



Promoting Excellence in Knowledge

# GHANA ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

## PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

**President:** Prof. Kofi Opoku Nti  
**Vice President Arts:** Prof. Joseph Roland Atsu Ayee  
**Vice President Sciences:** Emerita Prof. Isabella Akyinbah Quakyi  
**Honorary Secretary:** Prof. Helen Atawube Yitah  
**Honorary Treasurer:** Prof. Andrew Anthony Adjei

25<sup>th</sup> September 2024

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### GAAS CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE MEASURES TO STOP ILLEGAL MINING IN FOREST RESERVES AND WATER BODIES

#### A. Concerns of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences (GAAS)

GAAS is calling on the Executive and Parliament to revoke LI 2462, stop issuing permits and licences for mining in forest reserves, and immediately ban mining in water bodies. **The Academy** has raised the following concerns about mining activities in forest reserves and water bodies:

1. **Forest reserves** were established to prevent desertification, improve climatic conditions for cocoa production, and protect water sources. Mining in these areas undermines these critical functions.
2. As a signatory to the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, Ghana is obligated to follow global environmental agreements. However, **L.I. 2462**—which permits mining in forest reserves—contradicts Ghana’s international commitments to combat climate change, prevent land and water degradation, and conserve biodiversity.
3. **Forest conservation** is vital for mitigating climate change, protecting biodiversity, ensuring food security, and maintaining sustainable development. Forest reserves are not only for the current generation but also for future generations of Ghanaians. They hold the potential for scientific research and discoveries essential for addressing global environmental crises like climate change and pollution.
4. The enactment of **L.I. 2462** is particularly troubling because it has allowed many companies to secure forest entry permits, creating pressure for the issuance of mining licenses. GAAS regrets that **Parliament did not annul L.I. 2462** when it had the chance, as this has opened a backdoor for mining activities that threaten forest reserves.
5. GAAS is extremely concerned about the **destruction of water bodies** through mining, which has resulted in the pollution of water sources essential for drinking, agriculture, and fishing. The **Ghana Water Company** has warned that water treatment costs have risen sharply due to increased pollution, signalling potential health risks and unaffordable water tariffs in the near future.

## B. Recommendations

GAAS offers the following recommendations to address these concerns:

1. **Immediate revocation of L.I. 2462** by the Executive and Parliament to protect the country's forest reserves. If no action is taken, all forest reserves could be lost by **2030**.
2. The **Executive and Parliament** must consult widely with scientific experts and stakeholders when enacting legislation that affects the environment. They should use their powers under the Constitution to protect the country from environmental threats.
3. The **Executive should stop issuing permits and licenses** for mining in forest reserves. Companies currently holding permits should be relocated to new areas outside forest reserves, with support to restart operations in these new locations. Those engaged in illegal mining or violating their licenses must be evicted immediately.
4. **Mining in water bodies and their surrounding areas must be banned immediately**. No new licenses should be granted for such activities, and the state must enforce these bans strictly.
5. **Law enforcement** must act decisively to implement these recommendations, with the assurance that the majority of Ghanaians support strong action to protect the environment.

## C. Conclusion

The **Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences (GAAS)** remains deeply concerned about the negative impact of illegal mining on forest reserves and water bodies. The Academy urges the **Executive and Parliament** to take immediate steps to revoke **L.I. 2462** to prevent further environmental destruction and to ban mining in water bodies. The Academy stands ready to work with all stakeholders to protect Ghana's environment and stop illegal mining.

### About GAAS

In accordance with its mandate of encouraging the creation, acquisition, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge for national development, GAAS held a press conference and issued a public **Statement on Illegal Mining on 15 December 2023**.

This was followed by the publication of the statement in the Health Sciences Investigations (HSI) Journal, **Vol. 5 No. 2, 2024, pp. 740-743**.

In both the statement and its published form, GAAS condemned the scourge of illegal mining and recommended measures to address it, including revoking the Environmental Protection (Mining in Forest Reserves) Regulation 2022 (L.I. 2462).

For more information about GAAS, visit our website on <http://gaas-gh.org/>

For media enquiries please email [info@gaas-gh.org](mailto:info@gaas-gh.org)



Prof. Kofi Opoku Nti, FGA

President of the Academy