanao, and southern Sulu Sea, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Yemen.

International Travel Guide

Checklist for Travelers

- 1. Take out travel insurance to cover hospital treatment or medical evacuation. Overseas medical costs are expensive to most international travelers, where one's domestic, nationalized or even private health insurance plans will not provide coverage outside one's home country. Learn about "reciprocal insurance plans" that some international health care companies might offer.**
- 2. Make sure that one's travel insurance is appropriate. If one intends to indulge in adventurous activities, such as parasailing, one should be sure that one is fully insured in such cases. Many traditional insurance policies do not provide coverage in cases of extreme circumstances.**
- 3. Take time to learn about one's destination country and culture. Read and learn about the place one is traveling. Also check political, economic and socio-cultural developments at the destination by reading country-specific travel reports and fact sheets noted below.**
- 4. Get the necessary visas for the country (or countries) one intends to visit - but be aware that a visa does not guarantee entry. A number of useful sites regarding visa and other entry requirements**

are noted below.

- 5.** Keep in regular contact with friends and relatives back at home by phone or email, and be sure to leave a travel itinerary.
- 6.** Protect one's personal information by making copies of one's passport details, insurance policy, travelers checks and credit card numbers. Taking copies of such documents with you, while leaving another collection copies with someone at home is also good practice for travelers. Taking copies of one's passport photograph is also recommended.
- 7.** Stay healthy by taking all possible precautions against illness. Also, be sure to take extra supplies of prescription drugs along for the trip, while also taking time to pack general pharmaceutical supplies, such as aspirin and other such painkillers, bandages, stomach ailment medication, anti-inflammatory medication and anti-bacterial medication.
- 8.** Do not carry illicit drugs. Understand that the punishment for possession or use of illegal drugs in some countries may be capital punishment. Make sure your prescription drugs are legal in the countries you plan to visit.
- 9.** Know the laws of one's destination country and culture; be sure to understand the repercussions of breaking those laws and regulations. Often the transparency and freedoms of the juridical system at home is not consistent with that of one's destination country. Become aware of these complexities and subtleties before you travel.
- 10.** For longer stays in a country, or where the security situation is volatile, one should register one's self and traveling companions at the local embassy or consulate of one's country of citizenship.
- 11.** Women should take care to be prepared both culturally and practically for traveling in a different country and culture. One should be sure to take sufficient supplies of personal feminine products and prescription drugs. One should also learn about local cultural standards for women, including norms of dressing. Be aware that it is simply inappropriate and unsafe for women to travel alone in some countries, and take the necessary precautions to avoid risk-filled situations.
- 12.** If one is traveling with small children, one should pack extra supplies, make arrangements with the travel carrier for proper seating that would adequately accommodate children, infants or toddlers. Note also that whether one is male or female, traveling with children means that one's hands are thus not free to carry luggage and bags. Be especially aware that this makes one vulnerable to pickpockets, thieves and other sorts of crime.
- 13.** Make proper arrangements for accommodations, well in advance of one's arrival at a destination. Some countries have limited accommodation, while others may have culturally distinctive facilities. Learning about these practicalities before one travels will greatly aid the enjoyment of one's trip.
- 14.** Travel with different forms of currency and money (cash, traveler's checks and credit cards) in anticipation that venues may not accept one or another form of money. Also, ensuring that one's financial resources are not contained in one location, or by one person (if one is traveling with others) can be a useful measure, in the event that one loses a wallet or purse.
- 15.** Find out about transportation in the destination country. In some places, it might be advisable to hire a local driver or taxi guide for safety reasons, while in other countries, enjoying one's travel

experience may well be enhanced by renting a vehicle and seeing the local sights and culture independently. Costs may also be prohibitive for either of these choices, so again, prior planning is suggested.

Tips for Travelers

A passport and visa are required, as is evidence of a yellow fever vaccination.

The Government of Ghana treats a dual-Ghanaian citizen as a Ghanaian only. If a Ghanaian dual national runs afoul of Ghanaian authorities, consular assistance may be limited.

Due to the potential for violence, foreign citizens should avoid political rallies and street demonstrations and maintain security awareness at all times.

Pick-pocketing, purse snatching, and various types of scams are the most common forms of crime confronting visitors. Travelers have reported instances of these types of theft in crowded market areas, beaches and parks, and at tourist attractions. Travelers who limit their display of jewelry and handle their cash discreetly reduce their vulnerability to crime.

In recent years, foreign citizens have reported substantial financial losses from questionable transactions involving gold and other precious metals.

The Government of Ghana maintains strict regulations on these natural resources. All agents must be licensed, and all transactions must be certified.

Business fraud stemming from Nigerian scam operations targets foreigners and poses a danger of financial loss and physical harm.

The loss or theft abroad of a passport should be reported immediately to local police and to the appropriate embassy.

Medical facilities are limited, particularly outside Accra. Travelers should be aware that evidence of and/or assurances from their local insurance companies will not be accepted as settlement of medical expenses in Ghana.

Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health services. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas may face extreme difficulties.

Please check with your own insurance company to confirm whether your policy applies overseas, including provision for medical evacuation, and for adequacy of coverage. Serious medical problems requiring hospitalization and/or medical evacuation back to your country can be very expensive. Please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas hospital or doctor or

whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur. Some insurance policies also include coverage for psychiatric treatment and for disposition of remains in the event of death.

While in a foreign country, you may encounter road conditions that differ significantly from those in your country. The information below concerning Ghana is provided for general reference only, and may not be totally accurate in a particular location or circumstance.

Safety of Public Transportation: Fair
Urban Road Conditions/Maintenance: Good
Rural Road Conditions/Maintenance: Poor
Availability of Roadside Assistance: Poor

Most primary roads are generally paved and well maintained. However, roads outside the major cities are in poor condition. The road from Accra to the central region tourist area of Cape Coast continues to be the site of many accidents. Travel at dark, particularly outside the major cities, is extremely hazardous, due to poor street lighting and the unpredictable behavior of pedestrians, bicyclists and farm animals, such as goats and pigs.

The safety standards of the small private buses that transit roads and highways are uncertain. Travelers are encouraged to consider this when making travel arrangements.

Travelers are routinely stopped at police checkpoints throughout Ghana. Automobiles and passengers may be searched. Drivers must possess an international drivers license. Foreign nationals are expected to carry documentation of their status, such as a passport and visa.

Visitors entering Ghana with more than 5,000 dollars (US) in cash are required to declare the amount upon entry into Ghana. Currency exchange is available at most banks and at licensed foreign exchange bureaus. Currency transactions with private citizens are illegal.

The Government of Ghana maintains strict regulations on the import and export of gold, diamonds and other precious natural resources. Only agents licensed by the Precious Metals and Mining Commission, telephone (233)(21) 664-635 or 664-579, may handle import-export transactions of these natural resources. Any transaction lacking this Commission's endorsement may be illegal and/or fraudulent. Attempts to evade regulations are punishable by prison terms.

In rare instances, visitors arriving in Ghana with sophisticated electronic equipment (video cameras and laptop computers) may have to deposit 17.5 per cent of the item's value with the Customs and Excise office at the airport. To get the deposit refunded, visitors must apply to the Customs and Excise Office in central Accra 48 hours before departure.

While in a foreign country, you are subject to that country's laws and regulations, which sometimes

differ significantly from those in your home country. Persons violating Ghanaian law, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested or imprisoned. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Ghana are strict, and convicted offenders can expect jail sentences and heavy fines.

Taking pictures near sensitive installations, including military sites and government buildings, is prohibited. In some instances, film and cameras have been confiscated.

The wearing of any military apparel, such as camouflage jackets or trousers, or any clothing or items which may appear military in nature, is strictly prohibited.

Note: This information is directly quoted from the United States Department of State Consular Information Sheet.

Sources: *United States Department of State Consular Information Sheet*

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Sources: *United States Department of State Commercial Guides*

Online Resources Regarding Entry Requirements and Visas

Foreign Entry Requirements for Americans from the United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html

Visa Services for Non-Americans from the United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html

Visa Bulletins from the United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/bulletin/bulletin_1360.html

Visa Waivers from the United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1990.html - new

Passport and Visa Information from the Government of the United Kingdom

<http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

Visa Information from the Government of Australia

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/visas/index.html>

Passport Information from the Government of Australia

<https://www.passports.gov.au/Web/index.aspx>

Passport Information from the Government of Canada

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/preparation_information/passport_passeport-eng.asp

Visa Information from the Government of Canada

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/preparation_information/visas-eng.asp

Online Visa Processing by Immigration Experts by VisaPro

<http://www.visapro.com>

Sources: United States Department of State, United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Government of Australia: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Canada

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Useful Online Resources for Travelers

Country-Specific Travel Information from United States

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html

Travel Advice by Country from Government of United Kingdom

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country/>

General Travel Advice from Government of Australia

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/General>

Travel Bulletins from the Government of Australia

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/TravelBulletins/>

Travel Tips from Government of Australia

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/tips/index.html>

Travel Checklist by Government of Canada

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/preparation_information/checklist_sommaire-eng.asp

Travel Checklist from Government of United Kingdom

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/staying-safe/checklist>

Your trip abroad from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1225.html

A safe trip abroad from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html

Tips for expatriates abroad from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/residing/residing_1235.html

Tips for students from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/studying/studying_1238.html <http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/broc>

Medical information for travelers from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_1185.html

US Customs Travel information

<http://www.customs.gov/xp/cgov/travel/>

Sources: United States Department of State; United States Customs Department, United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Government of Australia; Government of Canada: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Other Practical Online Resources for Travelers

Foreign Language Phrases for Travelers

<http://www.travlang.com/languages/>

<http://www.omniglot.com/language/phrases/index.htm>

World Weather Forecasts

<http://www.intellicast.com/>

<http://www.wunderground.com/>

<http://www.worldweather.org/>

Worldwide Time Zones, Map, World Clock

<http://www.timeanddate.com/>

<http://www.worldtimezone.com/>

International Airport Codes

<http://www.world-airport-codes.com/>

International Dialing Codes

<http://www.kropla.com/dialcode.htm>

<http://www.countrycallingcodes.com/>

International Phone Guide

<http://www.kropla.com/phones.htm>

International Mobile Phone Guide

<http://www.kropla.com/mobilephones.htm>

International Internet Café Search Engine

<http://cybercaptive.com/>

Global Internet Roaming

<http://www.kropla.com/roaming.htm>

World Electric Power Guide

<http://www.kropla.com/electric.htm>

<http://www.kropla.com/electric2.htm>

World Television Standards and Codes

<http://www.kropla.com/tv.htm>

International Currency Exchange Rates

<http://www.xe.com/ucc/>

Banking and Financial Institutions Across the World

<http://www.123world.com/banks/index.html>

International Credit Card or Automated Teller Machine (ATM) Locator

<http://visa.via.infonow.net/locator/global/>

<http://www.mastercard.com/us/personal/en/cardholderservices/atmlocations/index.html>

International Chambers of Commerce

<http://www.123world.com/chambers/index.html>

World Tourism Websites

<http://123world.com/tourism/>

Diplomatic and Consular Information

United States Diplomatic Posts Around the World

<http://www.usembassy.gov/>

United Kingdom Diplomatic Posts Around the World

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/embassies-and-posts/find-an-embassy-overseas/>

Australia's Diplomatic Posts Around the World

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/missions/>

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/embassies.html>

Canada's Embassies and High Commissions

<http://www.international.gc.ca/ciw-cdm/embassies-ambassades.aspx>

Resources for Finding Embassies and other Diplomatic Posts Across the World

<http://www.escapeartist.com/embassy1/embassy1.htm>

Safety and Security

Travel Warnings by Country from Government of Australia

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/>

Travel Warnings and Alerts from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1766.html

Travel Reports and Warnings by Government of Canada

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/updates_mise-a-jour-eng.asp

Travel Warnings from Government of United Kingdom

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country/>

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country/?action=noTravelAll#noTravelAll>

Sources: United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the United States Department of State, the Government of Canada: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Government of Australia: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Other Safety and Security Online Resources for Travelers

United States Department of State Information on Terrorism

<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/>

Government of the United Kingdom Resource on the Risk of Terrorism

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?>

[pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1044011304926](http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1044011304926)

Government of Canada Terrorism Guide

<http://www.international.gc.ca/crime/terrorism-terrorisme.aspx?lang=eng>

Information on Terrorism by Government of Australia

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/icat/index.html>

FAA Resource on Aviation Safety

<http://www.faasafety.gov/>

In-Flight Safety Information for Air Travel (by British Airways crew trainer, Anna Warman)

<http://www.warman.demon.co.uk/anna/inflight.html>

Hot Spots: Travel Safety and Risk Information

<http://www.airsecurity.com/hotspots/HotSpots.asp>

Information on Human Rights

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/>

Sources: The United States Department of State, the United States Customs Department, the Government of Canada, the Government of United Kingdom, the Government of Australia, the Federal Aviation Authority, Anna Warman's In-flight Website, Hot Spots Travel and Risk Information

Diseases/Health Data

Please Note: Most of the entry below constitutes a generalized health advisory, which a traveler might find useful, regardless of a particular destination.

As a supplement, however, reader will also find below a list of countries flagged with current health notices and alerts issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Please note that travel to the following countries, based on these 3 levels of warnings, is ill-advised, or should be undertaken with the utmost precaution:

Level 3 (highest level of concern; avoid non-essential travel) --

Guinea - Ebola

Liberia - Ebola

Nepal - Earthquake zone
Sierra Leone - Ebola

Level 2 (intermediate level of concern; use utmost caution during travel) --

Cameroon - Polio
Somalia - Polio
Vanuatu - Tropical Cyclone zone
Throughout Middle East and Arabia Peninsula - MERS ((Middle East Respiratory Syndrome)

Level 1 (standard level of concern; use practical caution during travel) -

Australia - Ross River disease
Bosnia-Herzegovina - Measles
Brazil - Dengue Fever
Brazil - Malaria
Brazil - Zika
China - H7N9 Avian flu
Cuba - Cholera
Egypt - H5N1 Bird flu
Ethiopia - Measles
Germany - Measles
Japan - Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD)
Kyrgyzstan - Measles
Malaysia -Dengue Fever
Mexico - Chikungunya
Mexico - Hepatitis A
Nigeria - Meningitis
Philippines - Measles
Scotland - Mumps
Singapore - Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD)
South Korea - MERS ((Middle East Respiratory Syndrome)
Throughout Caribbean - Chikungunya
Throughout Central America - Chikungunya
Throughout South America - Chikungunya
Throughout Pacific Islands - Chikungunya

For specific information related to these health notices and alerts please see the CDC's listing available at URL:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

Health Information for Travelers to Ghana

An outbreak of meningitis is currently occurring in several central, east, and west African countries, including Ethiopia, Chad, Cameroon, Burkino Faso, and Benin. For more information on this outbreak and recommendations, see the following sites:

Travelers' Health Information on Meningococcal Disease
(<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/menin.htm>)

World Health Organization Disease Outbreak News
(<http://www.who.int/disease-outbreak-news/>)

Food and waterborne diseases are the number one cause of illness in travelers. Travelers' diarrhea can be caused by viruses, bacteria, or parasites, which are found throughout the region and can contaminate food or water. Infections may cause diarrhea and vomiting (*E. coli*, *Salmonella*, cholera, and parasites), fever (typhoid fever and toxoplasmosis), or liver damage (hepatitis). Make sure your food and drinking water are safe. (See below.)

Malaria is a preventable infection that can be fatal if left untreated. Prevent infection by taking prescription antimalarial drugs and protecting yourself against mosquito bites (see below). Most travelers to malaria risk areas in this region should take mefloquine to prevent malaria. Your risk of malaria is high in all parts of these countries, including cities, except for most of the Cape Verde Islands. For more detailed information about the risk in specific locations, see Malaria in West Africa (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/regionalmalaria/wafrica.htm>).

Yellow fever vaccination is recommended and may be required for entry into certain of these countries. If you travel to West Africa, the easiest and safest thing to do is get a yellow fever vaccination and a signed certificate. For detailed information, see Comprehensive Yellow Fever Vaccination Requirements (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/yelfever.htm>).

Dengue, filariasis, leishmaniasis, onchocerciasis, and trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness) are diseases carried by insects that also occur in this region. Protecting yourself against insect bites (see below) will help to prevent these diseases.

Schistosomiasis, a parasitic infection, is found in fresh water in the region. Do not swim in fresh water (except in well-chlorinated swimming pools) in these countries. (For more information, please see the Swimming Precautions on the Making Travel Safe page at URL <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/safety.htm>.)

Because motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injury among travelers, walk and drive defensively. Avoid nighttime travel if possible and always use seat belts.

CDC Recommends the Following Vaccines (as Appropriate for Age):

See your doctor at least 4-6 weeks before your trip to allow time for shots to take effect.

- Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG).
- Hepatitis B, if you might be exposed to blood (for example, health-care workers), have sexual contact with the local population, stay longer than 6 months, or be exposed through medical treatment.
- Meningococcal meningitis, for travel to most of these countries (see meningitis map at URL <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/meninmap.htm>) from December through June.
- Yellow fever.
- Rabies, if you might be exposed to wild or domestic animals through your work or recreation.
- Typhoid, particularly if you are visiting developing countries in this region.
- As needed, booster doses for tetanus-diphtheria, measles, and a one-time dose of polio vaccine for adults. Hepatitis B vaccine is now recommended for all infants and for children ages 11-12 years who did not complete the series as infants.

To Stay Healthy, Do:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. If this is not possible, make water safer by BOTH filtering through an "absolute 1-micron or less" filter AND adding iodine tablets to the filtered water. "Absolute 1-micron filters" are found in camping/outdoor supply stores.
- Eat only thoroughly cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself. Remember: boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.
- Take your malaria prevention medication before, during, and after travel, as directed. (See your doctor for a prescription.)
- Protect yourself from insects by remaining in well-screened areas, using repellents (applied sparingly at 4-hour intervals) and permethrin-impregnated mosquito nets, and wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants from dusk through dawn.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot.
- Always use latex condoms to reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

To Avoid Getting Sick:

- Don't eat food purchased from street vendors.
- Don't drink beverages with ice.
- Don't eat dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Don't share needles with anyone.
- Don't handle animals (especially monkeys, dogs, and cats), to avoid bites and serious diseases (including rabies and plague). (For more information, please see the Animal-Associated Hazards on

the Making Travel Safe page.)

- Don't swim in fresh water. Salt water is usually safer. (For more information, please see the Swimming Precautions on the Making Travel Safe page.)

What You Need To Bring with You:

- Long-sleeved shirt and long pants to wear while outside whenever possible, to prevent illnesses carried by insects (e.g., malaria, dengue, filariasis, leishmaniasis, and onchocerciasis).
- Insect repellent containing DEET (diethylmethyltoluamide), in 30%-35% strength for adults and 6%-10% for children. Unless you are staying in air-conditioned or well-screened housing, purchase a bed net impregnated with the insecticide permethrin. (Bed nets can be purchased in camping or military supply stores.)
- Over-the-counter antidiarrheal medicine to take if you have diarrhea.
- Iodine tablets and water filters to purify water if bottled water is not available. See Do's above for more details about water filters.
- Sunblock, sunglasses, hat.
- Prescription medications: make sure you have enough to last during your trip, as well as a copy of the prescription(s).

After You Return Home:

If you have visited an area where there is risk for malaria, continue taking your malaria medication weekly for 4 weeks after you leave the area.

If you become ill after your trip-even as long as a year after you return-tell your doctor where you have traveled.

For More Information:

Ask your doctor or check the CDC web sites for more information about how to protect yourself against diseases that occur in West Africa, such as:

For information about diseases-

Carried by Insects

Dengue, Malaria, Yellow Fever

Carried in Food or Water

Cholera, *Escherichia coli*, diarrhea, Hepatitis A, Schistosomiasis, Typhoid Fever

Person-to-Person Contact

Hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS

For more information about these and other diseases, please check the Diseases (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/diseases.htm>) section and the Health Topics A-Z (<http://www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm>).

Note:

This country is located in the West Africa health region.

Sources:

The Center for Disease Control Destinations Website:
<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/indianrg.htm>

Chapter 6

Environmental Overview

Environmental Issues

General Overview:

In Ghana, many environmental issues surround the mining industry. Mining, and the associated growth of communities in areas where mining takes place, has led to severe deforestation, erosion, and water pollution.

Where sulfide gold ores have been roasted, there has been air pollution from sulfur and arsenic oxide emissions. Arsenic recovery circuits have been added to two of the three gold-processing plants in the country.

Similarly, mercury is widely used to amalgamate gold by artisanal miners in Ghana. Artisanal usage in particular has led to mercury contamination of rivers. All new mining operations are required to conduct and submit environmental impact studies and to plan their operations to minimize environmental damage. Further, rehabilitation of existing mines now includes environmental planning.

Current Issues:

- Limits to agricultural activities, and resultant limits on food production, as a consequence of drought
- Deforestation
- Overgrazing
- Soil erosion
- Habitat destruction and potential loss of bio-diversity
- Threats to wildlife populations from unregulated poaching
- Water pollution
- Inadequate supplies of potable water

Total Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Mtc):

5.5

Country Rank (GHG output):

104th

Natural Hazards:

-dry, dusty, harmattan winds

Environmental Policy

Regulation and Jurisdiction:

The regulation and protection of the environment in Ghana is under the jurisdiction of the following:

- Ministry of the Environment, Science and Technology
- Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
- The Environmental Protection Council

Major Non-Governmental Organizations:

N/A

International Environmental Accords:

Party to:

- Biodiversity
- Climate Change
- Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol
- Desertification

- Endangered Species
- Environmental Modification
- Hazardous Wastes
- Law of the Sea
- Nuclear Test Ban
- Ozone Layer Protection
- Ship Pollution
- Tropical Timber 83
- Tropical Timber 94
- Wetlands

Signed but not ratified:

- Marine Life Conservation

Kyoto Protocol Status (year ratified):

2003

Greenhouse Gas Ranking

Greenhouse Gas Ranking

GHG Emissions Rankings

Country Rank	Country
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1	United States
2	China
4	Russia
5	Japan
6	India
7	Germany
8	United Kingdom
9	Canada
10	Korea, South
11	Italy
12	Mexico
13	France
14	South Africa
15	Iran
16	Indonesia
17	Australia
18	Spain
19	Brazil

20	Saudi Arabia
21	Ukraine
22	Poland
23	Taiwan
24	Turkey
25	Thailand
26	Netherlands
27	Kazakhstan
28	Malaysia
29	Egypt
30	Venezuela
31	Argentina
32	Uzbekistan
33	Czech Republic
34	Belgium
35	Pakistan
36	Romania
37	Greece

38	United Arab Emirates
39	Algeria
40	Nigeria
41	Austria
42	Iraq
43	Finland
44	Philippines
45	Vietnam
46	Korea, North
47	Israel
48	Portugal
49	Colombia
50	Belarus
51	Kuwait
52	Hungary
53	Chile
54	Denmark
55	Serbia & Montenegro

56	Sweden
57	Syria
58	Libya
59	Bulgaria
60	Singapore
61	Switzerland
62	Ireland
63	Turkmenistan
64	Slovakia
65	Bangladesh
66	Morocco
67	New Zealand
68	Oman
69	Qatar
70	Azerbaijan
71	Norway
72	Peru
73	Cuba

74	Ecuador
75	Trinidad & Tobago
76	Croatia
77	Tunisia
78	Dominican Republic
79	Lebanon
80	Estonia
81	Yemen
82	Jordan
83	Slovenia
84	Bahrain
85	Angola
86	Bosnia & Herzegovina
87	Lithuania
88	Sri Lanka
89	Zimbabwe
90	Bolivia
91	Jamaica

92	Guatemala
93	Luxembourg
94	Myanmar
95	Sudan
96	Kenya
97	Macedonia
98	Mongolia
99	Ghana
100	Cyprus
101	Moldova
102	Latvia
103	El Salvador
104	Brunei
105	Honduras
106	Cameroon
107	Panama
108	Costa Rica
109	Cote d'Ivoire

110	Kyrgyzstan
111	Tajikistan
112	Ethiopia
113	Senegal
114	Uruguay
115	Gabon
116	Albania
117	Nicaragua
118	Botswana
119	Paraguay
120	Tanzania
121	Georgia
122	Armenia
123	Congo, RC
124	Mauritius
125	Nepal
126	Mauritius
127	Nepal

128	Mauritania
129	Malta
130	Papua New Guinea
131	Zambia
132	Suriname
133	Iceland
134	Togo
135	Benin
136	Uganda
137	Bahamas
138	Haiti
139	Congo, DRC
140	Guyana
141	Mozambique
142	Guinea
143	Equatorial Guinea
144	Laos
145	Barbados

146	Niger
147	Fiji
148	Burkina Faso
149	Malawi
150	Swaziland
151	Belize
152	Afghanistan
153	Sierra Leone
154	Eritrea
155	Rwanda
156	Mali
157	Seychelles
158	Cambodia
159	Liberia
160	Bhutan
161	Maldives
162	Antigua & Barbuda
163	Djibouti

164	Saint Lucia
165	Gambia
166	Guinea-Bissau
167	Central African Republic
168	Palau
169	Burundi
170	Grenada
171	Lesotho
172	Saint Vincent & the Grenadines
173	Solomon Islands
174	Samoa
175	Cape Verde
176	Nauru
177	Dominica
178	Saint Kitts & Nevis
179	Chad
180	Tonga
181	Sao Tome & Principe

182	Comoros
183	Vanuatu
185	Kiribati
Not Ranked	Andorra
Not Ranked	East Timor
Not Ranked	Holy See
Not Ranked	Hong Kong
Not Ranked	Liechtenstein
Not Ranked	Marshall Islands
Not Ranked	Micronesia
Not Ranked	Monaco
Not Ranked	San Marino
Not Ranked	Somalia
Not Ranked	Tuvalu

* European Union is ranked 3rd

Cook Islands are ranked 184th

Niue is ranked 186th

Global Environmental Snapshot

Introduction

The countries of the world face many environmental challenges in common. Nevertheless, the nature and intensity of problem vary from region to region, as do various countries' respective capacities, in terms of affluence and infrastructure, to remediate threats to environmental quality.

Consciousness of perils affecting the global environment came to the fore in the last third or so of the 20th century has continued to intensify well into the new millennium. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, considerable environmental progress has been made at the level of institutional developments, international cooperation accords, and public participation. Approximately two-dozen international environmental protection accords with global implications have been promulgated since the late 1970s under auspices of the United Nations and other international organizations, together with many additional regional agreements. Attempts to address and rectify environmental problems take the form of legal frameworks, economic instruments, environmentally sound technologies and cleaner production processes as well as conservation efforts. Environmental impact assessments have increasingly been applied across the globe.

Environmental degradation affects the quality, or aesthetics, of human life, but it also displays potential to undermine conditions necessary for the sustainability of human life. Attitudes toward the importance of environmental protection measures reflect ambivalence derived from this bifurcation. On one hand, steps such as cleaning up pollution, dedicating parkland, and suchlike, are seen as embellishments undertaken by wealthy societies already assured they can successfully perform those functions deemed, ostensibly, more essential-for instance, public health and education, employment and economic development. On the other hand, in poorer countries, activities causing environmental damage-for instance the land degradation effects of unregulated logging, slash-and-burn agriculture, overgrazing, and mining-can seem justified insofar as such activities provide incomes and livelihoods.

Rapid rates of resource depletion are associated with poverty and high population growth, themselves correlated, whereas consumption per capita is much higher in the most developed countries, despite these nations' recent progress in energy efficiency and conservation. It is impossible to sequester the global environmental challenge from related economic, social and political challenges.

First-tier industrialized countries have recently achieved measurable decreases in environmental pollution and the rate of resource depletion, a success not matched in middle income and developing countries. It is believed that the discrepancy is due to the fact that industrialized countries have more developed infrastructures to accommodate changes in environmental policy, to apply environmental technologies, and to invest in public education. The advanced industrialized countries incur relatively lower costs in alleviating environmental problems, in comparison to

developing countries, since in the former even extensive environmental programs represent a rather minuscule percentage of total expenditures. Conversely, budget constraints, lagged provision of basic services to the population, and other factors such as debt service and militarization may preclude institution of minimal environmental protection measures in the poorest countries.

A synopsis for the current situation facing each region of the world follows:

Regional Synopsis: Africa

The African continent, the world's second-largest landmass, encompasses many of the world's least developed countries. By global standards, urbanization is comparatively low but rising at a rapid rate. More heavily industrialized areas at the northern and southern ends of the continent experience the major share of industrial pollution. In other regions the most serious environmental problems typically stem from inefficient subsistence farming methods and other forms of land degradation, which have affected an increasingly extensive area under pressure of a widely impoverished, fast-growing population. Africa's distribution of natural resources is very uneven. It is the continent at greatest risk of desertification, especially in the Sahel region at the edge of the Sahara but also in other dry-range areas. Yet at the same time, Africa also harbors some of the earth's richest and most diverse biological zones.

Key Points:

Up to half a billion hectares of African land are moderately to severely degraded, an occurrence reflecting short-fallow shifting cultivation and overgrazing as well as a climatic pattern of recurrent droughts.

Soil degradation is severe along the expanse directly south of the Sahara, from the west to the east coasts. Parts of southern Africa, central-eastern Africa, and the neighboring island of Madagascar suffer from serious soil degradation as well.

Africa contains about 17 percent of the world's forest cover, concentrated in the tropical belt of the continent. Many of the forests, however, are severely depleted, with an estimated 70 percent showing some degree of degradation.

Population growth has resulted in continuing loss of arable land, as inefficient subsistence farming techniques affect increasingly extensive areas. Efforts to implement settled, sustainable agriculture have met with some recent success, but much further progress in this direction is needed. Especially in previously uninhabited forestlands, concern over deforestation is intensifying.

By contrast, the African savanna remains the richest grassland in the world, supporting a

substantial concentration of animal and plant life. Wildlife parks are sub-Saharan Africa's greatest tourist attraction, and with proper management-giving local people a stake in conservation and controlling the pace of development-could greatly enhance African economies.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of northern, southern and eastern Africa are currently threatened, while the biological diversity in Mauritania and Madagascar is even further compromised with over 20 percent of the mammal species in these two countries currently under threat.

With marine catch trends increasing from 500,000 metric tons in the 1950s to over 3,000,000 metric tons by 2000, there was increasing concern about the reduction in fisheries and marine life, should this trend continue unabated.

Water resource vulnerability is a major concern in northeastern Africa, and a moderate concern across the rest of the continent. An exception is central Africa, which has plentiful water supplies.

Many Africans lack adequate access to resources, not just (if at all) because the resources are unevenly distributed geographically, but also through institutional failures such as faulty land tenure systems or political upheaval. The quality of Africa's natural resources, despite their spotty distribution, is in fact extraordinarily rich. The infrastructure needed to protect and benefit from this natural legacy, however, is largely lacking.

Regional Synopsis: Asia and the Pacific

Asia-earth's largest landmass-and the many large and nearly innumerable small islands lying off its Pacific shore display extraordinarily contrasting landscapes, levels of development, and degrees of environmental stress. In the classification used here, the world's smallest continent, Australia, is also included in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Asia-Pacific region is home to 9 of the world's 14 largest urban areas, and as energy use for utilities, industry and transport increases in developing economies, urban centers are subject to worsening air quality. Intense population density in places such as Bangladesh or Hong Kong is the quintessential image many people have of Asia, yet vast desert areas such as the Gobi and the world's highest mountain range, the Himalayas, span the continent as well. Forested areas in Southeast Asia and the islands of Indonesia and the Philippines were historically prized for their tropical hardwood, but in many places this resource is now severely depleted. Low-lying small island states are extremely vulnerable to the effects of global warming, both rising sea levels and an anticipated increase in cyclones.

Key Points:

Asian timber reserves are forecast to be depleted in the next 40 years. Loss of natural forest is irreversible in some areas, but plantation programs to restore tree cover may ameliorate a portion of the resulting land degradation.

Increased usage of fossil fuels in China and other parts of southern Asia is projected to result in a marked increase in emissions, especially in regard to carbon dioxide. The increased usage of energy has led to a marked upsurge in air pollution across the region.

Acidification is an emerging problem regionally, with sulfur dioxide emissions expected to triple by 2010 if the current growth rate is sustained. China, Thailand, India, and Korea seem to be suffering from particularly high rates of acid deposition. By contrast, Asia's most highly developed economy, Japan, has effected substantial improvements in its environmental indicators.

Water pollution in the Pacific is an urgent concern since up to 70 percent of the water discharged into the region's waters receives no treatment. Additionally, the disposal of solid wastes, in like manner, poses a major threat in a region with many areas of high population density.

The Asia-Pacific region is the largest expanse of the world's land that is adversely affected by soil degradation.

The region around Australia reportedly suffers the largest degree of ozone depletion.

The microstates of the Pacific suffer land loss due to global warming, and the consequent rise in the levels of ocean waters. A high-emissions scenario and anthropogenic climate impact at the upper end of the currently predicted range would probably force complete evacuation of the lowest-elevation islands sometime in this century.

The species-rich reefs surrounding Southeast Asia are highly vulnerable to the deleterious effects of coastal development, land-based pollution, over-fishing and exploitative fishing methods, as well as marine pollution from oil spills and other activities.

With marine catch trends increasing from 5,000,000 metric tons in the 1950s to over 20,000,000 metric tons by 2000, there was increasing concern about the reduction in fisheries and marine life, should this trend continue unabated.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of China and south-east Asia are currently threatened, while the biological diversity in India, Japan, Australia, the Philippines, Indonesia and parts of Malaysia is even further compromised with over 20 percent of the mammal species in these countries currently under threat.

Water resource vulnerability is a serious concern in areas surrounding the Indian subcontinent.

Regional Synopsis: Central Asia

The Central Asian republics, formerly in the Soviet Union, experience a range of environmental problems as the result of poorly executed agricultural, industrial, and nuclear programs during the Soviet era. Relatively low population densities are the norm, especially since upon the breakup of the U.S.S.R. many ethnic Russians migrated back to European Russia. In this largely semi-arid region, drought, water shortages, and soil salinization pose major challenges.

Key Points:

The use of agricultural pesticides, such as DDT and other chemicals, has contributed to the contamination of soil and groundwater throughout the region.

Land and soil degradation, and in particular, increased salinization, is mostly attributable to faulty irrigation practices.

Significant desertification is also a problem in the region.

Air pollution is prevalent, mostly due to use of low octane automobile fuel.

Industrial pollution of the Caspian Sea and the Aral Sea, as a result of industrial effluents as well as mining and metal production, presents a challenge to the countries bordering these bodies of water.

One of the most severe environmental problems in the region is attributable to the several billion tons of hazardous materials stored in landfills across Central Asia.

Uzbekistan's particular problem involves the contraction of the Aral Sea, which has decreased in size by a third, as a consequence of river diversions and poor irrigation practices. The effect has been the near-total biological destruction of that body of water.

Kazakhstan, as a consequence of being the heartland of the former Soviet Union's nuclear program, has incurred a high of cancerous malignancies, biogenetic abnormalities and radioactive contamination.

While part of the Soviet Union, the republics in the region experienced very high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, as a consequence of rapid industrialization using cheap but dirty energy sources, especially coal.

By contrast, however, there have recently been substantial reductions in the level of greenhouse gas emissions, especially those attributable to coal burning, with further decreases anticipated over the next decade. These changes are partially due to the use of cleaner energy technologies, such as natural gas, augmented by governmental commitment to improving environmental standards.

Regional Synopsis: Europe

Western Europe underwent dramatic transformation of its landscape, virtually eliminating large-scale natural areas, during an era of rapid industrialization, which intensified upon its recovery from World War II. In Eastern Europe and European Russia, intensive land development has been less prevalent, so that some native forests and other natural areas remain. Air and water pollution from use of dirty fuels and industrial effluents, however, are more serious environmental problems in Eastern than in Western Europe, though recent trends show improvement in many indicators. Acid rain has inflicted heavy environmental damage across much of Europe, particularly on forests. Europe and North America are the only regions in which water usage for industry exceeds that for agriculture, although in Mediterranean nations agriculture is the largest water consumer.

Key Points:

Europe contributes 36 percent of the world's chlorofluorocarbon emissions, 30 percent of carbon dioxide emissions, and 25 percent of sulfur dioxide emissions.

Sulfur and nitrogen oxide emissions are the cause of 30 to 50 percent of Central and Eastern Europe's deforestation.

Acid rain has been an environmental concern for decades and continues to be a challenge in parts of Western Europe.

Overexploitation of up to 60 percent of Europe's groundwater presents a problem in industrial and urban areas.

With marine catch trends increasing from 5,000,000 metric tons in the 1950s to over 20,000,000 metric tons by 2000, there was increasing concern about the reduction in fisheries and marine life, should this trend continue unabated.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of western Europe, Eastern Europe and Russia are currently threatened, while the biological diversity on the Iberian Peninsula is even further compromised with over 40 percent of the mammal species in this region currently under threat. As a result, there has been a 10 percent increase in protected areas of Europe.

A major environmental issue for Europe involves the depletion of various already endangered or threatened species, and most significantly, the decline of fish stocks. Some estimates suggest that up to 50 percent of the continent's fish species may be considered endangered species. Coastal fisheries have been over-harvested, resulting in catch limits or moratoriums on many commercially important fish species.

Fortunately, in the last few years, these policies have started to yield measurable results with decreasing trends in marine fish catch.

Recently, most European countries have adopted cleaner production technologies, and alternative methods of waste disposal, including recycling.

The countries of Eastern Europe have made air quality a major environmental priority. This is exemplified by the Russian Federation's addition to the 1995 "Berlin Mandate" (transnational legislation based on resolutions of the Rio Earth Summit) compelling nations to promote "carbon sinks" to absorb greenhouse gases.

On a relative basis, when compared with the degree of industrial emissions emitted by many Eastern European countries until the late 1980s, there has been some marked increase in air quality in the region, as obsolete plants are closed and a transition to cleaner fuels and more efficient energy use takes place.

Regional Synopsis: The Middle and Near East

Quite possibly, the Middle East will exemplify the adage that, as the 20th century was a century fixated on oil, the 21st century will be devoted to critical decisions about water. Many (though far from all) nations in the Middle East rank among those countries with the largest oil and gas reserves, but water resources are relatively scarce throughout this predominantly dry region. Effects of global warming may cause moderately high elevation areas that now typically receive winter "snowpack" to experience mainly rain instead, which would further constrain dry-season water availability. The antiquities and religious shrines of the region render it a great magnet for tourism, which entails considerable economic growth potential but also intensifies stresses on the environment.

Key Points:

Water resource vulnerability is a serious concern across the entire region. The increased usage of, and further demand for water, has exacerbated long-standing water scarcity in the region. For instance, river diversions and industrial salt works have caused the Dead Sea to shrink by one-third

from its original surface area, with further declines expected.

The oil industry in the region contributes to water pollution in the Persian Gulf, as a result of oil spills, which have averaged 1.2 million barrels of oil spilt per year (some sources suggest that this figure is understated). The consequences are severe because even after oil spills have been cleaned up, environmental damage to the food webs and ecosystems of marine life will persist for a prolonged period.

The region's coastal zone is considered one of the most fragile and endangered ecosystems of the world. Land reclamation, shoreline construction, discharge of industrial effluents, and tourism (such as diving in the Red Sea) contribute to widespread coastal damage.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of the Middle East are currently threatened.

Since the 1980s, 11 percent of the region's natural forest has been depleted.

Regional Synopsis: Latin America and the Caribbean

The Latin American and Caribbean region is characterized by exceedingly diverse landforms that have generally seen high rates of population growth and economic development in recent decades. The percentage of inhabitants residing in urban areas is quite high at 73.4 percent; the region includes the megacities of Mexico City, Sao Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro. The region also includes the world's second-highest mountain range, the Andes; significant expanses of desert and grassland; the coral reefs of the Caribbean Sea; and the world's largest contiguous tropical forest in the Amazon basin. Threats to the latter from subsistence and commercial farming, mineral exploitation and timbering are well publicized. Nevertheless, of eight countries worldwide that still retain at least 70 percent of their original forest cover, six are in Latin America. The region accounts for nearly half (48.3 percent) of the world's greenhouse gas emissions derived from land clearing, but as yet a comparatively minuscule share (4.3 percent) of such gases from industrial sources.

Key Points:

Although Latin America is one of the most biologically diverse regions of the world, this biodiversity is highly threatened, as exemplified by the projected extinction of up to 100,000 species in the next few decades. Much of this loss will be concentrated in the Amazon area, although the western coastline of South America will also suffer significant depletion of biological diversity. The inventory of rainforest species with potentially useful commercial or medical applications is incomplete, but presumed to include significant numbers of such species that may become extinct before they are discovered and identified.

Up to 50 percent of the region's grazing land has lost its soil fertility as a result of soil erosion, salinization, alkalinization and overgrazing.

The Caribbean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Pacific Ocean have all been contaminated by agricultural wastes, which are discharged into streams that flow into these major waters. Water pollution derived from phosphorous, nitrates and pesticides adversely affects fish stocks, contributes to oxygen depletion and fosters overgrowth of aquatic vegetation. Marine life will continue to be severely compromised as a result of these conditions.

Due to industrial development in the region, many beaches of eastern Latin America and the Caribbean suffer from tar deposits.

Most cities in the region lack adequate sewage treatment facilities, and rapid migration of the rural poor into the cities is widening the gap between current infrastructure capacity and the much greater level needed to provide satisfactory basic services.

The rainforest region of the Amazon Basin suffers from dangerously high levels of deforestation, which may be a significant contributory factor to global warming or "the greenhouse effect." In the late 1990s and into the new millennium, the rate of deforestation was around 20 million acres of rainforest being destroyed annually.

Deforestation on the steep rainforest slopes of Caribbean islands contributes to soil erosion and landslides, both of which then result in heavy sedimentation of nearby river systems. When these sedimented rivers drain into the sea and coral reefs, they poison the coral tissues, which are vital to the maintenance of the reef ecosystem. The result is marine degradation and nutrient depletion. Jamaica's coral reefs have never quite recovered from the effects of marine degradation.

The Southern Cone of Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay) suffers the effects of greatly increased ultraviolet-B radiation, as a consequence of more intense ozone depletion in the southern hemisphere.

Water resource vulnerability is an increasingly major concern in the northwestern portion of South America.

Regional Synopsis: North America

North American nations, in particular the United States and Canada, rank among the world's most highly developed industrial economies—a fact which has generated significant pollution problems, but also financial resources and skills that have enabled many problems to be corrected. Although efforts to promote energy efficiency, recycling, and suchlike have helped ease strains on the

environment in a part of the world where per capita consumption levels are high, sprawling land development patterns and recent preferences many households have demonstrated for larger vehicles have offset these advances.

Meanwhile, a large portion of North America's original forest cover has been lost, though in many cases replaced by productive second-growth woodland. In recent years, attitudes toward best use of the region's remaining natural or scenic areas seem to be shifting toward recreation and preservation and away from resource extraction. With increasing attention on the energy scarcity in the United States, however, there is speculation that this shift may be short-lived. Indeed, the energy shortage on the west coast of the United States and associated calls for energy exploration, indicate a possible retrenchment toward resource extraction. At the same time, however, it has also served to highlight the need for energy conservation as well as alternative energy sources.

Despite generally successful anti-pollution efforts, various parts of the region continue to suffer significant air, water and land degradation from industrial, vehicular, and agricultural emissions and runoff. Mexico, as a middle-income country, displays environmental problems characteristic of a developing economy, including forest depletion, pollution from inefficient industrial processes and dirty fuels, and lack of sufficient waste-treatment infrastructure.

Key Points:

Because of significantly greater motor vehicle usage in the United States (U.S.) than in the rest of the world, the U.S. contribution of urban air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, especially carbon dioxide, is disproportionately high in relation to its population.

Acid rain is an enduring issue of contention in the northeastern part of the United States, on the border with Canada.

Mexico's urban areas suffer extreme air pollution from carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, and other toxic air pollutants. Emissions controls on vehicles are in their infancy, compared to analogous regulations in the U.S.

The cities of Mexico, including those on the U.S. border, also discharge large quantities of untreated or poorly treated sewage, though officials are currently planning infrastructure upgrades.

Deforestation is noteworthy in various regions of the U.S., especially along the northwest coastline. Old growth forests have been largely removed, but in the northeastern and upper midwestern sections of the United States, evidence suggests that the current extent of tree cover probably surpasses the figure for the beginning of the 20th century.

Extreme weather conditions in the last few years have resulted in a high level of soil erosion along the north coast of California; in addition, the coastline itself has shifted substantially due to soil erosion and concomitant landslides.

Agricultural pollution-including nitrate contamination of well water, nutrient runoff to waterways, and pesticide exposure-is significant in various areas. Noteworthy among affected places are California's Central Valley, extensive stretches of the Midwest, and land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Inland waterways, especially around the Great Lakes, have substantially improved their water quality, due to concentrated efforts at reducing water pollution by governmental, commercial and community representatives. Strict curbs on industrial effluents and near-universal implementation of sewage treatment are the chief factors responsible for this improvement.

A major environmental issue for Canada and the United States involves the depletion of various already endangered or threatened species, and most significantly, the decline of fish stocks. Coastal fisheries have been over-harvested, resulting in catch limits or moratoriums on many commercially important fish species. In the last few years, these policies have started to yield measurable results with decreasing trends in marine fish catch.

Due to the decay of neighboring ecosystems in Central America and the Caribbean, the sea surrounding Florida has become increasingly sedimented, contributing to marine degradation, nutrient depletion of the ecosystem, depletion of fish stocks, and diseases to coral species in particular.

Polar Regions

Key Points:

The significant rise in sea level, amounting 10 to 25 centimeters in the last 100 years, is due to the melting of the Arctic ice sheets, and is attributed to global warming.

The Antarctic suffers from a significant ozone hole, first detected in 1976. By 1985, a British scientific team reported a 40 percent decrease in usual regeneration rates of the ozone. Because a sustained increase in the amount of ultraviolet-B radiation would have adverse consequences upon all planetary life, recent environmental measures have been put into effect, aimed at reversing ozone depletion. These measures are projected to garner significant results by 2050.

Due to air and ocean currents, the Arctic is a sink for toxic releases originally discharged thousands of miles away. Arctic wildlife and Canada's Inuit population have higher bodily levels of

contaminants such as PCB and dioxin than those found in people and animals in much of the rest of the world.

Global Environmental Concepts

1. Global Warming and Greenhouse Gases

The Greenhouse Effect:

In the early 19th century, the French physicist, Jean Fourier, contended that the earth's atmosphere functions in much the same way as the glass of a greenhouse, thus describing what is now understood as the "greenhouse effect." Put simply, the "greenhouse effect" confines some of the sun's energy to the earth, preserving some of the planet's warmth, rather than allowing it to flow back into space. In so doing, all kinds of life forms can flourish on earth. Thus, the "greenhouse effect" is necessary to sustain and preserve life forms and ecosystems on earth.

In the late 19th century, a Swedish chemist, Svante Arrhenius, noticed that human activities, such as the burning of coal and other fossil fuels for heat, and the removal of forested lands for urban development, led to higher concentrations of greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide and methane, in the atmosphere. This increase in the levels of greenhouse gases was believed to advance the "greenhouse effect" exponentially, and might be related to the trend in global warming.

In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, after industrial development took place on a large scale and the total human population burgeoned simultaneously with industrialization, the resulting increase in greenhouse gas emissions could, many scientists believe, be significant enough to have some bearing on climate. Indeed, many studies in recent years support the idea that there is a linkage between human activities and global warming, although there is less consensus on the extent to which this linkage may be relevant to environmental concerns.

That said, some scientists have argued that temperature fluctuations have existed throughout the evolution of the planet. Indeed, Dr. S. Fred Singer, the president of the Science and Environment Policy Project has noted that 3,000-year-old geological records of ocean sediment reveal changes in the surface temperature of the ocean. Hence, it is possible that climate variability is merely a normal fact of the planet's evolution. Yet even skeptics as to anthropogenic factors concur that any substantial changes in global temperatures would likely have an effect upon the earth's ecosystems, as well as the life forms that inhabit them.

The Relationship Between Global Warming and Greenhouse Gases:

A large number of climatologists believe that the increase in atmospheric concentrations of "greenhouse gas emissions," mostly a consequence of human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels, are contributing to global warming. The cause notwithstanding, the planet has reportedly warmed 0.3°C to 0.6°C over the last century. Indeed, each year during the 1990s was one of the very warmest in the 20th century, with the mean surface temperature for 1999 being the fifth warmest on record since 1880.

In early 2000, a panel of atmospheric scientists for the National Research Council concluded in a report that global warming was, indeed, a reality. While the panel, headed by Chairman John Wallace, a professor of atmospheric sciences at the University of Washington, stated that it remained unclear whether human activities have contributed to the earth's increasing temperatures, it was apparent that global warming exists.

In 2001, following a request for further study by the incoming Bush administration in the [United States](#), the National Academy of Sciences again confirmed that global warming had been in existence for the last 20 years. The study also projected an increase in temperature between 2.5 degrees and 10.4 degrees Fahrenheit by the year 2100. Furthermore, the study found the leading cause of global warming to be emissions of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels, and it noted that greenhouse gas accumulations in the earth's atmosphere was a result of human activities.

Within the scientific community, the controversy regarding has centered on the difference between surface air and upper air temperatures. Information collected since 1979 suggests that while the earth's surface temperature has increased by about a degree in the past century, the atmospheric temperature five miles above the earth's surface has indicated very little increase. Nevertheless, the panel stated that this discrepancy in temperature between surface and upper air does not invalidate the conclusion that global warming is taking place. Further, the panel noted that natural events, such as volcanic eruptions, can decrease the temperature in the upper atmosphere.

The major consequences of global warming potentially include the melting of the polar ice caps, which, in turn, contribute to the rise in sea levels. Many islands across the globe have already experienced a measurable loss of land as a result. Because global warming may increase the rate of evaporation, increased precipitation, in the form of stronger and more frequent storm systems, is another potential outcome. Other consequences of global warming may include the introduction and proliferation of new infectious diseases, loss of arable land (referred to as "desertification"), destructive changes to existing ecosystems, loss of biodiversity and the isolation of species, and concomitant adverse changes in the quality of human life.

International Policy Development in Regard to Global Warming:

Regardless of what the precise nature of the relationship between greenhouse gas emissions and global warming may be, it seems that there is some degree of a connection between the phenomena. Any substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and global warming trends will likely involve systematic changes in industrial operations, the use of advanced energy sources and technologies, as well as global cooperation in implementing and regulating these transformations.

In this regard, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) stipulated the following objectives:

1. To stabilize "greenhouse gas" concentrations within the atmosphere, in such a manner that would preclude hazardous anthropogenic intervention into the existing biosphere and ecosystems of the world. This stabilization process would facilitate the natural adaptation of ecosystems to changes in climate.
2. To ensure and enable sustainable development and food production on a global scale.

*** See section on "International Environmental Agreements and Associations" for information related to international policies related to limiting greenhouse gases and controlling climate change emanating from historic summits at Kyoto, Copenhagen, Doha, and Paris. ***

2. Air Pollution

Long before global warming reared its head as a significant issue, those concerned about the environment and public health noted the deleterious effects of human-initiated combustion upon the atmosphere. Killer smogs from coal burning triggered acute health emergencies in London and other places. At a lower level of intensity motor vehicle, power plant, and industrial emissions impaired long-range visibility and probably had some chronic adverse consequences on the respiratory systems of persons breathing such air.

In time, scientists began associating the sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides released from coal burning with significant acid deposition in the atmosphere, eventually falling as "acid rain." This phenomenon has severely degraded forestlands, especially in Europe and a few parts of the [United States](#). It has also impaired some aquatic ecosystems and eaten away the surface of some human artifacts, such as marble monuments. Scrubber technology and conversion to cleaner fuels have enabled the level of industrial production to remain at least constant while significantly reducing acid deposition. Technologies aimed at cleaning the air and curtailing acid rain, soot, and smog

may, nonetheless, boomerang as the perils of global warming become increasingly serious. In brief, these particulates act as sort of a sun shade -- comparable to the effect of volcanic eruptions on the upper atmosphere whereby periods of active volcanism correlate with temporarily cooler weather conditions. Thus, while the carbon dioxide releases that are an inevitable byproduct of combustion continue, by scrubbing the atmosphere of pollutants, an industrial society opens itself to greater insolation (penetration of the sun's rays and consequent heating), and consequently, it is likely to experience a correspondingly greater rise in ambient temperatures.

The health benefits of removing the sources of acid rain and smog are indisputable, and no one would recommend a return to previous conditions. Nevertheless, the problematic climatic effects of continually increasing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases pose a major global environmental challenge, not as yet addressed adequately.

3. Ozone Depletion

The stratospheric ozone layer functions to prevent ultraviolet radiation from reaching the earth. Normally, stratospheric ozone is systematically disintegrated and regenerated through natural photochemical processes. The stratospheric ozone layer, however, has been depleted unnaturally as a result of anthropogenic (man-made) chemicals, most especially chlorine and bromide compounds such as chloroflorocarbons (CFCs), halons, and various industrial chemicals in the form of solvents, refrigerants, foaming agents, aerosol propellants, fire retardants, and fumigants. Ozone depletion is of concern because it permits a greater degree of ultraviolet-B radiation to reach the earth, which then increases the incidences of cancerous malignancies, cataracts, and human immune deficiencies. In addition, even in small doses, ozone depletion affects the ecosystem by disturbing food chains, agriculture, fisheries and other forms of biological diversity.

Transnational policies enacted to respond to the dangers of ozone depletion include the 1985 Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The Montreal Protocol was subsequently amended in London in 1990, Copenhagen in 1992 and Vienna in 1995. By 1996, 155 countries had ratified the Montreal Protocol, which sets out a time schedule for the reduction (and eventual elimination) of ozone depleting substances (OPS), and bans exports and imports of ODS from and to non-participant countries.

In general, the Protocol stipulates that developed countries must eliminate halon consumption by 1994 and CFC consumption by 1996, while developing countries must eliminate these substances by 2010. Consumption of methyl bromide, which is used as a fumigant, was to be frozen at the 1995 in developed countries, and fully eliminated in 2010, while developing countries are to freeze consumption by 2002, based on average 1995-1998 consumption levels. Methyl chloroform is to be phased out by 2005. Under the Montreal Protocol, most ODS will be completely eliminated

from use by 2010.

4. Land Degradation

In recent decades, land degradation in more arid regions of the world has become a serious concern. The problem, manifest as both "desertification" and "devegetation," is caused primarily by climate variability and human activities, such as "deforestation," excessive cultivation, overgrazing, and other forms of land resource exploitation. It is also exacerbated by inadequate irrigation practices. Although the effects of droughts on drylands have been temporary in the past, today, the productivity and sustainability of these lands have been severely compromised for the long term. Indeed, in every region of the world, land degradation has become an acute issue.

Desertification and Devegetation:

"Desertification" is a process of land degradation causing the soil to deteriorate, thus losing its nutrients and fertility, and eventually resulting in the loss of vegetation, known as "devegetation." As aforementioned, "desertification" and "devegetation" are caused by human activities, yet human beings are also the greatest casualties. Because these forms of land degradation affect the ability of the soil to produce crops, they concomitantly contribute to poverty. As population increases and demographic concentrations shift, the extent of land subject to stresses by those seeking to wrest subsistence from it has inexorably risen.

In response, the United Nations has formed the Convention to Combat Desertification-aimed at implementing programs to address the underlying causes of desertification, as well as measures to prevent and minimize its effects. Of particular significance is the formulation of policies on transboundary resources, such as areas around lakes and rivers. At a broader level, the Convention has established a Conference of Parties (COP), which includes all ratifying governments, for directing and advancing international action.

To ensure more efficacious use of funding, the Convention intends to reconfigure international aid to utilize a consultative and coordinated approach in the disbursement and expenditure of donor funds. In this way, local communities that are affected by desertification will be active participants in the solution-generation process. In-depth community education projects are envisioned as part of this new international aid program, and private donor financing is encouraged. Meanwhile, as new technologies are developed to deal with the problem of desertification, they need to be distributed for application across the world. Hence, the Convention calls for international cooperation in scientific research in this regard.

Desertification is a problem of sustainable development. It is directly connected to human

challenges such as poverty, social and economic well-being and environmental protection as well. Broader environmental issues, such as climate change, biological diversity, and freshwater supplies, are indirectly related, so any effort to resolve this environmental challenge must entail coordinated research efforts and joint action.

Deforestation:

Deforestation is not a recent phenomenon. For centuries, human beings have cut down trees to clear space for land cultivation, or in order to use the wood for fuel. Over the last 200 years, and most especially after World War II, deforestation increased because the logging industry became a globally profitable endeavor, and so the clearing of forested areas was accelerated for the purposes of industrial development. In the long term, this intensified level of deforestation is considered problematic because the forest is unable to regenerate itself quickly. The deforestation that has occurred in tropical rainforests is seen as an especially serious concern, due to the perceived adverse effects of this process upon the entire global ecosystem.

The most immediate consequence of deforestation is soil degradation. Soil, which is necessary for the growth of vegetation, can be a fragile and vital property. Organically, an extensive evolution process must take place before soil can produce vegetation, yet at the same time, the effects of natural elements, such as wind and rain, can easily and quickly degrade this resource. This phenomenon is known as soil erosion. In addition, natural elements like wind and rain reduce the amount of fertile soil on the ground, making soil scarcity a genuine problem. When fertile topsoil that already exists is removed from the landscape in the process of deforestation, soil scarcity is further exacerbated. Equally significant is the fact that once land has been cleared so that the topsoil can be cultivated for crop production, not only are the nutrient reserves in the soil depleted, thus producing crops of inferior quality, but the soil structure itself becomes stressed and deteriorates further.

Another direct result of deforestation is flooding. When forests are cleared, removing the cover of vegetation, and rainfall occurs, the flow of water increases across the surface of land. When extensive water runoff takes place, the frequency and intensity of flooding increases. Other adverse effects of deforestation include the loss of wildlife and biodiversity within the ecosystem that supports such life forms.

At a broader level, tropical rainforests play a vital role in maintaining the global environmental system. Specifically, destruction of tropical rainforests affects the carbon dioxide cycle. When forests are destroyed by burning (or rotting), carbon dioxide is released into the air, thus contributing to an intensified "greenhouse effect." The increase in greenhouse gas emissions like carbon dioxide is a major contributor to global warming, according to many environmental scientists. Indeed, trees themselves absorb carbon dioxide in the process of photosynthesis, so their

loss also reduces the absorption of greenhouse gases.

Tropical rainforest destruction also adversely affects the nitrogen cycle. Nitrogen is a key nutrient for both plants and animals. Plants derive nitrogen from soil, while animals obtain it via nitrogen-enriched vegetation. This element is essential for the formation of amino acids, and thereby for proteins and biochemicals that all living things need for metabolism and growth. In the nitrogen cycle, vegetation acquires these essential proteins and biochemicals, and then cyclically returns them to the atmosphere and global ecosystem. Accordingly, when tropical rainforest ecosystems are compromised, not only is vegetation removed; the atmosphere is also affected and climates are altered. At a more immediate level, the biodiversity within tropical rainforests, including wildlife and insect species and a wealth of plant varieties, is depleted. Loss of rare plants is of particular concern because certain species as yet unknown and unused could likely yield many practical benefits, for instance as medicines.

As a result of the many challenges associated with deforestation, many environmental groups and agencies have argued for government policies on the sustainable development of forests by governments across the globe. While many countries have instituted national policies and programs aimed at reducing deforestation, and substantial research has been advanced in regard to sustainable and regenerative forestry development, there has been very little progress on an international level. Generally speaking, most tropical rainforests are located in developing and less developed countries, where economic growth is often dependent upon the exploitation of tropical rainforests. Timber resources as well as wildlife hunting tend to be particularly lucrative arenas.

In places such as the Amazon, where deforestation takes place for the construction of energy plants aimed at industrialization and economic development, there is an exacerbated effect on the environment. After forests are cleared in order to construct such projects, massive flooding usually ensues. The remaining trees then rot and decay in the wake of the flooding. As the trees deteriorate, their biochemical makeup becomes more acidic, producing poisonous substances such as hydrogen sulphide and methane gases. Acidified water subsequently corrodes the mechanical equipment and operations of the plants, which are already clogged by rotting wood after the floodwaters rise.

Deforestation generally arises from an economically plausible short-term motivation, but nonetheless poses a serious global concern because the effects go beyond national boundaries. The United Nations has established the World Commission on Forest and Sustainable Development. This body's task is to determine the optimal means of dealing with the issue of deforestation, without unduly affecting normal economic development, while emphasizing the global significance of protecting tropical forest ecosystems.

5. Water Resources

For all terrestrial fauna, including humans, water is the most immediate necessity to sustain life. As the population has increased and altered an ever-greater portion of the landscape from its natural condition, demand on water resources has intensified, especially with the development of industrialization and large-scale irrigation. The supply of freshwater is inherently limited, and moreover distributed unevenly across the earth's landmasses. Moreover, not just demand for freshwater but activities certain to degrade it are becoming more pervasive. By contrast, the oceans form a sort of "last wilderness," still little explored and in large part not seriously affected by human activity. However, coastal environments - the biologically richest part of the marine ecosystem-are experiencing major depletion due to human encroachment and over-exploitation.

Freshwater:

In various regions, for instance the Colorado River in the western [United States](#), current withdrawals of river water for irrigation, domestic, and industrial use consume the entire streamflow so that almost no water flows into the sea at the river's mouth. Yet development is ongoing in many such places, implying continually rising demand for water. In some areas reliant on groundwater, aquifers are being depleted at a markedly faster rate than they are being replenished. An example is the San Joaquin Valley in California, where decades of high water withdrawals for agriculture have caused land subsidence of ten meters or more in some spots. Naturally, the uncertainty of future water supplies is particularly acute in arid and semi-arid regions. Speculation that the phenomenon of global warming will alter geographic and seasonal rainfall patterns adds further uncertainty.

Water conservation measures have great potential to alleviate supply shortages. Some city water systems are so old and beset with leaking pipes that they lose as much water as they meter. Broad-scale irrigation could be replaced by drip-type irrigation, actually enhancing the sustainability of agriculture. In many areas where heavy irrigation has been used for decades, the result is deposition of salts and other chemicals in the soil such that the land becomes unproductive for farming and must be abandoned.

Farming is a major source of water pollution. Whereas restrictions on industrial effluents and other "point sources" are relatively easy to implement, comparable measures to reform hydraulic practices at farms and other "nonpoint sources" pose a significantly knottier challenge. Farm-caused water pollution takes the following main forms:

- Nitrate pollution found in wells in intensive farming areas as a consequence of heavy fertilizer use is a threat to human health. The most serious danger is to infants, who by ingesting high-nitrate water can contract methemoglobinemia, sometimes called "blue baby syndrome," a potentially fatal condition.

- Fertilizer runoff into rivers and lakes imparts unwanted nutrients that cause algae growth and eventual loss of oxygen in the body of water, degrading its ability to support fish and other desirable aquatic life.
- Toxic agricultural chemicals - insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides - are detectable in some aquifers and waterways.

In general, it is much easier to get a pollutant into water than to retrieve it out. Gasoline additives, dry cleaning chemicals, other industrial toxins, and in a few areas radionuclides have all been found in water sources intended for human use. The complexity and long time scale of subterranean hydrological movements essentially assures that pollutants already deposited in aquifers will continue to turn up for decades to come. Sophisticated water treatment processes are available, albeit expensive, to reclaim degraded water and render it fit for human consumption. Yet source protection is unquestionably a more desirable alternative.

In much of the developing world, and even some low-income rural enclaves of the developed world, the population lacks ready access to safe water. Surface water and shallow groundwater supplies are susceptible to contamination from untreated wastewater and failing septic tanks, as well as chemical hazards. The occurrence of waterborne disease is almost certainly greatly underreported.

Marine Resources:

Coastal areas have always been desirable places for human habitation, and population pressure on them continues to increase. Many types of water degradation that affect lakes and rivers also affect coastal zones: industrial effluents, untreated or partially treated sewage, nutrient load from agriculture figure prominently in both cases. Prospects for more extreme storms as a result of global warming, as well as the pervasiveness of poorly planned development in many coastal areas, forebode that catastrophic hurricanes and landslides may increase in frequency in the future. Ongoing rise in sea levels will force remedial measures and in some cases abandonment of currently valuable coastal property.

Fisheries over much of the globe have been overharvested, and immediate conservation measures are required to preserve stocks of many species. Many governments subsidized factory-scale fishing fleets in the 1970s and 1980s, and the resultant catch increase evidently surpassed a sustainable level. It is uncertain how much of the current decline in fish stocks stems from overharvesting and how much from environmental pollution. The deep ocean remains relatively unaffected by human activity, but continental shelves near coastlines are frequently seriously polluted, and these close-to-shore areas are the major biological nurseries for food fish and the

smaller organisms they feed on.

6. Environmental Toxins

Toxic chemical pollution exploded on the public consciousness with disclosure of spectacularly polluted industrial areas such as Love Canal near Buffalo, New York. There is no question that pollutants such as organophosphates or radionuclides can be highly deleterious to health, but evidence to date suggests that seriously affected areas are a localized rather than universal problem.

While some explore the possibilities for a lifestyle that fully eschews use of modern industrial chemicals, the most prevalent remediative approach is to focus on more judicious use. The most efficient chemical plants are now able to contain nearly all toxic byproducts of their production processes within the premises, minimizing the release of such substances into the environment. Techniques such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) dictate limited rather than broadcast use of pesticides: application only when needed using the safest available chemical, supplemented as much as possible with nontoxic controls.

While heightened public awareness and growing technical sophistication suggest a hopeful outlook on limiting the damage from manmade environmental toxins, one must grant that previous incidents of their misuse and mishandling have already caused environmental damage that will have to be dealt with for many years to come. In the case of the most hazardous radioactive substances, the time scale for successful remediation actually extends beyond that of the recorded history of civilization. Moreover, in this era of high population density and rapid economic growth, quotidian activities such as the transport of chemicals will occasionally, seemingly inevitably result in accidents with adverse environmental consequences.

7. "Islandization" and Biodiversity

With increased awareness regarding the adverse effects of unregulated hunting and habitat depletion upon wildlife species and other aspects of biodiversity, large-scale efforts across the globe have been initiated to reduce and even reverse this trend.

In every region of the world, many species of wildlife and areas of biodiversity have been saved from extinction. Nationally, many countries have adopted policies aimed at preservation and conservation of species, and one of the most tangible measures has been the proliferation of protected habitats. Such habitats exist in the form of wildlife reserves, marine life reserves, and other such areas where biodiversity can be protected from external encroachment and exploitation.

Despite these advances in wildlife and biodiversity protection, further and perhaps more intractable

challenges linger. Designated reserves, while intended to prevent further species decline, exist as closed territories, fragmented from other such enclaves and disconnected from the larger ecosystem. This environmental scenario is referred to as "islandization." Habitat reserves often serve as oversized zoos or game farms, with landscapes and wildlife that have effectively been "tamed" to suit. Meanwhile, the larger surrounding ecosystem continues to be seriously degraded and transformed, while within the islandized habitat, species that are the focus of conservation efforts may not have sufficient range and may not be able to maintain healthy genetic variability.

As a consequence, many conservationists and preservationists have demanded that substantially larger portions of land be withheld as habitat reserves, and a network of biological corridors to connect continental reserves be established. While such efforts to combat islandization have considerable support in the [United States](#), how precisely such a program would be instituted, especially across national boundaries, remains a matter of debate. International conservationists and preservationists say without a network of reserves a massive loss of biodiversity will result.

The concept of islandization illustrates why conservation and preservation of wildlife and biodiversity must consider and adopt new, broader strategies. In the past, conservation and preservation efforts have been aimed at specific species, such as the spotted owl and grizzly bear in North America, the Bengal tiger in Southeast Asia, the panda in [China](#), elephants in Africa. Instead, the new approach is to simultaneously protect many and varied species that inhabit the same ecosystem. This method, referred to as "bio-regional conservation," may more efficaciously generate longer-term and more far-reaching results precisely because it is aimed at preserving entire ecosystems, and all the living things within.

More About Biodiversity Issues:

This section is directly taken from the United Nations Environmental Program: "[Biodiversity Assessment](#)"

The Global Biodiversity Assessment, completed by 1500 scientists under the auspices of United Nations Environmental Program in 1995, updated what is known (or unknown) about global biological diversity at the ecosystem, species and genetic levels. The assessment was uncertain of the total number of species on Earth within an order of magnitude. Of its working figure of 13 million species, only 13 percent are scientifically described. Ecological community diversity is also poorly known, as is its relationship to biological diversity, and genetic diversity has been studied for only a small number of species. The effects of human activities on biodiversity have increased so greatly that the rate of species extinctions is rising to hundreds or thousands of times the background level. These losses are driven by increasing demands on species and their habitats, and by the failure of current market systems to value biodiversity adequately. The Assessment calls for urgent action to reverse these trends.

There has been a new recognition of the importance of protecting marine and aquatic biodiversity. The first quantitative estimates of species losses due to growing coral reef destruction predict that almost 200,000 species, or one in five presently contributing to coral reef biodiversity, could die out in the next 40 years if human pressures on reefs continue to increase.

Since Rio, many countries have improved their understanding of the status and importance of their biodiversity, particularly through biodiversity country studies such as those prepared under the auspices of UNEP/GEF. The [United Kingdom](#) identified 1250 species needing monitoring, of which 400 require action plans to ensure their survival. Protective measures for biodiversity, such as legislation to protect species, can prove effective. In the USA, almost 40 percent of the plants and animals protected under the Endangered Species Act are now stable or improving as a direct result of recovery efforts. Some African countries have joined efforts to protect threatened species through the 1994 Lusaka Agreement, and more highly migratory species are being protected by specialized cooperative agreements among range states under the Bonn Agreement.

There is an emerging realization that a major part of conservation of biological diversity must take place outside of protected areas and involve local communities. The extensive agricultural areas occupied by small farmers contain much biodiversity that is important for sustainable food production. Indigenous agricultural practices have been and continue to be important elements in the maintenance of biodiversity, but these are being displaced and lost. There is a new focus on the interrelationship between agrodiversity conservation and sustainable use and development practices in smallholder agriculture, with emphasis on use of farmers' knowledge and skills as a source of information for sustainable farming.

Perhaps even more important than the loss of biodiversity is the transformation of global biogeochemical cycles, the reduction in the total world biomass, and the decrease in the biological productivity of the planet. While quantitative measurements are not available, the eventual economic and social consequences may be so significant that the issue requires further attention.

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Online resources used generally in the Environmental Overview:

Environmental Protection Agency Global Warming Site. URL: <http://www.epa.gov/globalwarming>

Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations: Forestry. URL: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/sofo/en/>

Global Warming Information Page. URL: <http://globalwarming.org>

U n i t e d N a t i o n s E n v i r o n m e n t a l P r o g r a m . U R L :

http://www.unep.org/GEO/GEO_Products/Assessment_Reports/

United Nations Global Environmental Outlook. URL: <http://www.unep.org/geo/geo4/media/>

Note on Edition Dates:

The edition dates for textual resources are noted above because they were used to formulate the original content. We also have used online resources (cited above) to update coverage as needed.

Information Resources

For more information about environmental concepts, CountryWatch recommends the following resources:

The United Nations Environmental Program Network (with country profiles)

<<http://www.unep.net/>>

The United Nations Environment Program on Climate Change

<<http://climatechange.unep.net/>>

The United Nations Environmental Program on Waters and Oceans

<<http://www.unep.ch/earthw/Pdepwat.htm>>

The United Nations Environmental Program on Forestry: "Forests in Flux"

<<http://www.unep-wcmc.org/forest/flux/homepage.htm>>

FAO "State of the World's Forests"

<<http://www.fao.org/forestry/FO/SOFO/SOFO99/sofo99-e.stm>>

World Resources Institute.

<<http://www.wri.org/>>

Harvard University Center for Health and the Global Environment

[<http://www.med.harvard.edu/chge/the-review.html>](http://www.med.harvard.edu/chge/the-review.html)

The University of Wisconsin Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment

<http://sage.aos.wisc.edu/>

International Environmental Agreements and Associations

International Policy Development in Regard to Global Warming:

Introduction

Regardless of what the precise nature of the relationship between greenhouse gas emissions and global warming may be, it seems that there is some degree of a connection between the phenomena. Any substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and global warming trends will likely involve systematic changes in industrial operations, the use of advanced energy sources and technologies, as well as global cooperation in implementing and regulating these transformations.

In this regard, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) stipulated the following objectives:

1. To stabilize "greenhouse gas" concentrations within the atmosphere, in such a manner that would preclude hazardous anthropogenic intervention into the existing biosphere and ecosystems of the world. This stabilization process would facilitate the natural adaptation of ecosystems to changes in climate.
2. To ensure and enable sustainable development and food production on a global scale.

Following are two discussions regarding international policies on the environment, followed by listings of international accords.

Special Entry: The Kyoto Protocol

The UNFCCC was adopted at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, and entered into force in 1994. Over 175 parties were official participants.

Meanwhile, however, many of the larger, more industrialized nations failed to reach the emissions' reduction targets, and many UNFCCC members agreed that the voluntary approach to reducing emissions had not been successful. As such, UNFCCC members reached a consensus that legally binding limits were necessitated, and agreed to discuss such a legal paradigm at a meeting in Kyoto, [Japan](#) in 1997. At that meeting, the UNFCCC forged the Kyoto Protocol. This concord is the first legally binding international agreement that places limits on emissions from industrialized countries. The major greenhouse gas emissions addressed in the Kyoto Protocol include carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulfur hexafluoride, and methane.

The provisions of the Kyoto Protocol stipulate that economically advanced nations must reduce their combined emissions of greenhouse gases, by approximately five percent from their 1990 levels, before the 2008-2010 deadline. Countries with the highest carbon dioxide emissions, such as the [United States](#) (U.S.), many of the European Union (EU) countries, and [Japan](#), are to reduce emissions by a scale of 6 to 8 percent. All economically advanced nations must show "demonstrable progress" by 2005. In contrast, no binding limits or timetable have been set on developing countries. Presumably, this distinction is due to the fact that most developing countries - - with the obvious exceptions of [India](#) and [China](#) -- simply do not emit as many greenhouse gases as do more industrially advanced countries. Meanwhile, these countries are entrenched in the process of economic development.

Regardless of the aforementioned reasoning, there has been strong opposition against the asymmetrical treatment assigned to emissions limits among developed and developing countries. Although this distinction might be regarded as unfair in principle, associations such as the Alliance of Small Island States have been vocal in expressing how global warming -- a result of greenhouse gas emissions - has contributed to the rise in sea level, and thus deleteriously affected their very existence as island nation states. For this reason, some parties have suggested that economically advanced nations, upon returning to their 1990 levels, should be required to further reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by a deadline of 2005. In response, interested parties have observed that even if such reductions were undertaken by economically advanced nations, they would not be enough to completely control global warming. Indeed, a reduction in the rate of fossil fuel usage by developing nations would also be necessary to have substantial ameliorative effect on global warming. Indeed, a reduction in the rate of fossil fuel usage by developing nations would also be necessary to have substantial ameliorative effect on global warming.

As such, the Protocol established a "Clean Development Mechanism" which permits developed countries to invest in projects aimed at reducing emissions within developing countries in return for credit for the reductions. Ostensibly, the objective of this mechanism is to curtail emissions in developing countries without unduly penalizing them for their economic development. Under this

model, the countries with more potential emissions credits could sell them to other signatories of the Kyoto Protocol, whose emissions are forecast to significantly rise in the next few years. Should this trading of emissions credits take place, it is estimated that the Kyoto Protocol's emissions targets could still be met.

In 1999, the International Energy Outlook projected that Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Newly Independent States, as well as parts of Asia, are all expected to show a marked decrease in their level of energy-related carbon emissions in 2010. Nations with the highest emissions, specifically, the U.S., the EU and [Japan](#), are anticipated to reduce their emissions by up to 8 percent by 2012. By 2000, however, the emissions targets were not on schedule for achievement. Indeed, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates forecast that by 2010, there will be a 34 percent increase in carbon emissions from the 1990 levels, in the absence of major shifts in policy, economic growth, energy prices, and consumer trends. Despite this assessment in the U.S., international support for the Kyoto Protocol remained strong, especially among European countries and island states, who view the pact as one step in the direction away from reliance on fossil fuels and other sources of greenhouse gases.

In 2001, U.S. President, George W. Bush, rejected his country's participation in the Kyoto Protocol, saying that the costs imposed on the global economic system, and especially, on the US, overshadowed the benefits of the Protocol. He also cited the unfair burden on developed nations to reduce emissions, as another primary reasons for withdrawal from the international pact, as well as insufficient evidence regarding the science of global warming. Faced with impassioned international disapproval for his position, the U.S. president stated that his administration remained interested in dealing with the matter of global warming, but would endorse alternative measures to combat the problem, such as voluntary initiatives limiting emissions. Critics of Bush's position, however, have noted that it was the failure of voluntary initiatives to reduce emissions following the Rio Summit that led to the establishment of the Kyoto Protocol in the first place.

In the wake of the Bush administration's decision, many participant countries resigned themselves to the reality that the goals of the Kyoto Protocol might not be achieved without U.S. involvement. Nevertheless, in Bonn, [Germany](#), in July 2001, the remaining participant countries struck a political compromise on some of the key issues and sticking points, and planned to move forward with the Protocol, irrespective of the absence of the U.S. The key compromise points included the provision for countries to offset their targets with carbon sinks (these are areas of forest and farmland which can absorb carbon through the process of photosynthesis). Another compromise point within the broader Bonn Agreement was the reduction of emissions cuts of six gases from over 5 percent to a more achievable 2 percent. A third key change was the provision of funding for less wealthy countries to adopt more progressive technologies.

In late October and early November 2001, the UNFCCC's 7th Conference of the Parties met in

Marrakesh, [Morocco](#), to finalize the measures needed to make the Kyoto Protocol operational. Although the UNFCCC projected that ratification of the Protocol would make it legally binding within a year, many critics noted that the process had fallen short of implementing significant changes in policy that would be necessary to actually stop or even slow climate change. They also maintained that the absence of U.S. participation effectively rendered the Protocol into being a political exercise without any substance, either in terms of transnational policy or in terms of environmental concerns.

The adoption of the compromises ensconced within the Bonn Agreement had been intended to make the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol more palatable to the U.S. In this regard, it failed to achieve its objective as the Bush administration continued to eschew participation in the international accord. Still, however, the Bonn Agreement did manage to render a number of other positive outcomes. Specifically, in 2002, key countries, such as [Russia](#), [Japan](#) and [Canada](#) agreed to ratify the protocol, bringing the number of signatories to 178. The decision by key countries to ratify the protocol was regarded as "the kiss of life" by observers.

By 2005, on the eve of a climate change conference in London, British Prime Minister Tony Blair was hoping to deal with the problems of climate change beyond the provisions set forth in the Kyoto Protocol. Acknowledging that the Kyoto Protocol could not work in its current form, Blair wanted to open the discussion for a new climate change plan.

Blair said that although most of the world had signed on to Kyoto, the protocol could not meet any of its practical goals of cutting greenhouse gas emissions without the participation of the United States, the world's largest polluter. He also noted that any new agreement would have to include India and China -- significant producers of greenhouse gas emissions, but exempt from Kyoto because they have been classified as developing countries. Still, he said that progress on dealing with climate change had been stymied by "a reluctance to face up to reality and the practical action needed to tackle problem."

Blair also touted the "huge opportunities" in technology and pointed toward the possibilities offered by wind, solar and nuclear power, along with fuel cell technology, eco-friendly biofuels, and carbon capture and storage which could generate low carbon power. Blair also asserted that his government was committed to achieving its domestic goal of reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 20 percent by 2010.

In the United States, President George W. Bush has said that global warming remained a debatable issue and despite conclusions reached by his own Environmental Protection Agency, he has not agreed with the conclusion that global warming and climate change are linked with human activities. Bush has also refused to ratify Kyoto on the basis of its economic costs.

Australia, an ally of the United States, has taken a similarly dim view of the Kyoto Protocol.

Ahead of the November 2005 climate change meeting in Canada in which new goals for the protocol were to be discussed, Australia's Environment Minister, Ian Campbell, said that negotiating new greenhouse gas emission levels for the Kyoto Protocol would be a waste of time. Campbell said, "There is a consensus that the caps, targets and timetables approach is flawed. If we spend the next five years arguing about that, we'll be fiddling and negotiating while Rome burns." Campbell, like the Bush administration, has also advocated a system of voluntary action in which industry takes up new technologies rather than as a result of compelling the reduction of emissions. But the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) has called on its government to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, to establish a system of emissions trading, and to set binding limits on emissions. Interestingly, although it did not sign on to Kyoto, Australia was expected to meet its emissions target by 2012 (an 8 percent increase in 1990 levels in keeping with the country's reliance on coal). But this success has nothing to do with new technologies and is due to state-based regulations on land clearing.

Note: The Kyoto Protocol calls for developed nations to cut greenhouse emissions by 5.2 percent of 1990 levels by 2012.

Special Entry: Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen (2009) --

In December 2009, the United Nations Climate Change Summit opened in the Danish capital of Copenhagen. The summit was scheduled to last from Dec. 7-18, 2009. Delegates from more than 190 countries were in attendance, and approximately 100 world leaders, including British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and [United States](#) President Barack Obama, were expected to participate. At issue was the matter of new reductions targets on greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

Despite earlier fears that little concurrence would come from the conference, effectively pushing significant actions forward to a 2010 conference in [Mexico](#) City, negotiators were now reporting that the talks were productive and several key countries, such as [South Africa](#), had pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The two main issues that could still lead to cleavages were questions of agreement between the industrialized countries and the developing countries of the world, as well as the overall effectiveness of proposals in seriously addressing the perils of climate change.

On Dec. 9, 2009, four countries -- the [United Kingdom](#), [Australia](#), [Mexico](#) and [Norway](#) -- presented a document outlining ideas for raising and managing billions of dollars, which would be intended to help vulnerable countries dealing with the perils of climate change. Described as a "green fund," the concept could potentially help small island states at risk because of the rise in sea level. [Bangladesh](#) identified itself as a potential recipient of an assistance fund, noting that as a country plagued by devastating floods, it was particularly hard-hit by climate change. The "green fund" would fall under the rubric of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate

Change, for which developed countries have been committed to quantifying their emission reduction targets, and also to providing financial and technical support to developing countries.

The [United Kingdom](#), [Australia](#), [Mexico](#) and [Norway](#) also called for the creation of a new legal treaty that would replace the Kyoto Protocol. This new treaty, which could go into force in 2012, would focus largely on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. But [Australia](#) went even further in saying that the successor treaty to the Kyoto Protocol, should be one with provisions covering all countries. Such a move would be a departure from the structure of the Kyoto Protocol, which contained emissions targets for industrialized countries due to the prevailing view that developed countries had a particular historic responsibility to be accountable for climate change. More recently, it has become apparent that substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions demanded by scientists would only come to pass with the participation also of significant developing nation states, such as [China](#) and [India](#). Indeed, one of the most pressing critiques of the Kyoto Protocol was that it was a "paper tiger" that failed to address the impact of the actions of emerging economies like [China](#) and [India](#), with its focus on the developed economies.

Now, in 2009, [China](#) -- as the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitter -- was responding this dubious distinction by vocalizing its criticism of the current scenario and foregrounding its new commitments. Ahead of the Copenhagen summit, [China](#) had announced it would reduce the intensity of its carbon emissions per unit of its GDP in 2020 by 40 to 45 percent against 2005 levels. With that new commitment at hand, [China](#) was now accusing the [United States](#) and the European Union of shirking their own responsibilities by setting weak targets for greenhouse gas emissions cuts. Senior Chinese negotiator, Su Wei, characterized the goals of the world's second largest greenhouse gas emitter -- the [United States](#) -- as "not notable," and the European Union's target as "not enough." Su Wei also took issue with [Japan](#) for setting implausible preconditions.

On Dec. 11, 2009, [China](#) demanded that developed and wealthy countries in Copenhagen should help deliver a real agreement on climate change by delivering on their promises to reduce carbon emissions and provide financial support for developing countries to adapt to global warming. In so doing, China's Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei said his country was hoping that a "balanced outcome" would emerge from the discussions at the summit. Echoing the position of the Australian government, He Yafei spoke of a draft agreement as follows: "The final document we're going to adopt needs to be taking into account the needs and aspirations of all countries, particularly the most vulnerable ones."

China's Vice Foreign Minister emphasized the fact that climate change was "a matter of survival" for developing countries, and accordingly, such countries need wealthier and more developed countries to accentuate not only their pledges of emissions reduction targets, but also their financial commitments under the aforementioned United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. To that end, scientists and leaders of small island states in the Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, have highlighted the existential threat posed by global warming and the concomitant rise in sea level.

China aside, attention was also on [India](#) -- another major player in the developing world and a country with an industrializing economy that was impacting the environment. At issue was the Indian government's decision to set a carbon intensity target, which would slow emissions growth by up to 25 percent by the 2020 deadline. This strong position was resisted by some elements in [India](#), who argued that their country should not be taking such a strong position when developed wealthy countries were yet to show accountability for their previous commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The matter grew so heated that the members of the opposition stormed out of the parliament in protest as Indian Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh defended the policy. But the political pressure at home in [India](#) was leaving the Indian delegation in Copenhagen in a state of chaos as well. In fact, India's top environmental negotiator refused to travel to Copenhagen in protest of the government's newly-announced stance.

China and [India](#) were joined by [Brazil](#) and [South Africa](#) in the crafting of a draft document calling for a new global climate treaty to be completed by June 2010. Of concern has been the realization that there was insufficient time to find concurrence on a full legal treaty, which would leave countries only with a politically-binding text by the time the summit at Copenhagen closed. But Guyana's leader, President Bharrat Jagdeo, warned that the summit in [Denmark](#) would be classified as a failure unless a binding document was agreed upon instead of just political consensus. He urged his cohorts to act with purpose saying, "Never before have science, economics, geo-strategic self-interest and politics intersected in such a way on an issue that impacts everyone on the planet."

Likewise, [Tuvalu](#) demanded that legally binding agreements emerge from Copenhagen. Its proposal was supported by many of the vulnerable countries, from small island states and sub-Saharan Africa, all of whom warned of the catastrophic impact of climate change on their citizens. [Tuvalu](#) also called for more aggressive action, such as an amendment to the 1992 agreement, which would focus on sharp greenhouse gas emissions and the accepted rise in temperatures, due to the impact the rise in seas. The delegation from [Kiribati](#) joined the call by drawing attention to the fact that one village had to be abandoned due to waist-high water, and more such effects were likely to follow. Kiribati's Foreign Secretary, Tessie Lambourne, warned that the people of [Kiribati](#) could well be faced with no homeland in the future saying, "Nobody in this room would want to leave their homeland." But despite such impassioned pleas and irrespective of warnings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that the rise in sea level from melting polar ice caps would deleteriously affect low-lying atolls such as such as [Tuvalu](#) and [Kiribati](#) in the Pacific, and the [Maldives](#) in the Indian Ocean, the oil-giant [Saudi Arabia](#) was able to block this move.

Meanwhile, within the developed countries, yet another power struggle was brewing. The European Union warned it would only agree to raise its target of 20 percent greenhouse gas emissions reductions to 30 percent if the [United States](#) demonstrated that it would do more to

reduce its own emissions. It was unknown if such pressure would yield results. [United States](#) President Barack Obama offered a "provisional" 2020 target of 17 percent reductions, noting that he could not offer greater concessions at Copenhagen due to resistance within the [United States](#) Congress, which was already trying to pass a highly controversial "cap and trade" emissions legislation. However, should that emissions trading bill fail in the Senate, the [United States](#) Environment Protection Agency's declaration that greenhouse gases pose a danger to human health and the environment was expected to facilitate further regulations and limits on power plants and factories at the national level. These moves could potentially strengthen the Obama administration's offering at Copenhagen. As well, President Obama also signaled that he would be willing to consider the inclusion of international forestry credits.

Such moves indicated willingness by the Obama administration to play a more constructive role on the international environmental scene than its predecessor, the Bush administration. Indeed, ahead of his arrival at the Copenhagen summit, President Barack Obama's top environmental advisors promised to work on a substantial climate change agreement. To that end, [United States](#) Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson said at a press conference, "We are seeking robust engagement with all of our partners around the world." But would this pro-engagement assertion yield actual results?

By Dec. 12, 2009, details related to a draft document prepared by Michael Zammit Cutajar, the head of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action, were released at the Copenhagen climate conference. Included in the document were calls for countries to make major reductions in carbon emissions over the course of the next decade. According to the Washington Post, industrialized countries were called on to make cuts of between 25 percent and 40 percent below 1990 levels -- reductions that were far more draconian than the [United States](#) was likely to accept. As discussed above, President Obama had offered a provisional reduction target of 17 percent. The wide gap between the released draft and the United States' actual stated position suggested there was much more negotiating in the offing if a binding agreement could be forged, despite the Obama administration's claims that it was seeking greater engagement on this issue.

In other developments, the aforementioned call for financial support of developing countries to deal with the perils of climate change was partly answered by the European Union on Dec. 11, 2009. The European bloc pledged an amount of 2.4 billion euros (US\$3.5 billion) annually from 2010 to 2012. Environment Minister Andreas Carlgren of [Sweden](#) -- the country that holds the rotating presidency of the European Union at the time of the summit -- put his weight behind the notion of a "legally binding deal." Meanwhile, Yvo de Boer, a top United Nations climate change official, focused less on the essence of the agreement and more on tangible action and effects saying, "Copenhagen will only be a success if it delivers significant and immediate action that begins the day the conference ends."

The division between developed and developing countries in Copenhagen reached new heights on Dec. 14, 2009, when some of the poor and less developed countries launched a boycott at the

summit. The move, which was spurred by African countries but backed by [China](#) and [India](#), appeared to be geared toward redirecting attention and primary responsibility to the wealthier and more industrialized countries. The impasse was resolved after the wealthier and more industrialized countries offered assurances that they did not intend on shirking from their commitments to reducing greenhouse gases. As a result, the participating countries ceased the boycott.

Outside the actual summit, thousands of protestors had gathered to demand crucial global warming, leading to clashes between police and demonstrators elsewhere in the Danish capital city. There were reports of scattered violence across Copenhagen and more than 1,000 people were arrested.

Nevertheless, by the second week of the climate change summit, hopes of forging a strong deal were eroding as developed and developing nations remained deadlocked on sharing cuts in greenhouse gases, and particularly on the matters of financing and temperature goals. In a bid to shore up support for a new climate change, [United States](#) President Barack Obama joined other world leaders in Copenhagen. On Dec. 14, 2009, there was a standoff brewing between the [United States](#) and [China](#). At issue was China's refusal to accept international monitoring of its expressed targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The [United States](#) argued that China's opposition to verification could be a deal-breaker.

By the close of the summit, the difficult process eventually resulted in some consensus being cultivated. A draft text called for \$100 billion a year by 2020 to assist poor nations cope with climate change, while aiming to limit global warming to two degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrial levels. The deal also included specific targets for developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and called for reductions by developing countries as a share of their economies. Also included in the agreement was a mechanism to verify compliance. The details of the agreement were supported by President Barack Obama, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

This draft would stand as an interim agreement, with a legally-binding international pact unlikely to materialize until 2010. In this way, the summit in Copenhagen failed to achieve its central objective, which was to negotiate a successor to the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emissions.

Editor's Note

In the background of these developments was the growing global consciousness related to global warming and climate change. Indeed, as the Copenhagen summit was ongoing, it was clear there was enormous concurrence on the significance of the stakes with an editorial on the matter of climate change being published in 56 newspapers in 45 countries. That editorial warned that without global action, climate change would "ravage our planet." Meanwhile, a global survey taken by Globescan showed that concern over global warming had exponentially increased from 1998 --

when only 20 percent of respondents believed it to be a serious problem -- to 64 percent in 2009. Such survey data, however, was generated ahead of the accusations by climate change skeptics that some climate scientists may have overstated the case for global warming, based on emails derived in an illicit manner from a British University.

Special Entry: Climate change talks in Doha in [Qatar](#) extend life of Kyoto Protocol (2012)

December 2012 saw climate talks ensue in the Qatari city of Doha as representatives from countries across the world gathered to discuss the fate of the Kyoto Protocol, which seeks to minimize greenhouse gas emissions. The summit yielded results with decisions made (1) to extend the Kyoto Protocol until 2020, and (2) for wealthier countries to compensate poorer countries for the losses and damage incurred as a result of climate change.

In regards to the second matter, Malia Talakai of [Nauru](#), a leading negotiator for the Alliance of Small Island States, explained the necessity of the compensation package as follows: "We are trying to say that if you pollute you must help us."

This measure was being dubbed the "Loss and Damage" mechanism, and was being linked with [United States](#) President Barack Obama's request for \$60 billion from Congress to deal with the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy months before. The sight of a hurricane bearing down on the northern Atlantic seaboard, along with the reality of the scope of reconstruction, appeared to have illustrated the economic costs of climate change -- not so much as a distant environmental issue -- but as a danger to the quotidian lives of people. Still, there was blame to be placed on the [United States](#) and European countries -- some of world's largest emitters -- for failing to do more to reduce emissions.

To that latter end, there was in fact little progress made on the central issue of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Had those emissions been reduced, there would have been less of a need to financially deal with the devastation caused by climate change. One interpretation was that the global community was accepting the fact that industrialization was contributing to global warming, which had deleterious effects on the polar ice caps and concomitantly on the rise of sea level, with devastating effects for small island nations. Thus, wealthier countries were willing to pay around \$10 billion a year through 2020, effectively in "damages," to the poor countries that could be viewed as the "collateral damage" of industrial progress. But damages today could potentially be destruction tomorrow, leaving in place the existential challenges and burdens to be born by some of the world's smallest and least wealthy island countries.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the representative for the small island nation states at the Doha summit responded with ire, characterizing the lack of progress on reducing emissions as follows: "We see the package before us as deeply deficient in mitigation (carbon cuts) and finance. It's likely to lock

us on the trajectory to a 3,4,5C rise in global temperatures, even though we agreed to keep the global average temperature rise of 1.5C to ensure survival of all islands. There is no new finance (for adapting to climate change and getting clean energy) -- only promises that something might materialize in the future. Those who are obstructive need to talk not about how their people will live, but whether our people will live."

Indeed, in most small island countries not just in the Pacific, but also the Caribbean and Indian Ocean, ecological concerns and the climate crisis have been dominant themes with dire life and death consequences looming in the background for their people. Small island nations in these region are already at risk from the rise of sea-level, tropical cyclones, floods. But their very livelihoods of fishing and subsistence farming were also at risk as a result of ecological and environmental changes. Increasingly high storm surges can wipe out entire villages and contaminate water supplies. Accordingly, the very existence of island nations, such as [Kiribati](#) and [Tuvalu](#), are at severe risk of being obliterated from the map. Yet even with the existential threat of being wiped off the map in the offing, the international community has been either slow or restrictive in its efforts to deal with global warming, climate change, economic and ecological damage, as well as the emerging global challenge of environmental refugees.

A 2012 report from the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Pacific Regional Environment Program underlined the concerns of small island nations and their people as it concluded that the livelihoods of approximately 10 million people in Pacific island communities were increasingly vulnerable to climate change. In fact, low-lying islands in that region would likely confront losses of up to 18 percent of gross domestic product due to climate change, according to the report. The report covers 21 countries and territories, including [Fiji](#), [Kiribati](#), [Samoa](#) and [Tonga](#), and recommended environmental legislation intended to deal with the climate crisis facing the small island countries particularly. As noted by David Sheppard, the director general of the Pacific Regional Environment Program that co-sponsored this study: "The findings... emphasize the need more than ever to raise the bar through collective actions that address the region's environmental needs at all levels."

Regardless of the failures of the summit in [Qatar](#) (discussed above), the meeting did facilitate a process starting in 2015, which would bind both wealthy and poor countries together in the mission of forging a new binding treaty that would replace the Kyoto Protocol and tackle the central causes of climate change.

For more information on the threats faced in small island nations by climate change and the measures being undertaken to lobby for international action, please see the Alliance for Small Island States available online at the URL: <http://aosis.org/>

Special Report

COP 21 summit in Paris ends with historic agreement to tackle climate change; rare international consensus formed on environmental crisis facing the planet (2015) --

In mid-December 2015, the highly-anticipated United Nations climate conference of parties (COP) in Paris, [France](#), ended with a historic agreement. In fact, it would very likely be understood as the most significant international agreement signed by all the recognized countries of the world since the Cold War. Accordingly, the Paris Agreement was being distinguished as the first multilateral pact that would compel all countries across the world to cut its carbon emissions -- one of the major causes of increasing greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to global warming, and its deleterious effects ranging from the dangerous rise in sea level to catastrophic climate change.

The accord, which was dubbed to be the "Paris Agreement," was the work of rigorous diplomacy and fervent environmental advocacy, and it aimed to address the climate change crisis facing the planet. As many as 195 countries were represented in the negotiations that led to the landmark climate deal. Indeed, it was only after weeks of passionate debate that international concurrence was reached in addressing the environmental challenges confronting the world, with particular attention to moving beyond fossil fuels and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The success of the COP 21 summit in Paris and the emergence of the landmark Paris Agreement was, to some extent, attributed to the efforts of France's Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius who presided over the negotiations. The French foreign minister's experience and credentials as a seasoned diplomat and respected statesman paid dividends. He skillfully guided the delegates from almost 200 countries and interest groups along the negotiations process, with ostensibly productive results and a reasonably robust deal to show for it.

On Dec. 12, 2015, French Foreign Minister Fabius officially adopted the agreement, declaring: "I now invite the COP to adopt the decision entitled Paris Agreement outlined in the document. Looking out to the room I see that the reaction is positive, I see no objections. The Paris agreement is adopted." Once Foreign Minister Fabius' gavel was struck, symbolically inaugurating the Paris Agreement into force, the COP delegate rushed to their feet with loud and bouyant cheers as well as thunderous applause.

In general, the Paris Agreement was being hailed as a victory for enviromental activists and a triumph for international diplomats, while at the same time being understood as simply an initial -- and imperfect -- move in the direction of a sustainable future. China's chief negotiator, Xie Zhenhua, issued this message, saying that while the accord was not ideal, it should "not prevent us from marching historical steps forward."

United States President Barack Obama lauded the deal as both "ambitious" and "historic," and the

work of strenuous multilateral negotiations as he declared, "Together, we've shown what's possible when the world stands as one." The [United States](#) leader acknowledged that the accord was not "perfect," but he reminded the critics that it was "the best chance to save the one planet we have. "

Former [United States](#) Vice President Al Gore, one of the world's most well known environmental advocates, issued a lengthy statement on the accomplishments ensconced in the Paris Agreement. He highlighted the fact that the Paris Agreement was a first step towards a future with a reduced carbon footprint on Planet Earth as he said, "The components of this agreement -- including a strong review mechanism to enhance existing commitments and a long-term goal to eliminate global-warming pollution this century -- are essential to unlocking the necessary investments in our future. No agreement is perfect, and this one must be strengthened over time, but groups across every sector of society will now begin to reduce dangerous carbon pollution through the framework of this agreement."

The central provisions of the Paris Agreement included the following items:

- Greenhouse gas emissions should peak as quickly as possible, with a move towards balancing energy sources, and ultimately the decrease of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century
- Global temperature increase would be limited to 1.5 degrees Centigrade above pre-industrial levels and would be held "well below" the two degrees Centigrade threshold
- Progress on these goals would be reviewed every five years beginning in 2020 with new greenhouse gas reduction targets issued every five years
- \$100 billion would be expended each year in climate finance for developing countries to move forward with green technologies, with further climate financing to be advanced in the years beyond

It should be noted that there both legally binding and voluntary elements contained within the Paris Agreement. Specifically, the submission of an emissions reduction target and the regular review of that goal would be legally mandatory for all countries. Stated differently, there would be a system in place by which experts would be able to track the carbon-cutting progress of each country. At the same time, the specific targets to be set by countries would be determined at the discretion of the countries, and would not be binding. While there was some criticism over this non-binding element, the fact of the matter was that the imposition of emissions targets was believed to be a major factor in the failure of climate change talks in Copenhagen, [Denmark](#), in 2009.

In 2015, the talks faced challenges as several countries, such as [China](#) and [India](#), objected to conditions that would stymie economic and development. In order to avoid that kind of landmine, a system Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) was developed and formed the basis of the accord. As such, the Paris Agreement would, in fact, facilitate economic growth and development, as well as technological progress, but with the goal of long-term ecological sustainability based on low carbon sources. In fact, the agreement heralded as "the beginning of

the end of the fossil fuel era." As noted by Nick Mabey, the head of the climate diplomacy organization E3G, said, "Paris means governments will go further and faster to tackle climate change than ever before. The transition to a low carbon economy is now unstoppable, ensuring the end of the fossil fuel age."

A particular sticking point in the agreement was the \$100 billion earmarked for climate financing for developing countries to transition from traditional fossil fuels to green energy technologies and a low carbon future. In 2014, a report by the International Energy Agency indicated that the cost of that transition would actually be around \$44 trillion by the mid-century -- an amount that would render the \$100 billion being promised to be a drop in the proverbial bucket. However, the general expectation was that the Republican-controlled Senate in the [United States](#), which would have to ratify the deal in that country, was not interested in contributing significant funds for the cause of climate change.

A key strength of the Paris Agreement was the ubiquitous application of measures to all countries. Of note was the frequently utilized concept of "flexibility" with regard to the Paris Agreement. Specifically, the varying capacities of the various countries in meeting their obligations would be anticipated and accorded flexibility. This aspect presented something of a departure from the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which drew a sharp distinction between developed and developing countries, and mandated a different set of obligations for those categories of countries. Thus, under Kyoto, [China](#) and [India](#) were not held to the same standards as the [United States](#) and European countries. In the Paris Agreement, there would be commitments from all countries across the globe.

Another notable strength of the Paris Agreement was the fact that the countries of the world were finally able to reach consensus on the vital necessity to limit global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Centigrade. Ahead of the global consensus on the deal, and as controversy continued to surface over the targeted global temperature limits, the leaders of island countries were sounding the alarm about the melting of the Polar ice caps and the associated rise in sea level. Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga of [Tuvalu](#) issued this dismal reminder: "Tuvalu's future ... is already bleak and any further temperature increase will spell the total demise of [Tuvalu](#). No leader in this room carries such a level of worry and responsibility. Just imagine you are in my shoes, what would you do?" It was thus something of a victory for environmental advocates that the countries of the world could find consensus on the lower number -- 1.5 degrees rather than 2 degrees.

A significant weak point with regard to the Paris deal was a "loss and damage" provision, which anticipates that even with all the new undertakings intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move to a low carbon future, there would nonetheless be unavoidable climate change consequences. Those consequences ranged from the loss of arable land for farmers as well as soil erosion and contamination of potable water by sea water, to the decimation of territory in coastal zones and on small islands, due to the rise in sea level, with entire small island countries being

rendered entirely uninhabitable. The reality was that peoples' homes across the world would be destroyed along with their way of life.

With that latter catastrophic effect being a clear and present danger for small island countries, the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) demanded that the developed world acknowledge its responsibility for this irreversible damage.. Despite the fact that greenhouse gas emissions and the ensuing plague of global warming was, indeed, the consequence of development in the West (the [United States](#) and Europe) and the large power house countries, such as [Russia](#), [China](#) and [India](#), there was no appetite by those countries to sign on to unlimited liability. Under the Paris Agreement, there was a call for research on insurance mechanisms that would address loss and damage issues, with recommendations to come in the future.

The call for research was being regarded as an evasion of sorts and constituted the weakest aspect of the Paris Agreement. Not surprisingly, a coalition of small island nations demanded a "Marshall Plan" for the Pacific. Borrowing the term "Marshall Plan" from the post-World War II reconstruction effort, the coalition of Pacific island nation, which included [Kiribati](#), [Tuvalu](#), [Fiji](#), and the [Marshall Islands](#), called for an initiative that would include investment in renewable energy and shoreline protection, cultural preservation, economic assistance for economies in transition, and a plan for migration and resettlement for these countries as they confront the catastrophic effects of the melting of the Polar ice caps and the concomitant rise in sea level. The precise contours of the initiative remained unknown, unspecified, and a mere exercise in theory at the time of writing. Yet such an initiative would, at some point, have to be addressed, given the realities of climate change and the slow motion calamity unfolding each day for low-lying island nations across the world.

As noted by Vice President Greg Stone of Conservation International, who also functions as an adviser to the government of [Kiribati](#), "Imagine living in a place where you know it's going to go away someday, but you don't know what day that wave's going to come over and wash your home away." He added, "It's a disaster we know is going to happen." Meanwhile, the intervening years promised to be filled with hardship for small island nations, such as [Kiribati](#). Stone explained, "For every inch of sea-level rise, these islands lose 10 feet of their freshwater table to saltwater intrusion," Stone explained. "So it's not just about the day the water finally goes over the island; it's also about the day that there's just not enough water left and everyone has to move off the island." Presaging the future for island nations that could face submersion, Stone said, "If you look ahead 50 years, a country like [Kiribati](#) could become the first aqueous nation. possibility of migration. That is, they own this big patch of ocean, and they administer it from elsewhere."

Foreign Minister Minister Tony Debrum of the [Marshall Islands](#) emerged as the champion advocating on behalf of small island nation states and a loose coalition of concerned countries from the Pacific to the Caribbean, but with support from the [United States](#). He addressed the

comprehensive concerns of small island nations regarding the weaknesses of the deal, while simultaneously making clear that the Paris Agreement signified hope for the countries most at risk. In a formal statement, Debrum declared: "We have made history today. Emissions targets are still way off track, but this agreement has the tools to ramp up ambition, and brings a spirit of hope that we can rise to this challenge. I can go back home to my people and say we now have a pathway to survival." Debrum highlighted the imperatives of Pacific island nations, saying, "Our High Ambition Coalition was the lightning rod we needed to lift our sights and expectations for a strong agreement here in Paris. We were joined by countries representing more than half the world. We said loud and clear that a bare-bones, minimalist agreement would not fly. We instead demanded an agreement to mark a turning point in history, and the beginning of our journey to the post-carbon era."

Debrum of the [Marshall Islands](#) espoused the quintessential synopsis of the accord and its effects for those most likely to be affected by climate change as he noted, "Climate change won't stop overnight, and my country is not out of the firing line just yet, but today we all feel a little safer."

Editor's Entry on [Environmental Policy](#):

The low-lying Pacific island nations of the world, including [Kiribati](#), [Tuvalu](#), the [Marshall Islands](#), [Fiji](#), among others, are vulnerable to the threats posed by global warming and climate change, derived from carbon emissions, and resulting in the rise in sea level. Other island nations in the Caribbean, as well as poor countries with coastal zones, were also at particular risk of suffering the deleterious effects of climate change.

Political policy in these countries are often connected to ecological issues, which have over time morphed into an existential crisis of sorts. Indeed, ecological concerns and the climate crisis have also been dominant themes with life and death consequences for the people of island nations in the Pacific. Indeed, the very livelihoods of fishing and subsistence farming remain at risk as a result of ecological and environmental changes. Yet even so, these countries are threatened by increasingly high storm surges, which could wipe out entire villages and contaminate water supplies. Moreover, because these are low lying island nations, the sustained rise in sea level can potentially lead to the terrain of these countries being uninhabitable at best, and submerged at worst. Stated in plain terms, these countries are at severe risk of being obliterated from the map and their plight illuminates the emerging global challenge of environmental refugees. In these manifold senses, climate change is the existential crisis of the contemporary era.

Since the time of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, there have been efforts aimed at extending the life of that agreement, with an eye on minimizing greenhouse gas emissions, and thus minimizing the effects of climate change. Those endeavors have largely ended in failure, as exemplified by the unsuccessful Copenhagen talks in 2009 and the fruitless Doha talks in 2012 respectively. The success of the COP 21 talks in [France](#), with the adoption of the landmark Paris Agreement in

2015, was regarded as the first glimmer of hope. Not only did the Paris Agreement signify the triumph of international diplomacy and global consensus, but it also marked the start of the end of the fossil fuel era, with the path forward toward a low carbon future reliant on greener technologies. Most crucially, the Paris Agreement stood as the first significant response in recent times to the central challenge of climate change and its quotidian effects on the lives of real human beings across the world.

1. Major International Environmental Accords:

General Environmental Concerns

Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, Espoo, 1991.

Accords Regarding Atmosphere

Annex 16, vol. II (Environmental Protection: Aircraft Engine Emissions) to the 1044 Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, Montreal, 1981

Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP), Geneva, 1979

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), New York, 1992

Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, Vienna, 1985 including the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Depleted the Ozone Layer, Montreal, 1987

Accords Regarding Hazardous Substances

Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movements and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa, Bamako, 1991

Convention on Civil Liability for Damage Caused during Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road, Rail and Inland Navigation Vessels (CRTD), Geneva, 1989

Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Basel Convention), Basel, 1989

Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, Helsinki, 1992

Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (Waigani Convention), Waigani, 1995

European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), Geneva 1957

FAO International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, Rome, 1985

2. Major International Marine Accords:

Global Conventions

Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Convention 1972), London, 1972

International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by Protocol of 1978 relation thereto (MARPOL 73/78), London, 1973 and 1978

International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage 1969 (1969 CLC), Brussels, 1969, 1976, and 1984

International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage 1971 (1971 Fund Convention), Brussels, 1971

Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea (HNS), London 1996

International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response, and Co-operation (OPRC), London, 1990

International Convention Relation to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties (Intervention Convention), Brussels, 1969

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Montego Bay, 1982

Regional Conventions

Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft (Oslo Convention), Oslo, 1972

Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution from Land-based Sources (Paris Convention), Paris, 1974

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention), Paris, 1992

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (1974 Helsinki Convention), Helsinki 1974

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (1992 Helsinki Convention), Helsinki 1992

Conventions within the UNEP Regional Seas Programme

Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, Bucharest, 1992

Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Cartagena de Indias, 1983

Convention for the Protection, Management, and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region, Nairobi, 1985

Kuwait Regional Convention for Co-operation on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Pollution, [Kuwait](#), 1978

Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Region of the Mediterranean Sea (Barcelona Convention), Barcelona, 1976

Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment, Jeddah, 1982

Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region, Noumea, 1986

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Area of the South-East Pacific, Lima, 1981

Convention for Co-operation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal

Environment of the West and Central African Region, Abidjan, 1981

3. Major Conventions Regarding Living Resources:

Marine Living Resources

Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), Canberra, 1980

International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Rio de Janeiro, 1966

International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW), Washington, 1946

Nature Conservation and Terrestrial Living Resources

Antarctic Treaty, Washington, D.C., 1959

Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention), Paris, 1972

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Nairobi, 1992

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), Bonn, 1979

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Washington, D.C., 1973

Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention), Ramsar, 1971

Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), Paris 1994

FAO International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, Rome, 1983

International Tropical Timber Agreement, 1994 (ITTA, 1994), Geneva, 1994

Freshwater Resources

Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, Helsinki, 1992

4. Major Conventions Regarding Nuclear Safety:

Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency (Assistance Convention), Vienna, 1986

Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (Notification Convention), Vienna, 1986

Convention on Nuclear Safety, Vienna, 1994

Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, Vienna, 1963

5. Major Intergovernmental Organizations

Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

European Union (EU): Environment

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC Funds)

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Environment Policy

Committee (EPOC)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

World Bank

World Food Programme (WFP)

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

World Trade Organization (WTO)

6. Major Non-Governmental Organizations

Atmosphere Action Network East Asia (AANEAA)

Climate Action Network (CAN)

Consumers International (CI)

Earth Council

Earthwatch Institute

Environmental Liaison Centre International (ELCI)

European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

Friends of the Earth International (FoEI)

Greenpeace International

International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

International Solar Energy Society (ISES)

IUCN-The World Conservation Union

Pesticide Action Network (PAN)

Sierra Club

Society for International Development (SID)

Third World Network (TWN)

Water Environment Federation (WEF)

Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

World Federalist Movement (WFM)

World Resources Institute (WRI)

World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF)

7. Other Networking Instruments

Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)

Global Legislators for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE)

Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)

United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS)

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The demographic information for language, ethnicity and religion listed in CountryWatch content is

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Methodology Notes for Economic Data:

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Exceptions to this method were used for:

- Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Nauru
- Cuba
- Palau
- Holy See
- San Marino
- Korea, North
- [Serbia](#) & Montenegro
- Liberia
- Somalia
- Liechtenstein
- Tonga
- Monaco
- Tuvalu

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Methodology Notes for the HDI:

Since 1990, the United Nations Development Programme, in concert with organizations across the globe, has produced the [Human Development Index](#) (or HDI). According to the UNDP, the index measures average achievement in basic human development in one simple composite index, and produces from this index a ranking of countries. The HDI is a composite of three basic components of human development: longevity, knowledge and standard of living. Longevity is measured by life expectancy. Knowledge is measured by combination of adult literacy and mean

years of schooling. Standard of living is measured by purchasing power, based on real GDP per capita (in constant US\$) adjusted for differences in international living costs (or, purchasing power parity, PPP). While the index uses these social indicators to measure national performance with regard to human welfare and development, not all countries provide the same level of information for each component needed to compute the index; therefore, as in any composite indicator, the final index is predicated on projections, predictions and weighting schemes. The index is a static measure, and thus, an incomplete measure of human welfare. In fact, the UNDP says itself the concept of human development focuses on the ends rather than the means of development and progress, examining in this manner, the average condition of all people in a given country.

Specifically, the index is calculated by determining the maximum and minimum for each of the three components (as listed above) and then measuring where each country stands in relation to these scales-expressed as a value between 0 and 1. For example, the minimum adult literary rate is zero percent, the maximum is 100 percent, and the reading skills component of knowledge in the HDI for a country where the literacy rate is 75 percent would be 0.75. The scores of all indicators are then averaged into the overall index.

For a more extensive examination of human development, as well as the ranking tables for each participating country, please visit: <http://www.undp.org>

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United Nations Environmental Program. URL: http://www.unep.org/GEO/GEO_Products/Assessment_Reports/

United Nations Global Environmental Outlook. URL: <http://www.unep.org/geo/geo4/media/>

United States Department of Energy, Country Analysis Briefs. URL: <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/contents.html>

World Climate Data Online. URL: <http://www.worldclimate.com>

World Directory of Country Environmental Studies. 1996. The World Resource Institute.

World Factbook. US Central Intelligence Agency. Washington, D.C.: Printing and Photography Group.

1998-1999 World Resources Guide to the Global Environment by the World Resources Institute. May, 1998.

1998/1999 Yearbook of International Cooperation on Environment and Development. 1998. London: Earthscan Publications.

Note on Edition Dates:

The earlier edition dates are noted above because they were used to formulate the original country reviews and serve as the baseline for some of the information covered. Later editions have been used in some cases, and are cited as such, while other more recent online resources (cited above) contain recent and ever-updated data sets used for research.

Other Sources:

General information has also been used in the compilation of this review, with the courtesy of governmental agencies from this country.

News Services:

CANA Daily Bulletin. Caribbean Media Agency Ltd., St. Michael, [Barbados](#).

Central and Eastern Africa Report, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Integrated Regional Information Network for Central and Eastern Africa.

Daily News, Panafrican News Agency. Dakar, [Senegal](#).

PACNEWS, Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association. Suva, [Fiji](#).

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Washington D.C. USA.

Reuters News. Thomson Reuters. New York, New York. USA.

Southern Africa Report, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Integrated Regional Information Network for Southern Africa.

Voice of America, English Service. Washington D.C.

West Africa Report, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa. 1998-1999

Note: Some or all these news services have been used to research various sections of this Country Review.

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Youngblood-Coleman, Denise. *Country Review: France*. 2003. Houston, Texas: CountryWatch Publications, 2003. *Country Review:France*. Online. Available URL : http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_country.asp?vCOUNTRY=61 October, 12, 2003.

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Youngblood-Coleman, Denise. "People." *CountryWatch.com: France*. 2003. Houston, Texas: CountryWatch Publications, 2003. *CountryWatch.com: France*. Online. Available URL : http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_topic.asp?vCOUNTRY=61&SECTION=SOCIAL&TOPIC=CLPEO&TYPE=TEXT. October 12, 2003.

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ISBN: 1- 60523- 681-0

Ghana Country Review

2016

ISSN: 1- 60523- 893-5

Printed in the United States of America