



**NATIONAL LAND CONFERENCE, 2022**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE  
ACCRA - GHANA**

**6th – 9th December 2022**

**Organized by**

**THE LANDS COMMISSION**

**Under the Auspices of the**

**MINISTRY OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**In collaboration with**

**DEPARTMENT OF LAND ECONOMY, KNUST**



**&**

**COLANDEF LAND AND PROPERTY  
RIGHTS**



**Theme**

# LEVERAGING NATIONAL LAND POLICY, LEGISLATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The first national land policy formulation process in Ghana started with the receipt by Government in March 1994 of the Final Report of the Law Reform Commission, which started work on Proposals for the Reform of Land Law in 1973. Between 1994 and 1997, the Final report was subjected to a series of reviews and wide stakeholder consultations to identify policy options for consideration by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources. A draft policy document was discussed at a National Land Policy Workshop in April 1997. The final draft policy document was presented to Cabinet in December 1997 for consideration and approval, and received final government approval in January 1999. The policy document was launched in June 1999.

The National Land Policy identifies several land administration challenges and their resolution of which are considered fundamental in realizing an efficient and effective land tenure regime in Ghana. The challenges include weak land administration and management systems, multiple land sales, compulsory acquisition by government of large tracts of land unutilized and compensation unpaid, land market indiscipline, unauthorized occupation and use of state lands by encroachers, haphazard spatial developments, lack of adequate functional and coordinated geographic information systems and networks, indeterminate boundaries of customary owned lands, lack of modern and up-to-date maps and plans, and use of unapproved development schemes.

Successive Governments have sought, through numerous initiatives to improve Ghana's land administration regime. The major interventions in land administration have been through the Land Administration Project (LAP) - phases 1 and 2, which sought to lay the foundation and consolidate urban and rural land administration and management systems for efficient and transparent land service delivery. Broadly, the interventions under LAP achieved the following main gains:

- establishing the “new” Lands Commission in 2008 (through the passage of the Lands Commission Act, 2008, Act 767),
- drafting of a new Land Bill, which was passed by Parliament as the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) and assented to by the President on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020,
- supporting the Judiciary by funding the establishment of a number of specialized Land Courts and improving the operations of the courts through automation,
- enacting the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016 (Act 925) establishing the new Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority,
- introduction of a new three-tier Spatial Planning Model,

- preparing a National Spatial Development Framework and two (2) Regional Spatial Development Frameworks,
- funding street naming and house numbering in towns and cities,
- establishing five (5) Client Service Access Units (CSAUs) within the Lands Commission,
- developing a Geospatial Policy for Ghana,
- establishing 87 Customary Land Secretariats nationwide,
- constructing a modern office complex for the Land Sector agencies in Kumasi,
- decentralizing deed registration to all the regional capitals
- ensuring participation of non-state actors such as the Civil Society Coalition on Land (CICOL) and other NGOs in the land sector among others.

In addition to the State efforts, several independent programs aimed at contributing to addressing the challenges in Ghana's land sector have been implemented by non-state actors. These have produced some results that have contributed to improvements in the land sector. Examples include projects implemented by several organizations such as Solidaridad, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), USAID, Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI), COLANDEF, as well as some private sector actors. These include the collaboration with stakeholders in the development of a Handbook for Customary Land Rights Documentation, piloting of customary land rights documentation, organization of an Africa Regional Consultative Workshop on Securing Land Tenure in Africa, analysis of land access and tenure security for the several agricultural value chains, development of Guidelines for Responsible Land Based Investments for the Private Sector, Community and Public Sector actors, Analysis of the Social Inclusion Dimensions of Large Scale Land Acquisition, among many others.

Even though the Land Administration reforms has focused on reforming the legal regulatory and institutional frameworks, decentralization of service delivery, testing new methods and approaches through piloting and seeking to harmonize the customary and formal systems of land administration, there is worsening land tenure risks for urban, peri-urban, and rural land users, fueled on the one hand by the rapid population growth and urbanization, increasing demand for land for all human activities and on the other hand by weak institutions, characterized by lack of coordination among many public sector institutions, uncoordinated land use practices, and lack of participation and inclusiveness in land governance and land administration. In addition, the management of other natural resources including timber, minerals and water add to the challenges of securing tenure rights for sustainable socio-economic development. These indicate the urgent need for a more inclusive, strategic, and sustained multi-stakeholder approach to improve the governance of land and other natural resources

in the country. Dialogue spaces among national and local governments, industry players, customary landowners and actors, academia, civil society organizations, investors and the general public are needed to achieve sustainable land sector transformation and socio-economic development.

Thus, the National Land Conference 2022 is designed to build on all these efforts in the land sector by both state and non-state actors and institutionalize a structured arrangement for multi-stakeholder participation in the transformation of the land sector.

## **RATIONALE FOR THE NATIONAL LAND CONFERENCE**

Significant land administration challenges remain unattended to in the country. Additionally, since the National Policy Workshop was held in 1997 to review the revised draft policy document, the subsequent was a national level policy dialogue on land held from in November 2007. Since then, there has not been any national platform to discuss the challenges confronting the sector and to mobilize consensus on how to tackle them. Emerging land issues resulting from environmental pressures, population dynamics, use and misuse of resources, reorganization of national, regional, local and traditional agencies, and advancements in technology among others suggest that the need for such a dialogue is long overdue.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have some targets linked to land and property rights and calls for a close examination of the extent to which we are working towards achieving the targets. Three of the important SDGs that have bearing the land sector are:

**SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere** – Target 1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.

**SDG 5: Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls** – Target 5a: *undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.*

**SDG 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable** – Target 11.3 by 2030 enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacities for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

Moreover, there are a number of international instruments and standards that provide guidance and standards to be achieved in land governance to improve security of tenure, and to leverage land and other natural resources for poverty reduction, resilience, socio-economic development and sustainable environmental management.

There has been calls by major actors in the land sector for deeper review of the current state of the land administration system and critically review the various interventions (Policies, Legislative, Institutional and Regulatory frameworks) in the land sector with a view to charting a new direction for the land sector. Thus the 2022 National Land Conference provides such a platform for undertaking a deeper introspection of the current state of Ghana's land sector, emerging land related issues such as climate change, migration, youth access to land, land and conflict, etc, identify opportunities and generate multi-stakeholder support for sustainable reforms.

The theme for the National Land Conference is **“Leveraging National Land Policy, Legislation and Institutional Capacity Towards Sustainable Socio-Economic Development.**

Guided by the country's Constitution, the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036), the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016 (Act 926), experiences and international best practices; the conference would create the platform to discuss policy options, experiences, present new research and scalable innovations, foster high level support and ownership of interventions to tackle land governance, and to empower and develop the capacities of the land sector stakeholders.

The Conference will establish a multi-stakeholder platform that will monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the conference and provide support for improving land governance and land administration in the country on a sustainable basis.

## **2 OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Conference are:

1. Create a multistakeholder platform for policy dialogue on land issues and challengers and propose recommendations to government for addressing them
  2. Provide opportunity for discussion and adoption of innovative approaches and enabling technologies for improving land governance and land administration in the country
  3. Increase public awareness and potential benefits of the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) and the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016 (Act 926)
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4. Establish a multi-stakeholder platform to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference and generally promote good land governance and land administration

### **3 EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

The expected outcomes of the conference are:

1. Awareness of conference participants raised on the Land Act, 2020 and the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016
2. A multi-stakeholder platform established to monitor the implementation of the conference recommendations
3. A Communique issued at the end of the Conference articulating the main recommendations
4. Broad modalities for implementation of the Land Act 2020 and the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016 established
5. A Conference Proceedings Report that details out the main recommendations/resolutions of the Conference

### **4 THEMATIC AREAS**

The National Land Conference will deliberate on the following conference thematic areas:

1. Land Policy and Land Governance Reforms – Legal and Institutional Frameworks
2. Land Administration and Innovative Methodologies – Land registration, Land Valuation, Taxation, Institutional Arrangements, Dispute Resolution Mechanisms
3. Surveying and Mapping – Innovative and Cost-Effective Techniques
4. Land Use Planning and Spatial Development – Spatial Planning, Development Control, Institutional Frameworks
5. Land Management System (Customary, State and Vested Lands)
6. Gender and social inclusion in the land sector

The Land Act, 2022 and the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016 are the key conference documents and therefore will be highlighted in the deliberations on each of the thematic areas mentioned above.

### **5 CONFERENCE COMMITTEES**

The following committees will be established to handle the different aspects of the conference:

- a. Steering Committee
- b. Communication/Media relations
- c. Protocol Committee
- d. Logistics Committee
- e. Resource mobilization Committee

## 6 CONFERENCE FORMAT

To provide a full conference experience while respecting the COVID-19 guidelines, the event will allow a combination of onsite and remote participation for participants during plenary and technical sessions. However, all panelists and presenters must be present in-person.

### 6.1 Conference Outline and Structure

**Pre-conference Activities:** There will be publicity and media engagements from the second week of November until the week of the conference. There will also be social media interactions on all social media platforms. The goal of the pre-conference activities will be to create awareness of the conference and generate ideas from the public on issues of interest that should be considered at the conference.

**Conference:** The conference will be held from 6 to 9 December 2022. The official opening ceremony will be in the afternoon of 6<sup>th</sup> December. Full conference deliberations will be carried out on 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022. The afternoon of the final day will focus on the presentation of the communique and closing ceremony.

**Post-Conference:** Post conference activities will be facilitated by the convenor and chairperson of the multi-stakeholder dialogue platform that will be set up at the conference, with support from the members of the platform. The multistakeholder platform will work in coordination with the Land Sector Agencies to monitor the implementation of the recommendations from the conference.

### 6.2 Venue and Date

The conference will be held in Accra at The Accra International Conference Center (AICC) from Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> – Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

Spaces for booths will be provided for interested exhibitors.

## **7 PARTICIPANTS**

To ensure inclusivity, participants of the National Land Conference will include the following:

1. Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs),
2. Parliamentary Select Committee on Lands and Forestry
3. Civil Society Organizations (Land and natural resource based CSOs, Farmer associations, Gender Based Groups, Faith based organizations, vulnerable groups, etc)
4. Development Partners
5. Traditional Authorities and customary owners
6. Academia,
7. Judiciary
8. Professional Bodies,
9. Land sector agencies,
10. Financial institutions,
11. Ghana National Association of farmers and fishermen
12. Security Agencies,
13. Real Estate Development Associations,
14. Large-scale land-based investors (private sector)
15. Utility providers (water, electricity, telcos)
16. Media (print and electronic).
17. International players in the land sector (private service delivery organisations)

## **8. SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES**

Communication/media relations committee to detail out the social media handles of the Conference.

## **9. DRAFT PROGRAMME**

A draft programme is attached. A final programme will be issued at least one week before the Conference starts.

