



UNU-INRA *Sparkle*

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Enhancing Capacity for Managing Africa's Natural Resources

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The Extractive Industry: A Sustainable Development Licence to Operate



A mining pit

Extractive projects can generate vast sums of government revenues and create many employment opportunities. However, mineral-rich nations are confronted with serious challenges in attempting to translate natural resource wealth into long-term inclusive and sustainable development. This has compelled mining companies to secure the acceptance of mining activities by local communities and stakeholders, build public trust and prevent social conflicts, leading to the concept of 'social licence to operate'.

The concept of 'social licence to operate' entreats mining companies to respond to the concerns and requests by affected

communities and civil societies, provide timely and understandable information, deliver on their commitments, operate in an honest and responsible manner, and be accountable.

Despite the widespread uptake of the 'social licence to operate', the concept has witnessed a lot of criticisms. Key among the criticisms is the fact that it focuses mainly on the social dimension of mining projects, with less attention to the environmental component. While some environmental concerns may be addressed if raised by local communities and other actors, the social licence is far from a comprehensive means for protecting the environment from the destructive and polluting impacts of mining.

In the wake of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which integrate the three pillars of economic development, social inclusion and environmental sustainability, there is a growing recognition that if well-managed, the mining sector

can play a positive role in promoting broad-based development and structural transformation in many countries. Indeed, mining can contribute more directly to the achievement of eight of the global goals relating to poverty eradication (SDG #1), clean water and sanitation (SDG#6), sustainable and affordable energy (SDG#7), decent work and economic growth (SDG#8), industry and infrastructure (SDG #9), climate action (SDG#13), life on land (SDG#15), as well as peace and justice (SDG #16).

The inadequacy of the existing governance landscape in the extractive sector calls for a new governance framework, particularly in light of the SDGs, hence a proposed concept; ‘sustainable development licence to operate’. This concept aims to help improve on the ‘social licence to operate’, by reflecting the significant potential contribution of the mining sector to realise the sustainable development of mineral-rich developing countries. It highlights the importance of

governance for the achievement of positive economic, social and environmental outcomes.

The ‘sustainable development licence to operate’ calls on governments to put in place clear, comprehensive and transparent laws, policies and regulations, to build strong institutions, train skilled professionals and set up accountability mechanisms to ensure that policy frameworks and rules are implemented. The concept requires close collaboration and cooperation between countries and actors, with all relevant stakeholders incorporating the principles enshrined in the SDGs into their own practices and operations.

In brief, this new paradigm demands the reconciliation of the aspirations of different actors such as multi-national companies, governments, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations and land users in the extractive sector, so as to ensure shared benefits from mining.

This article is culled from a journal article by Pedro, A., Ayuk, E.T (Director of UNU-INRA), Bodourogrou, C. et al., published in the Mineral Economics Journal (2017). It is available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13563-017-0108-9>

GCIC Team Improves Relationship with MESTI



The GCIC team with MESTI officials

A team from the Ghana Climate Innovation Centre (GCIC) led by Mr. Michael Ehst; the GCIC Task Team Leader at the World Bank, paid a working visit to the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) on 13th June, 2017 in Accra. The aim of the visit was to improve the working relationship between the project team and officials of the ministry. The meeting discussed the GCIC project and brainstormed on how it can be sustained to the benefits of many Ghanaians.

Funded through a grant from the World Bank Group and partners, the Ghana Climate Innovation Center is a green project incubation hub where entrepreneurs and start-up ventures can access support to develop their innovative ideas into strong and viable businesses. The project is being implemented by Ashesi University College (Ghana), SNV, Ernst & Young, and UNU-INRA. UNU-INRA is leading the policy component of the project.

UNU-INRA Experts Participate in Dresden Nexus Conference



UNU-INRA Experts making their presentations

Experts from UNU-INRA represented the Institute at the 2017 Dresden Nexus Conference organised by the United Nations University (UNU-FLORES) and other partners in Germany from 17th -19th May. The conference was held on the theme: ‘SDGs and Nexus Approach: Monitoring and Implementation’.

Speaking on the topic: ‘opportunities and challenges to adopt sustainable watershed management in crop-livestock system’, Dr Gebreyesus Brhane Tesfahunegn, Land and Water Resources Research Fellow at UNU-INRA, underscored the need to combine knowledge and the skills of all stakeholders for an effective adoption of land and watershed interventions in Africa.

The Institute’s Green Economy Research Fellow, Dr Dorothé Nje Yong, in her presentation, called on stakeholders to provide incentives for communities to

adopt soil and water conservation technologies. This, she indicated, will help reduce soil erosion and other environmental costs in Africa.

On her part, Dr Ngozi Finette Stewart, made a poster presentation on a study that is investigating the impact of urban sprawl on ecosystem services, environmental quality and livelihoods of communities in the Eastern Region of Ghana. She noted that the research would provide policy options on the impact of urban expansions on environmental sustainability and livelihoods.

Researchers and Communicators to Collaborate on Science Communication



Cross-section of the workshop participants

A two-day workshop held by the United Nations University (UNU-INRA and UNU-MERIT), in partnership with the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), Accra, encouraged researchers/scientists, communications officers and journalists to collaborate to effectively inform stakeholders including local communities on the outcomes of scientific findings.

The workshop, dubbed “Reach & Turn” urged the participants to put scientific results in a clear, compelling, non-technical and inclusive language for the benefit of non-technical people. The participants were urged to try and use different communication products such as policy briefs, factsheets, blogs and channels like social media platforms to communicate key research findings to non-experts.

The workshop also encouraged researchers, communication officers and journalists to take advantage of the new media landscape to widely disseminate research findings to the benefit of the public.

There were 50 participants comprising researchers, communication officers and journalists from Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda and Togo at the workshop.

UNU-INRA Calls on University of Ghana VC



Dr Elias T. Ayuk, Director of UNU-INRA (left) and Professor Ebenezer Oduro Owusu, University of Ghana Vice Chancellor (right)

The Director of UNU-INRA, Dr Elias T. Ayuk paid a familiarisation visit to the office of the new Vice Chancellor (VC) of the University of Ghana (UG), Professor Ebenezer Oduro Owusu. The courtesy call was to formally brief the new Vice Chancellor on UNU-INRA’s programmes and activities.

Dr Ayuk seized the opportunity to thank the University of Ghana for its continuous support to UNU-INRA and reiterated the Institute’s commitment to continue to collaborate with the University to promote excellence in research that informs policy makings.

New Research Intern



Ms Yolanda Borquaye, the Research Intern

UNU-INRA welcomed a new research intern, Ms Yolanda Borquaye. Ms Borquaye is currently pursuing her Juris Doctorate at New York University, School of Law, where she is focusing on various aspects of International Law.

She earlier obtained her Bachelors of Arts Degree in Sociology and Government from Harvard University, Massachusetts, where she majored in International Development. Her research interests encompass legislative frameworks for extractive resources and natural resource management within Africa.

Key Publications in the Quarter

Towards a Sustainable Development Licence to Operate



The extractive sector can make significant contributions to the achievement of a large number of the Sustainable Development Goals. This paper documents the shortcomings of the existing governance architecture in the sector. It builds on the 'social licence to operate' concept and draws from its limitations to propose a new

framework called the 'sustainable development licence to operate (SDLO)'. The SDLO is a holistic multi-level and multi-stakeholder governance framework aimed at enhancing the contribution of the mining sector to sustainable development. The paper is available at:

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13563-017-0108-9>

Overcoming the Challenges of Fish Farming in Africa

This policy brief is based on a study that analysed the efficiency of resource use and the economic efficiency of 32 fish farmers. It calls on policymakers to consider facilitating fish farmers' access to quality and affordable feeds. It also recommends the creation of more awareness on best practices and effective management of fish ponds, and suggests the need for fish farmers to optimize resources to reduce waste and increase production.

The brief is available at:

<http://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:6229> and the full working paper can be downloaded at:

<http://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:6233#viewMetadata>



Annual Report 2016



The annual report covers information on UNU-INRA's research, capacity development, policy engagements and communication activities in the previous year. Kindly download the 2016 Annual Report at the link below, to learn more about our work:

<https://inra.unu.edu/publications/annual-reports>

Upcoming Event

- **Event:** Consultative Workshop to discuss policies on Climate and Clean Technologies in Ghana
- **Date:** 1st August, 2017

Our Social Media Presence

Information on the activities of UNU-INRA is available on social media. Follow us on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn at the links below:



[Twitter.com/UNUINRA](https://twitter.com/UNUINRA) . Our Twitter Handle is @UNUINRA



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About UNU-INRA

UNU-INRA enhances the capacity of African researchers to conduct research on natural resources management issues to inform policy formulation and implementation.

Although UNU-INRA is an institute of the United Nations University (UNU) system, it was an African concept developed by some committed top African scientists. Its establishment is supported by the Assembly of Heads of State and Governments of the African Union (AU). On this strong political and moral support, UNU-INRA was established in 1986.

UNU-INRA appreciates the continued contributions from the Governments of Cameroon, Ghana and Zambia to its endowment fund. The Institute is also grateful to the following organisations for the funding support to carry out specific projects:



Canada



ACPC

Embrapa



Sparkle is a quarterly newsletter of UNU-INRA.

It is an acronym for Sustainability through Partnership in Africa where Resources are optimally utilized using Knowledge that is holistic, Leadership that is inclusive and Economy that is green