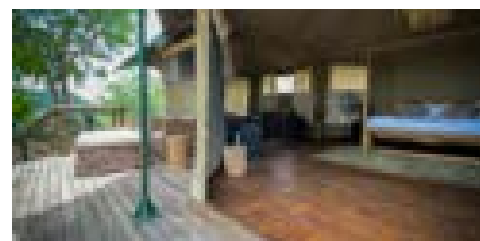
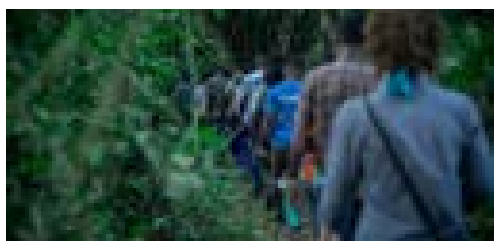
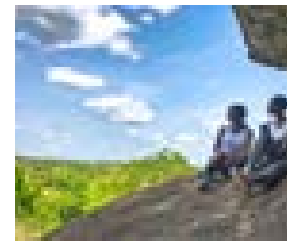
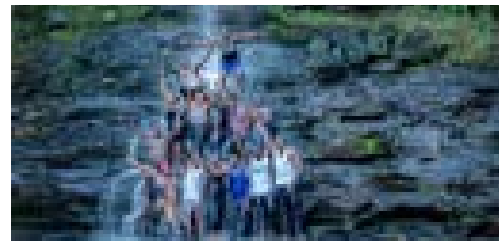
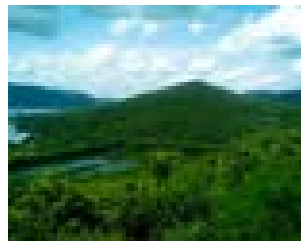
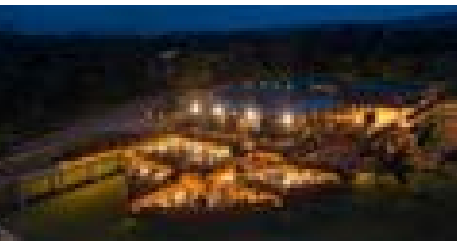


# ECO TOURISM

*Handbook*





# ECOTOURISM HANDBOOK



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   Wildlifeghana

 Forestry Commission Ghana

 Forestry Commission Gh

 the\_forestry\_commission



# KEY MESSAGE

*By*

**HON. SAMUEL A. JINAPOR, MP.**  
**MINISTER OF LANDS & NATURAL RESOURCES.**

The potential for nature-based tourism to contribute positively towards the Government's economic and social development policies as well as environmental conservation programs cannot be over-emphasised.

The 2012 Forest and Wildlife Policy has provided a strategic direction for developing the non-consumptive values of forest and wildlife resources through ecotourism value creation which will contribute to the attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Ghana is one of the most endowed countries in Africa in terms of natural resources such as forests, wildlife, water bodies, beautiful landscapes and more. The Forestry Commission has identified Ecotourism as a strategic tool for both conservation and development. Ecotourism in Ghana is mainly wildlife-based tourism with annual revenues of around \$2.5 million and it creates employment opportunities for several thousands of people.

The production of this Handbook which aims to raise awareness of ecotourism opportunities in Ghana is therefore, timely. The Handbook further provides some relevant information and guidelines for the development of ecotourism infrastructure in the Protected Areas. It further serves as a guide for tourists, investors, and policy makers and all other stakeholders with interest in Ecotourism in Ghana.

The Ministry of Lands of Natural Resources wants to assure all domestic and international visitors who patronise ecotourism that Ghana is a haven of peace, security and stability with friendly citizenry and local communities who are willing to make their stay in Ghana a memorable one.





# MESSAGE

*By*

**CHAIRMAN OF THE  
FORESTRY COMMISSION BOARD,**

**TETRETE OKUAMOAH SEKYIM II**

The tourism industry is on record as the 4th highest foreign exchange earner for the country after Cocoa, Gold and Oil & Gas. International arrivals and corresponding receipts have been reported to be increasing significantly over the past decade. Its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product of Ghana in 2018 was 4.9%.

A key imperative of the Forestry Commission that requires urgent attention is the creation of diversified portfolio of sustainable revenue sources. Ecotourism has been singled out as a potential source of revenue generation whilst at the same time serving as a tool for conservation.

Promotion and marketing of ecotourism products by the Forestry Commission is therefore, necessary to realise the full potential of the ecotourism value chain. The production of this Handbook is therefore, a step in the right direction. It is my expectation that users of this Ecotourism Handbook will find it helpful as they explore the myriad ecotourism destinations for pleasure, recreation and business. Although many industries including aviation and tourism were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020, Ghana like many other countries is recovering from the pandemic and open to tourism. I would therefore encourage everyone to visit whilst adhering to the “new normal” of COVID-19 protocols.

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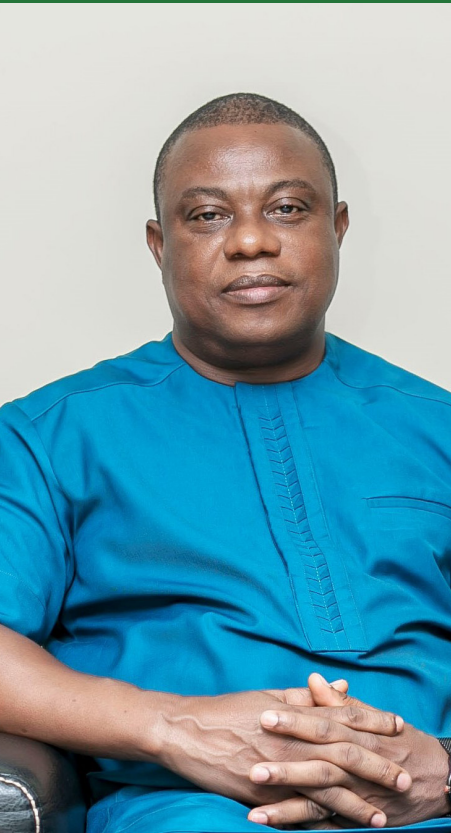
**CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING ECOTOURISM INVESTMENT PROPOSALS** 35

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CREMA	Community Resource Management Areas
FC	Forestry Commission
GHATOF	Ghana Tourism Federation
GIPC	Ghana Investment Promotion Center
GTA	Ghana Tourism Authority
GTDC	Ghana Tourism Development Company
MOTCA	Ministry of Tourism and Creative Arts
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WD	Wildlife Division
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
GHATOFF	The Ghana Tourism Federation
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GCAA	The Ghana Civil Aviation Authority
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GIPC	Ghana Investment Promotion Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FX	Foreign Exchange



# FOREWORD



**Mr. John Allotey**  
Chief Executive  
Forestry Commission

Ghana's current 2012 Forest and Wildlife policy has placed emphasis on the non-consumptive values of forest and wildlife resources which till date have not been extensively explored for sustainable development.

The Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission has a major role in the sustainable management of Ghana's wildlife resources with support from other stakeholders. The Division has the responsibility to ensure that the economic benefits of the wildlife resources are harnessed without compromising its ability to meet the needs of future generations. In this light, this handbook intends to provide information on the current state of ecotourism and serve as a one stop shop where stakeholders can obtain the necessary information about ecotourism. The appropriateness of the time for the production of this ecotourism handbook cannot be overemphasized.

There are ongoing efforts to curb the rapid depletion of the nation's forest and wildlife resources but due to population growth and its accompanying demand for natural resources, it is difficult to realise the impacts of these efforts. It is therefore imperative that the Commission through the Wildlife Division intensifies its efforts towards ecotourism development, an approach with minimal extractive utilisation of the natural resource base. In keeping with the objective of the government policy of Ghana Beyond Aid, it is important to add value and publicise the opportunities in the ecotourism sector in order to create job opportunities, earn foreign exchange and develop areas with ecotourism potentials.

This handbook thus provides information on the investment opportunities in the Wildlife Protected Areas and serves as an inclusive guide not only for present ecotourism development in the country but avenues for future business opportunities at a time where issues of nature conservation, sustainability, and income generation are of immense importance globally. These issues are mentioned in great detail and in simple, easy to understand expressions that make it easy for every individual to understand and follow. This handbook is a great recommendation for every individual, group, company, school children and environmentalist.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Ecotourism handbook was developed with the effort and active involvement of staff of the Stakeholder and Ecotourism Directorate of the Wildlife Division.

We express our gratitude to the Executive Director, Mr. Bernard Asamoah-Boateng of the Wildlife Division for his immense support and guidance throughout the entire process of developing this handbook.

A very special thanks goes to the Acting Director of the Stakeholder and Ecotourism Directorate, Dr. Richard Gyimah for initiating the idea of developing this ecotourism handbook. His time, direction and advice and editing of this handbook is deeply appreciated.

Our profound gratitude goes to the management team of the Wildlife Division whose invaluable contributions and criticisms helped us to fine tune this document.

Finally, we want to appreciate the tireless effort of Cornelia Danso, Sandra Frempong, Alice De-Graff Mends, Akosua Pokua Agyapong, Nana Kwame Amponsah and Suala Ali Issah- Prah for collating the relevant data, views and contributions. We acknowledge Dr. William Gblerkpor, Frederick Oppong Tabiri and Heward Mills for the photographs and designing this handbook.



## VERSION OF HANDBOOK

This is the first version of this hand book and it will be subjected to periodic review and improvement by the Stakeholder & Ecotourism Directorate of the Wildlife Division as the need arises. As ecotourism policy and practice changes at global, regional and local scales, the handbook will be revised accordingly to reflect national relevance.



**CHAPTER**

**01**

**INTRODUCTION**

Ghana benefits enormously from tourism as well as impacted by its negative effects. Tourism provides employment and income opportunities for the country but if not managed properly can degrade ecosystems, may raise the cost of living for local people and may degrade local culture. However, Ecotourism which involves conservation and sustainable use biodiversity when implemented effectively through sustainable technologies, the appropriate policy and legal frameworks and the capacity of the stakeholders to manage the impacts, will reduce the negative environmental impacts of tourism and steer development towards sustainability. It is necessary that all forms of tourism are carried out sustainably. Ecotourism is a rapidly growing movement towards creating a greener and more ethical form of tourism worldwide.

The 2012 Forest and Wildlife policy of Ghana has placed emphasis on the non-consumptive values of forest. The Forestry Commission has identified Ecotourism as a strategic tool for both conservation and development. Ecotourism in Ghana is wildlife-based tourism with annual revenues of around \$2.5 million and create employment opportunities for several thousands of people. There are many state and community-led ecotourism attraction sites in the forest and savannah landscapes of Ghana which when properly developed will ensure protection of sensitive environmental locations, minimize environmental impact, generate income opportunities



for local people, and promote learning and cultural understanding of different communities as well as creating awareness of environmental conservation.

However, the full range of benefits that Ecotourism can offer Ghana is yet to be realized. This is partly attributable low investment and capacity in the sector, low diversification as well as ineffective promotion and marketing of ecotourism products and services. There is therefore the need to provide a simple and concise information hand book to all potential users and investors who may be interested in the ecotourism development of Ghana.



## PURPOSE OF THE ECOTOURISM HANDBOOK

This Ecotourism handbook gives an overview and basic information of nature-based tourism in Ghana and the key institutions and their mandates in tourism development. The handbook particularly outlines the Forestry Commission's plans and projects in ecotourism development and promotion for the domestic and international markets.

More importantly, it aims to raise awareness of a suite of ecotourism opportunities in the Forest and Wildlife Protected Areas of Ghana. The handbook also provides some relevant information and guidelines for the development of ecotourism infrastructure in the Protected Areas. It further serves as a guide for tourists, investors, and policy makers and all other stakeholders with interest in Ecotourism in Ghana.



## TOURISM IN THE AFRICAN REGION AND WORLD

**Africa's tourism - current situation and future prospects:** Africa has been one of the world's fastest growing tourism regions, growing a small base of just 14.7 million visitors in 1990, to 26 million international tourists in 2000 and 56 million in 2014. International tourist arrivals in Africa are estimated to have increased by 2% in 2014. In absolute terms, the region welcomed a total of 56 million international tourists. Africa's 2% rise however represents a clear slowdown on tourism demand after years of solid growth. International tourism receipts (+3%) increased by US\$ 1 billion to reach US\$ 36 billion.

The region maintained a 5% share in worldwide arrivals and a 3% share in tourism receipts (WTO, 2015). In North Africa (+1%), international tourist arrivals in leading destination Morocco grew by a modest 2%, following a strong performance in the previous year, while arrivals in Tunisia decreased by 3%. Sub-Saharan Africa grew by an estimated 3% in 2014, based on available information. Arrivals to the sub region's largest destination South Africa (+0%) were flat in 2014. Worth mentioning among the other destinations for which data is reported are Côte d'Ivoire (+24%), Madagascar (+13%), Mauritius (+5%), Zimbabwe (+3%) and the Seychelles (+1%). While many countries in Africa benefited from strong economic growth in their tourism sector, the continent's share of worldwide tourism receipts is relatively modest (WTO, 2015).

Across the globe, Tourism has evolved as one of the most expensive and diverse sectors of our times. Now representing one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors of the world, Tourism contributing about 9% of global GDP. Importantly, supporting the livelihoods of 1 in 11 people worldwide, the sector has become a source of immense opportunity and possibility (WTO, 2015).



# TOURISM in Ghana



Ghana, located in the West African sub region is endowed with very rich resources and is the most democratic and economically stable in the Sub region. Access to Ghana is easy and simple with our state-of-the art international airport that manages airlines from Europe, Asia, America and other African countries. There are local flights that shuttles tourists from the airport to and from areas close to tourist sites. There are buses and hiring vehicles to transport tourists from the airport to tourist sites. Taxis and Uber services are easily available for transportation within and between cities. There are ongoing works for the rehabilitation and expansion of the existing railway system which will enhance movement.

Ghana recorded a total of 897,000 tourists in 2015, ranking 124th in the world in absolute terms. Without including the size of a country, such a ranking list may not be very meaningful. By putting the tourist numbers in relation to the population of Ghana, the result is much more comparable picture: with 0.029 tourists per resident, Ghana ranked 173rd in the world. In Western Africa, it ranked 6th. The 2013 Tourism and Travel Competitive Index Report ranks Ghana in 13th place in sub-Saharan Africa in terms of its competitiveness in travel and tourism.

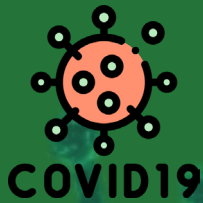
Tourist arrivals continue to increase in Ghana, hitting 1.2 million in 2016. Visits of friends and relatives (VFR) tops at 24.7 per cent whilst business visits stand at 23 per cent. 19 per cent of all visitors to Ghana in 2016 came for holiday. On the tourism expenditure side, 29 per cent of all expenditure by tourists go into accommodation whereas food and beverages take 14 per cent.

Tourists have a wide variety of tourism products to choose from. These include natural, cultural and historical attractions. Ghanaians are well known for their friendly nature especially towards international tourists. Ghana's all

year-round colorful traditional festivals, rich royal regalia such as the kente, fugu and cloths with Adinkra symbols are a sight to behold and experience. We are blessed with warm weather almost all year round and a variety of tasty local dishes. Tourists are welcome to experience culture, warmth and rhythm at the center of the world.

In 2011, Forbes Magazine published that Ghana was ranked the eleventh-most friendly country in the world. The assertion was based on a survey in 2010 of a cross-section of travelers. Of all the African countries that were included in the survey Ghana ranked highest ([www.vibeghana.com](http://www.vibeghana.com). retrieved 3 June 2014). Ghana ranks as the seventieth-most stable country in the world and as the 43rd –most peaceful country out of 163 countries in the world (Global Peace Index, 2020).

## IMPACT OF CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC ON TOURISM IN GHANA



The novel coronavirus (Covid-19) was reported to have emerged from Wuhan in China towards the end of December 2019, and has since spread across the world, affecting some 199 countries and territories as of March 2020. The first two COVID-19 cases were reported in Ghana on 12 March 2020, and has since been escalating. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is expected to have a significant adverse impact on the global economy. Governments around the world are implementing various fiscal measures to mitigate the adverse effect and provide relief for businesses and households. The Minister for Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts, Mrs. Barbara Oteng-Gyasi indicated that the sector has recorded US\$171 million loss due to the pandemic outbreak.

**With about 65% of the global economy currently on some form of lockdown, the impact of Covid-19 is being felt globally in the following ways:**

- Disruptions in global supply chains, with significant supply shortages and consequent price hikes
- Slowdown in investments and remittances and resulting job losses
- Volatility and collapse of stock markets due to uncertainties
- Decline in oil demand leading to decrease in oil prices and cut in revenue for oil exporting countries
- Decline in tourism and international travel and resulting job losses
- Unanticipated increase in health expenditure and resulting upsurge in public debt burden.



### In Ghana, the economic impact of Covid-19 includes the following:

- Hospitality industry adversely impacted due to closure of borders and general slowdown in tourism and demand for international travel
- Decline in trading volumes and values due to disruption in supply chain globally
- Contraction in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows to Ghana due to uncertainties
- Agriculture value chain could be adversely impacted due to disruptions in global supply chain and slowdown in demand as countries adjust
- Mixed impact of Covid-19 on commodity prices, as well as contraction in trade volumes, are likely to result in net loss of revenue to Government
- Shortage in supply of FX due to investor capital flight and decrease in exports could be offset by reduced demand for FX due to decrease in imports, the net effect of which is yet to be assessed

The major step taken by the government of Ghana in the face of COVID-19 is the use of the 3T procedure (Testing, Tracing and Treatment) to help best to know people's health status and know the right line of action. In a bid to reduce the probability of importing more cases of infected persons from outside the country, the government has introduced a lockdown of all borders of the country and equally restricting as much as possible international travels.

All persons living in Ghana have to adhere to mask-wearing, hand-washing, the use of sanitizers, and social distancing protocols that have become part of our daily routine.







## IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM

The tourism industry is a multi-billion dollar one that has been the backbone of state economies. For many developing countries it is one of the main sources of foreign exchange income and a major component of exports, creating much needed employment and development opportunities.

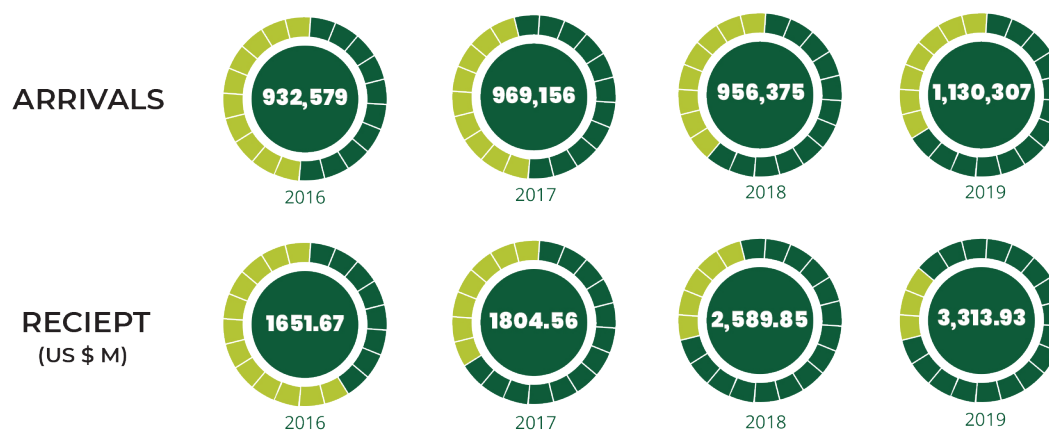
In its annual analysis quantifying the global economic and employment impact of Travel and Tourism in 185 countries and 25 regions, the World Travel and Tourism Council's research reveals that the sector accounted for 10.4% of global GDP and 319 million jobs, or 10% of total employment in 2018. Tourism is a key driver of socio-economic progress through export revenues, job and enterprises creation and infrastructure development.

It has been identified by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) that the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism is a key driver towards the achievement of the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In fact, all the 17 SDGs can be directly or indirectly linked to sustainable and responsible tourism especially, goal 1 (no poverty); goal 3 (good health and well-being); goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities) goal 13 (climate action); goal 14 (life below water); goal 15 (life on land).

Tourism is the fourth foreign exchange earner in Ghana. The contribution of travel and tourism to GDP (% GDP) was 5.5% in 2018 (World Data Atlas, 2018). The tourism sector's contribution to employment, including jobs indirectly supported by the industry was 5.3% of total employment (882,000 jobs). Tourism contributes to the sustainable economic growth and development of Ghana's economy. In 2018, international tourism receipts amounted to US\$ 996,000,000.

## INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS AND RECEIPT 2016-2019

A survey carried out by the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) presenting basic data and indicator recorded to assess the Socio-Economic impact of Inbound and Outbound tourism for the period 2016-2019 is shown in an illustration below;



Source: Ghana Immigration Service and Ghana Tourism Authority

## TOTAL ARRIVALS AT TOURIST ATTRACTIONS /SITES (2016 - 2019)

DESCRIPTION	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%
RESIDENT	403,571	82.89	391,922	77.81	459,594	72.35	464,162	69.35
NON-RESIDENT	403,571	82.89	391,922	77.81	459,594	72.35	464,162	30.65
TOTAL	403,571	82.89	391,922	77.81	459,594	72.35	464,162	100

Source: GTA RME DEPT

## TOP TEN (10) MOST VISITED ATTRACTIONS IN GHANA (2016 - 2019)

Sites	Total Visitation (2016)	Total Visitation (2017)	Total Visitation (2018)	Total Visitation (2019)
Kakum National Park	131,327	118,919	127,752	185,740
Cape Coast Castle	74,440	61,228	74,987	88,124
Kwame Nkrumah Memorial	57,224	56,515	82,262	98,678
Manhyia Palace Museum	49,835	45,053	53,002	60,423
Elimina Castle	44,574	47,306	65,208	69,544
Kintampo Waterfalls	22,659	***	***	18,420
Komfo Anokye Sword	20,754	***	***	10,526
Lake Bosomtwi	21,450	13,770	***	17,088
Kumasi Zoo	18,691	16,770	15,901	51,930
Mole National Park	16,869	17,758	18,387	13,796
Shai Hills Reserve	***	21,369	23,600	***
Aburi Gardens	***	***	27,887	***
Wli Falls	***	***	38,376	***
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>457,823</b>	<b>425,320</b>	<b>527,362</b>	<b>554,719</b>

Source: GTA



# CHAPTER

# 02

## KEY INSTITUTIONS & LEGISLATION IN THE TOURISM SECTOR



## MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC) exists to create a conducive environment for sustainable growth and development of the sector to enable it contribute enormously to GDP through effective and efficient use of appropriate policies, plans, programs and projects. MOTAC also develops and sustains public-private partnership with the Diaspora for resource mobilization and investment.

The core functions of MOTAC include but not limited to the formulation of policies, plans and programs for development and promotion of domestic, regional and international tourism arts and culture; promulgation of legislation and regulations on Tourism, Arts and Culture and co-ordination and collaboration with other Government Agencies, Development Partners, the Private Sector and Non-Governmental organizations on matters concerning Tourism, Arts and Culture.



## GHANA TOURISM AUTHORITY

The Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) was established by the 2011 Tourism Act (Act 817). GTA is the public service agency in charge of regulating tourism in Ghana through marketing and promotion, licensing and classification of tourism facilities and services, research and development.

The GTA is responsible for the implementation and ensure compliance with the regulations developed in accordance with the tourism Act. The GTA grants licenses for the tourism industry, regulate and supervise tourism enterprises. In addition, the GTA ensures the collaboration with public, private and international agencies and advice the minister on critical issues in the tourism sector. The GTA coordinates international fairs for the promotion of Ghana's tourist attractions and attract tourists and investors to Ghana.



## GHANA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

The Ghana Tourism Development Company (GTDC) is the commercial wing of the (MOTCA). GTDC was established in 1972 under the company's Code of 1963 (Act 179) to lead in tourism investment and development. The GTDC was set up mainly to provide financial and technical assistance for small businesses in the tourism sector. GTDC in addition promotes and provides resources for investment in tourist development and services.



## GHANA TOURISM FEDERATION

The Ghana Tourism Federation (GHATOFF) is the private sector umbrella body for tourism organizations in Ghana. It has 25 organizations under its umbrella. These organizations include the Ghana Hotels' Association; Ghana Association of Travel & Tours; Tour Operators Union; Association of Night Clubs and the Tourism Writer's Foundation. In the hotel's sub-sector, the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), which is the government body mandated to regulate the industry estimates that there are about 2,800 hotels registered across the various categories in Ghana.



## FORESTRY COMMISSION

The Forestry Commission, a government agency was established in 1999 by Act 571 to regulate the utilization of forest and wildlife resources, conserve and manage



those resources and coordinate policies related to them. The Forestry Commission is made up of three divisions and two centers, namely; The Wildlife Division, Forest Services Division, Timber Industry Development Division, Forestry Commission Training Center and Resource Management Support Center. The Forestry Commission is under the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources.

However, it also works hand in hand with other ministries and Agencies (Public and Private) like the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Ghana Tourism Authority, Embassies and High Commissions, local & foreign NGOs, Donor communities like the Royal Netherlands Government, EU,

DFID, SNV, Private sector business partners, sponsors, societies, Local communities (especially neighbouring parks & reserves). Visitors to parks & reserves (especially Ghanaian residents), tourists, businessmen, schools, universities, researchers, interest groups, etc.

The Forestry Commission works closely with the aforementioned institutions to effectively deliver its mandate in tourism development and promotion. In the area of international promotion of Ghana's tourism potential and products, the GTA coordinates Ghana's participation in international fairs like the ITB (Berlin), WTM (London), FITUR (Spain), Vakantibeurs (Netherlands) and Matka (Finland). The FC uses such opportunities to market and promote the Commission's tourism estates and potentials. The FC collaborates with MOTAC, GHATOF and GTDC to create the enabling environment for investments and development of Ghana's tourism sector. Regular meetings and discussions are held to address relevant issues whenever the need arises.

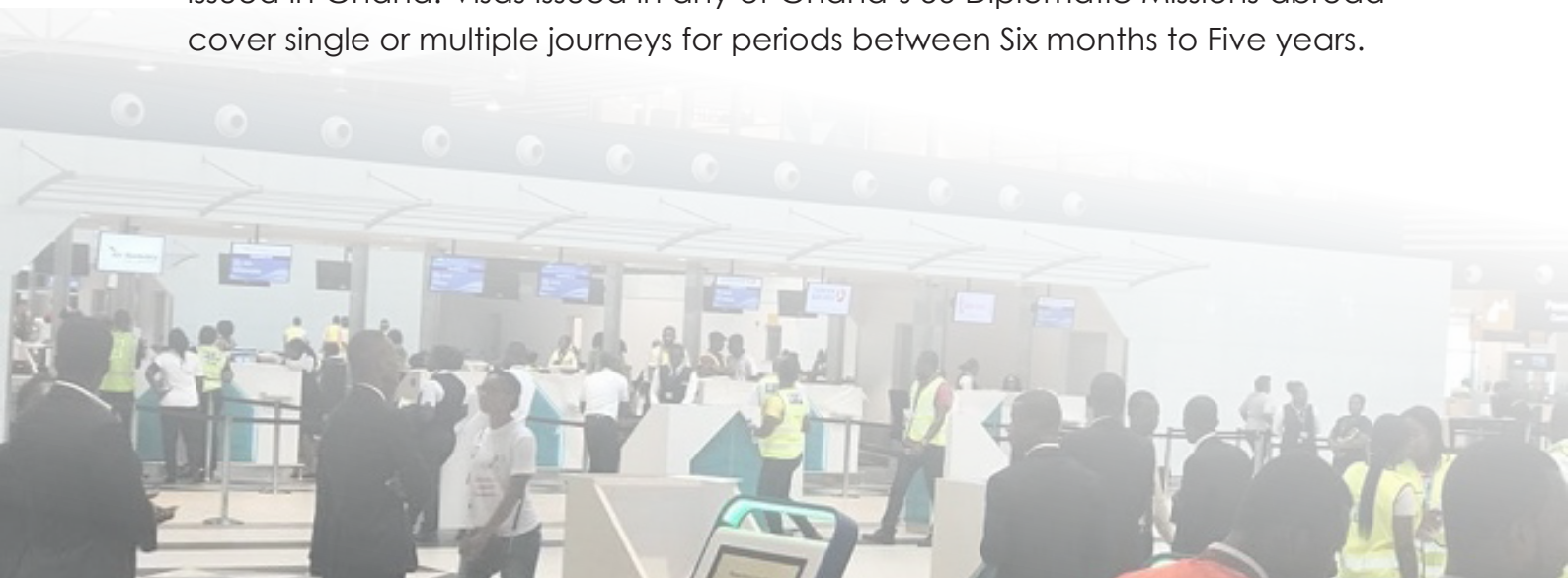


## GHANA IMMIGRATION SERVICE

The Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) is charged with the responsibility of enforcing all the enactments relating to entering, exit, residence and the employment of foreign nationals in Ghana.

The GIS is an agency under the Ministry of Interior. Movement of Ghanaians into and out of the country is also monitored. The two main legislations which govern the country's visa regime are the Immigration Act 2000, (Act 573) and Immigration Regulations 2001 (LI 1691). It's important to note that a person other than a citizen of Ghana must be in possession of a valid passport or other travel document and a valid visa (where necessary) to enter Ghana.

Some countries in West Africa (ECOWAS member states) and some other countries in Africa are exempted from obtaining a visa before entering Ghana. Nationals from African Union member states who are not ECOWAS nationals may obtain a visa on arrival after the payment of the required fees. There are two broad categories of Ghana Visas; those issued outside Ghana and those issued in Ghana. Visas issued in any of Ghana's 56 Diplomatic Missions abroad cover single or multiple journeys for periods between Six months to Five years.





## VISA POLICY FOR GHANA

The visa policy of Ghana determines the requirements and restrictions for nationals of all other countries who are planning a trip to Ghana. Ghana visa law states that there are a few different types of visa that allow travelers to enter the country. The type of visa a visitor to Ghana needs will depend on their nationality, the amount of time they intend to spend, and the purpose of the visit. Citizens of the majority of countries in Africa, as well as some Caribbean territories, can travel to Ghana without a visa or with a visa on arrival, which may be obtained from a border entry checkpoint in the country. The period of time a visa-exempt foreign citizen can spend in the country depends on their nationality and ranges from 60 to 90 days. At the moment, citizens from almost every country outside of Africa must apply for a visa at the nearest Ghanaian diplomatic mission before departure, which will allow them different lengths of stay and purposes depending on their needs. An embassy travel document may be issued as either a tourist visa, work visa, student visa, or business visa, among others.

The Ghanaian government has also announced the upcoming launch of the Ghana eVisa, an electronic visa which will expedite the application protocol and remove the need to obtain a visa from an embassy or consulate.

Please note that visitors holding a Dual Nationality Card issued by Ghana do not need to obtain a visa in advance, but they are required to obtain a pre-arranged visa on arrival.

Browse the link below to see if your nationality requires a visa for entry into Ghana.  
<https://www.onlinevisa.com/visa-policy/ghana/>

### Visa Not Required: Country list

ECOWAS Countries  
Rwanda  
Trinidad and Tobago

Barbados  
Kenya  
Singapore

Eswatiini  
Uganda  
Seychelles

Jamaica  
Mauritius  
Tanzania

Lesotho  
Sudan  
Zimbabwe



## GHANA CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

The Ghana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) is the regulatory agency of the Republic of Ghana for air transportation in the country. The GCAA has been structured into two bodies, the Ghana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) and the Ghana Airports Company Limited (GACL) on 1st January 2007. Under the GCAA Act 678, the functions of GCAA include: Licensing and Certification of Air Transport Operators, Regulation of Air Transport Services and Promoting the Development of Civil Air Transport Industry in Ghana.

## TOURISM ACT AND LEGISLATION IN GHANA

### Tourism (Tourist Sites) Regulations, 2019- L.I. 2393

In exercise of the powers conferred on the Minister responsible for tourism by subsection (1) of section 45 and subsection (1) of section 48 of the Tourism Act, 2011 (Act 817), these Regulations are made this 17th day of December, 2019. This legislative instrument regulates tourism (tourist sites) in Ghana. The Regulation provides for the following among others: (i) classification of tourist sites, (ii) management and minimum requirements for tourist sites, (iii) grades for tourist sites, (iv) records and (v) miscellaneous provisions.







PUNGUSE  
TRAIL

# CHAPTER

# 03

## ECOTOURISM & ITS POTENTIAL IN GHANA

**E**cotourism, according to the Ecotourism Society, is now defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education” (TIES, 2015). Ghana's Tourism Policy states that the type of tourism to be promoted shall be non-mass and shall focus on that which shall respect and conserve the natural, cultural, historical, ecological and environmental heritage. The policy direction of government is to encourage more investments into community based eco-tourism facilities. The elements of a successful ecotourism project include:

- A low impact on the natural resources of the Protected areas
- Involve relevant stakeholders in the planning, development, implementation and monitoring stages.
- Respect local cultures and traditions
- Generate sustainable and equitable income for the local communities
- Generate income for the conservation of Protected Areas



**T**he mission of the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission is the conservation, sustainable management and the development of Ghana's wildlife heritage resources for the socio-economic benefit of all segments of the society, both present and future generations. Through initiatives like the Community Resources Management Areas (CREMA) program, the capacities of local communities are built to support conservation efforts. Apart from the economic benefits obtained by the locals through tourists spending at the tourist sites, the Wildlife Division employs tour guides from the local communities to support tourism and law enforcement in the Protected Areas. This serves as an incentive for the protection and promotion of bio-cultural diversity.

## **ECOTOURISM SITES MANAGED BY THE WILDLIFE DIVISION OF THE FORESTRY COMMISSION**

The Wildlife Division has designated 13,489km<sup>2</sup> (6.2%) of Ghana's total land surface through a system of Protected Areas. There are 7 National Parks, 6 Resource Reserves, 2 Wildlife Sanctuaries, 1 Strict Nature Reserves, 5 Coastal Ramsar Sites and 2 National Zoos (see Table 2). In these reserves tourism activities are carried out in a sustainable manner. The reserves have been zoned to ensure that highly sensitive areas are preserved. To enrich personal experiences and environmental awareness staff are continuously trained in interpretation. Ecotourism development is a safe economic tool for tourism development. There are design standards developed to guide investors in the design and construction of structures within the Protected Areas (Appendix 1).

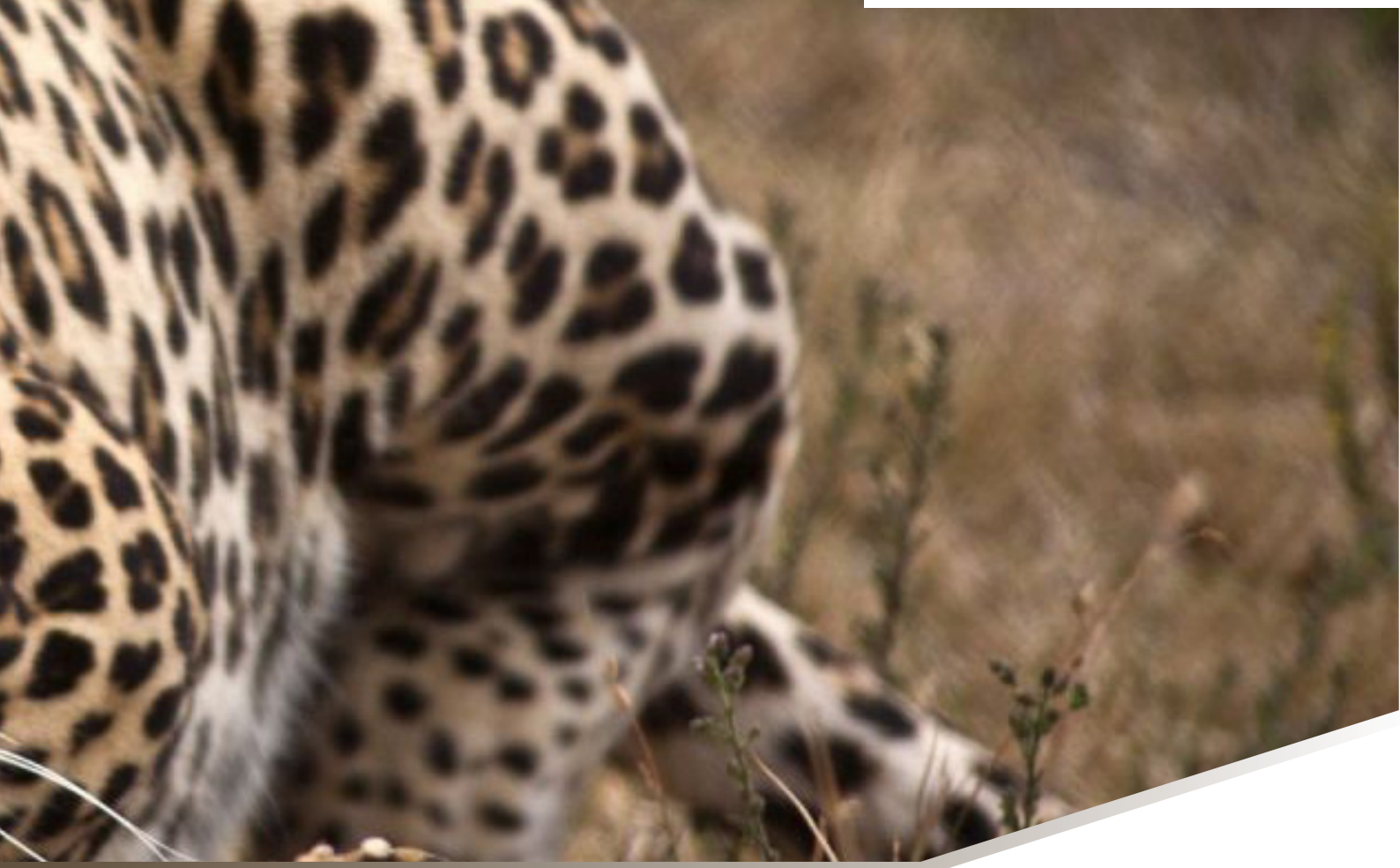


NATIONAL PARKS	SIZE	LOCATION
Mole National Park	4590 km <sup>2</sup>	Savannah Region
Kakum National Park	200km <sup>2</sup>	Central Region
Kyabobo National Park	222km <sup>2</sup>	Oti Region
Digya National Park	3478km <sup>2</sup>	Bono Ahafo/ Ashanti/ Eastern
Bui National Park	1821km <sup>2</sup>	Bono Region
Bia National Park (Conservation Area)	300km <sup>2</sup>	Western North Region
Nini Suhvien National Park	128km <sup>2</sup>	Western Region
RESOURCE RESERVES	SIZE	LOCATION
Assin Atandanso Resource Reserve (Part of Kakum Conservation Area)	150km <sup>2</sup>	Central Region
Shai Hills Resource Reserve	51km <sup>2</sup>	Gt. Accra Region
Ankasa Resource Reserve (Part of Ankasa Conservation Area)	490km <sup>2</sup>	Western Region
Kalakpa Resource Reserve	320km <sup>2</sup>	Volta Region
Gbelle Resource Reserve	565km <sup>2</sup>	Upper West Region
Bia Resource Reserve (Part of Bia Conservation Area)	205km <sup>2</sup>	Western Region
Kogyae Strict Nature Reserve	360km <sup>2</sup>	Ashanti Region
WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES	SIZE	LOCATION
Bomfobiri Wildlife Sanctuary	53km <sup>2</sup>	Ashanti Region
Kogyae Strict Nature Reserve	13km <sup>2</sup>	Ashanti Region
COASTAL RAMSAR SITES	SIZE	LOCATION
Sakumo Ramsar Site	13.64km <sup>2</sup>	Gt. Accra Region
Sakumo Ramsar Site	511.13km <sup>2</sup>	Gt. Accra Region
Keta Lagoon Complex	1010.23km <sup>2</sup>	Volta Region
Densu Delta Ramsar Site	58.93km <sup>2</sup>	Central Region
Muni Pomadze Ramsar Site	94.61km <sup>2</sup>	Central Region
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS	SIZE	LOCATION
Accra Zoo		Gt. Accra Region
Kumasi Zoo	19km <sup>2</sup>	Ashanti Region



## **MOLE NATIONAL PARK**

**S**ituated in the Savannah region of Ghana on savanna and riparian ecosystems at an elevation of 150m, with a sharp escarpment forming the southern boundary of the park, Mole is Ghana's largest wildlife refuge. It is the best location for viewing large savanna animals including elephant, buffalo, waterbuck, kob, roan antelope and hartebeest. The Lovi-Nyanga sector in Mole, is the only location in the wildlife division system where visitors have a realistic opportunity to view large carnivores such as lion, leopard and hyena. Mole is also an excellent bird-watching location with over 300 species identified in the park. At present the guided walks in the park administration/motel area are



the highlight for most visitors to the park. Until recently, only Mole had overnight accommodation inside the protected area system. Since 1993, Mole Motel has been run as a joint venture between wildlife division and GNPC. Other accommodation within Mole is the luxury Zaina Lodge, a public-private-partnership initiative. Visitors to Mole may do a walk safari or drive safari with their own vehicle or rent a vehicle from Neon and Sena Travel and Tour.

Mole has a unique ancient Caravan Route, from Salaga to Wa and beyond to Mali, passed through the heart of what

is now the park. This route was used for trading, and to transport slaves to coastal markets. There is a cave near Gbanwelle camp that was used as a refuge for slaves. Visitors can sit on the lounge behind the Mole Motel and watch mammals watering at the Asibey pools and the Kwomwohlu wetlands area. The Polzen waterfalls, Kparia waterfalls, the Konkori escarpment and the remains of old villages inside the park are also captivating attractions. Villages on the boundary line of the park particularly Jang, Ducie, Larabanga and Bawena, with their flat-roofed architecture and nucleated settlements are fascinating to view.





## KAKUM NATIONAL PARK & ASSIN- ATTANDANSO RESOURCE RESERVE

**K**akum national park/Assin-Attandanso resource reserve is the wildlife division ecotourism success story. Kakum has an excellent visitor center, a celebrated canopy walkway, a series of nature of trail, viewing and tree houses

in the forest, a restaurant and a giftshop. Kakum is also the best heavily publicized protected area in the country. Guides at the Kakum are the best trained and their interpretative skills are generally good. Directional signs are also available .Kakum has benefited from levels of international financial and technical support in its impressive drive to attract the ecotourist.



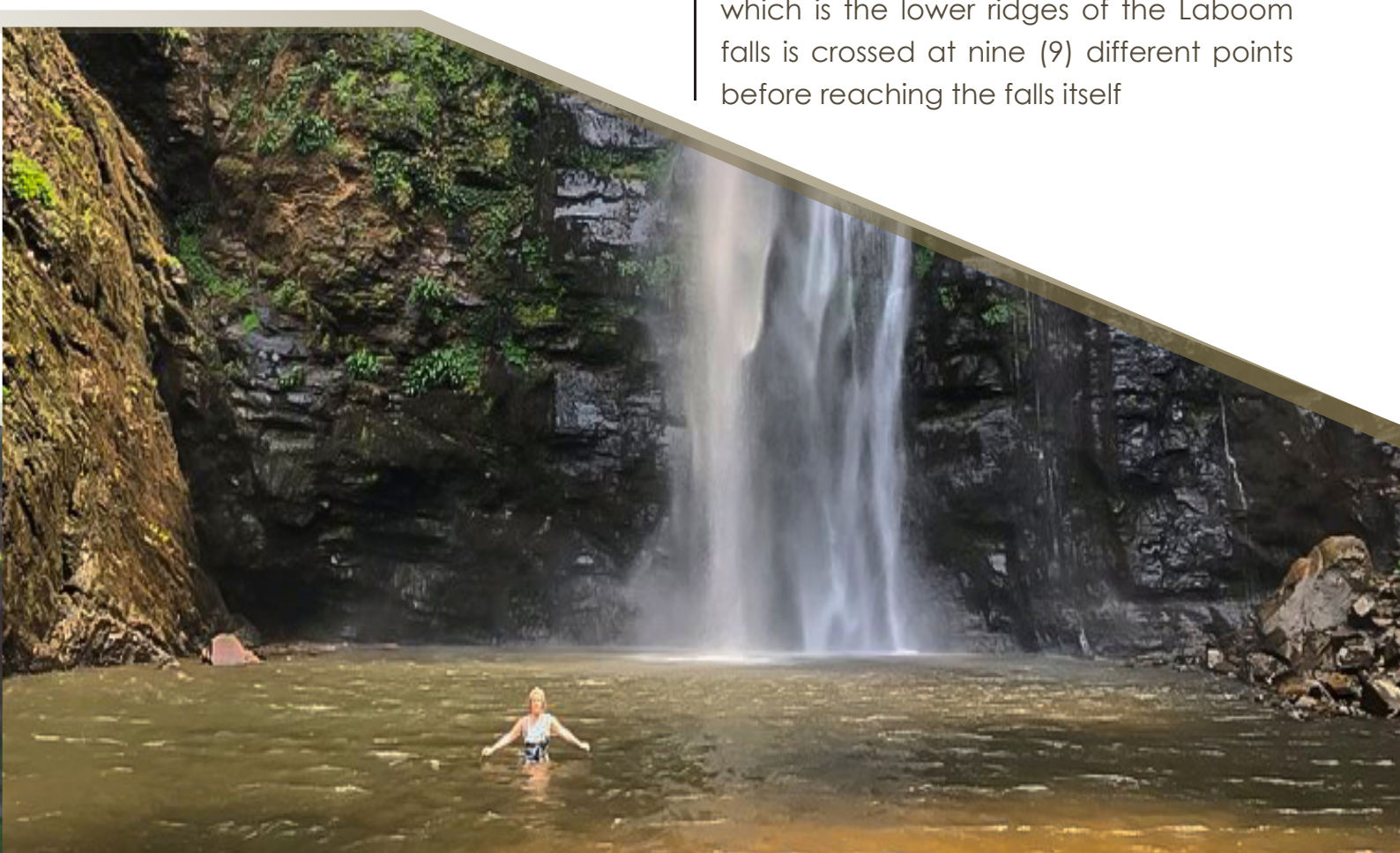


## KYABOBO RANGE NATIONAL PARK

**C**rowned by Mount Kyabobo, Ghana's 2nd highest peak, Kyabobo National Park is one of Ghana's untouched national parks. The name "Kyabobo" comes from an Achode word, meaning "go round" depicting the terrain on the park. Kyabobo has a unique set of ecosystems different from all other wildlife areas in the country. It is one of the best places in Ghana for mountain climbing and biking.

There are foot paths suitable for all ages to explore within this unique ecosystem with several crystal-clear streams generated by the Laboom waterfalls.

The southern portion of the park has steep hills with beautiful views in every direction. Kyabobo holds a wealth of economic trees such as (*Alnblakia-afloribunda*) (locally known as Sonkyea or Gele) an oil plant producing high grade oil which is used in the cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries. In addition, a number of endemic plant species in the area for an enriching and more in-depth experience of the park, the dedicated and knowledgeable guards can share their wealth of information about the natural and cultural wealth of the area. the transitional zone. The higher altitudes provide greater rainfall and moisture conditions resulting in the emergence of several streams. The Laboom stream which is the lower ridges of the Laboom falls is crossed at nine (9) different points before reaching the falls itself







## DIGYA NATIONAL PARK

**D**igya National Park is the second largest national park and the oldest protected area in Ghana. It was created in 1900 and given national park status in 1971. The park is the only wildlife territory in Ghana to have Lake Volta at its borders. Digya National Park covers 3,473 square kilometers and is located in the Ashanti and Bono East Regions of Ghana. The eastern side of the park is bounded by the vast Volta Lake, the largest man-made lake in the world. Two arms of the Volta Lake, the Digya and Obosom rivers curve around the almost peninsular park in the north and south.

Wildlife found in the park includes elephants, buffalos, leopards, waterbucks and bushbucks. There are also several types of duikers and primate species include the mona monkey, black and white colobus, patas monkey, green monkey and olive baboon. Manatees are still found in some arms of the Volta Lake, which makes Digya very special. There are also several snakes

and crocodiles. The nocturnal species of Digya include servals, jackals, genets and civet cats, galagos and pottos. Bird life in Digya is prolific with at least 236 species. Species of interest include the African Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus baeticatus* found nesting on the N. lake-shore, a completely new population and a first for Ghana; the Black-backed Cisticola *Cisticola eximius* found in the same area represents the first mention in Ghana away from the coastal plains. Other species of interest are those from the northern savannas reaching their southern limits in Digya (e.g. Verreaux's Eagle Owl *Bubo lacteus* and Sun Lark *Galerida modesta*), and some of the forest-edge birds in the south-west, such as the little-known Pale-fronted Negrofinch *Nigrita luteifrons*, African Barred Owlet *Glaucidium capense*, and Thick-billed Cuckoo *Pachycoccyx audeberti* which is very common.



## BUI NATIONAL PARK

Located in the Bono and Savanna regions, the 1,821km<sup>2</sup> Bui National Park was created in 1900 and given national park status in 1971. The park's undulating terrain, mostly woodland savannah with dispersed and riverine gallery forests harbour Ghana's largest population of hippos. Birdlife in Bui National Park is very rich, with over 250 species recorded including the very rare white-necked rock fowl [Picathartes]. Besides the hippos, Bui also has elephants, waterbucks, bushbucks, baboons, patas and green monkeys. Other interesting features are caves, lush mountains and water cascades. The caves harbour bat colonies and it's worth waiting to see the sun set over the mountains of Bui. Wildlife experiences offered by Bui National

park therefore centre on mammals and a mountain terrain that add the touch of adventure. The local people celebrate their annual ancestral yam festival in September – October when there is a general home-coming by indigenes domiciled elsewhere to join the festive season. Visitors may also go out in traditional dugouts with local fishermen.

A new hydro-electric dam built in Bui which has significantly alter the geography of the park and create more riverine areas and islands. Tourist activities awaiting you at Bui National Park include game viewing, bird watching, water sports and adventure hiking. Nearby villages may also be visited for true African insights and Ghanaian hospitality.



## BIA NATIONAL PARK & BIA RESOURCE RESERVE

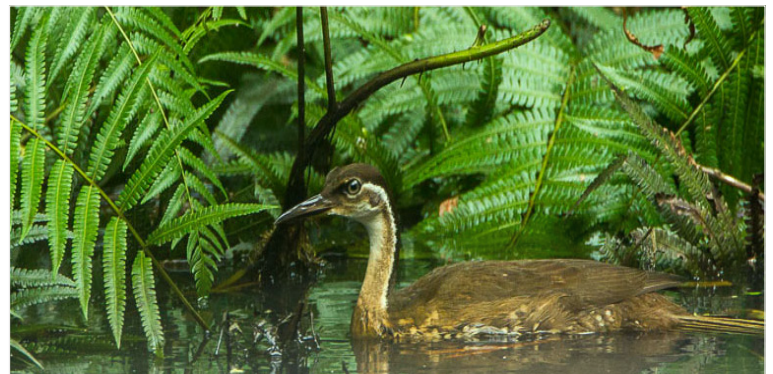
**T**his 306km<sup>2</sup> reserve, composed of a national park and a resource reserve, is an international biosphere reserve park. The reserves are situated in the transition between the moist evergreen and semi-deciduous tropical forest. 62 species of mammals known to occur in

this undisturbed forest, including 3 species of colobus, chimpanzee, forest elephant and the highly threatened bongo. Over 160 species of birds are known including the threatened white breasted guinea fowl.



## NINI-SUHYIEN NATIONAL PARK AND ANKASA RESOURCE RESERVE

**T**his conservation area made up of the Ankasa Resource Reserve and the Nini-Suhyien National Park, derives its name from the Ankasa River, clean-cool water running over a beautiful ragged terrain and with several all inspiring cascades. Nini-suhyien national park and Ankasa resource reserve cover 509km<sup>2</sup> of intact wet evergreen forest, a zone of botanical richness with up to 300 plant species in a single hectare. Time has stood still for the Ankasa Conservation Area, a remnant of the pristine Guinean



Forests of West Africa, which spans across the entirety of West Africa and descends into Congo Basin along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. This beautiful forest has the most biological diversity in Ghana, with about 800 vascular plant species including Ghana's sole endemic forest genus *Psychotria ankensis*, 639 butterfly species, and more than 190 bird species. Animal life includes the elephant, bongo, leopard, chimpanzee, Diana monkey, and other primates. Bird watching and hiking can be enjoyed in the serenity of the forest that time forgot.



## SHAI HILLS RESOURCE RESERVE

**A** short drive east of Accra; Ghana's capital city on routes to the world's largest man-made lake at Akosombo is the Shai Hills Resource Reserve. The reserve combines nature conservation and archeological sites of cultural interest with most impressive

scenic views of the Accra plains. Wide open grass plains and backdrop of hills, scattered trees, shrubs, herbs, climbers and epiphytes play host to a wide variety of wildlife including the kob, green monkey, spot-nose monkey and olive baboon. Within the Hills are some spectacular caves; prominent among them are Adwuku and Sayou caves. These caves were the abode of the Shai people since the late Stone Age period until they were dislodged by the colonial Army in 1892. Visitors can enjoy the park's cultural sites, picnic sites, overnight campsites, climbing routes and the walking trails for hikers.



## KALAKPA RESOURCE RESERVE

The reserve is located in the southeastern part of the Country, about 120 kilometers northeast of the capital Accra and about 30 kilometers south from the Volta Regional capital, Ho. The 320km<sup>2</sup> protected area was gazetted in 1975 by government, located on the foothills of the Togo Mountains in the Ho Municipal Area. Before this area was gazetted as a reserve, it served mainly as preferred hunting area for expatriates in Ghana. The landscape has an attractive variety of savanna grassland with riverine woodland, isolated hills covered with dry forest.

In this reserve you can find, apart from lions and elephants, a variety of buffaloes, antelopes, baboons and smaller mammals in the reserve. The bird world is worth seeing here. The reserve also boasts many butterfly species.





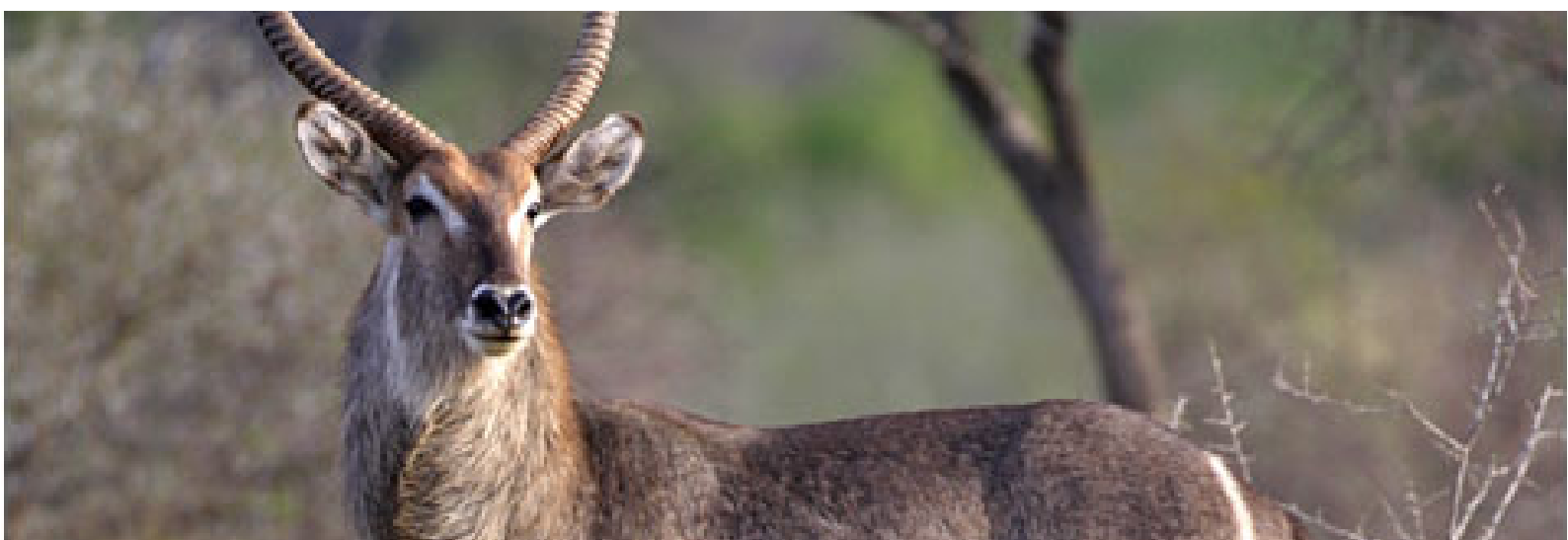
## GBELE RESOURCE RESERVE

**G**bele in the Upper West region is the wildlife protected area of Ghana closest to Burkina Faso on a trans-boundary migratory route for elephants and other mammals to and from the Naziga Game Ranch. Gbele is 565km<sup>2</sup> and lies partly in the areas of Wa, Nadowli and Tumu and is 61km from Tumu and 89km from Wa. The vegetation of Gbele Resource Reserve is open savannah woodland and is mainly associated with roan antelope, hartebeest, bushbuck, waterbuck, savannah duikers and warthogs. Gbele is also home to baboon, patas, green monkey and more.

There is also a very rich birdlife with a total of 194 species. The avifauna has a rich Sudanian component, with 30 Sudanian biome species recorded (a large proportion of the total occurring in Ghana). Species of special interest include Willcocks's Honeyguide Indicator willcocksii, found in riparian thickets (a considerable extension of

range to the north), the rare Gambaga Flycatcher *Muscicapa gambagae*, and Black-headed Weaver *Ploceus melanocephalus*. Breeding evidence for the N. Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicus* and the high density of Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinus capensis* are also worth noting. Gbele is one of only three wildlife reserves where the rare Yellow-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus africanus* is recorded.

Main tourist activities are game viewing, bird watching and nature walk/hiking. Other interesting features include rock outcrops. While out of the park one may visit the slave defence wall at Gwollu (30km), fishing activities and Nazinga Game Ranch in Burkina Faso (80km). Interesting communities near Gbele that you must visit include Gwollu, where there are slave defence walls, the tomb of the Late President Hilla Limann, the Gwollu palace and libido-restoration clinic. There is also a traditional bone-setting clinic at Gwollu. You may also visit the slave market and museum. Gbele has a tented camp for its visitors.





## KOGYAE STRICT NATURE RESERVE

Established in 1971, Kogyae, which has an area of 386 sq. km is located in a transitional semi-deciduous forest zone with tracts of open woodland and grassland. Among the mammals are buffaloes, monkeys, civet cats, occasional elephants and 85 species of birds including hornbills and francolins are present. This reserve is at the site of two traditional areas Kumawu and Kwamang which joined forces to fight invading enemies in one of their last victorious tribal wars. This area is this considered sacred to the local community.

The reserve is also used in research and other ecological studies that are aimed at protecting the biodiversity of the region.



## BOMFOBIRI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Bomfobiri Wildlife Sanctuary is located 50km from Kumasi on generally good roads. The habitat of the reserve has been severely scarred by the bush fires of the early 1980s and wildlife populations in the area are at low levels. Nevertheless, the area offers interesting terrain for hiking and camping, and would be particularly useful if marketed as a school field trip destination. Due to its proximity to Kumasi, it is good for day-trip destination.





## OWABI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

This sanctuary of 13km<sup>2</sup>, centered on an old reservoir, was gazetted in 1971, and declared a Ramsar site in 1988. The water body is ringed by secondary forest which shelters several primates and antelope species, including black duiker. The reservoir water supports an interesting diversity of residents and migrant waterfowl while the forest shelters hornbills, turacos and parrots among others. The reservoir supplies water to Kumasi.

Owabi Wildlife Sanctuary is the perfect 'nature experience' for the urban family and the tourist alike. It offers opportunities to see monkeys, go on nature walks, visit a bamboo forest and watch aquatic and forest species of birds.







## SAKUMO LAGOON RAMSAR SITE

**S**akumo Lagoon is located west of Tema in the Greater Accra Region, and covers 13.6km<sup>2</sup>. Seventy species of water birds have been recorded, with the total population estimated at 30,000. Thirteen fish species belonging to 13 genera and 8 families occur. The black chin tilapia (*Sarotherodon melanotheron*) constitutes about 97% of the fish population. Three

species of marine turtles' nest on the beaches, i.e. Olive Ridley turtle, green turtle and leatherback turtles.

Lagoon and marine fishing mainly involve tilapia, horse mackerel and the blue-legged swing crab. The chief priest, who is the custodian of the lagoon, officially closes the lagoon to public activity to perform purification rituals. These days of informal closure are usually after the market, and are observed by all local communities. This local tradition takes away some of the pressure on natural resource utilization.



## MUNI POMADZE RAMSAR SITE

**M**uni Pomadze is located within the Awutu, Efutu, Senya and Gomoa districts of the Central Region, and covers 9,461 ha. The site is particularly important for terns, and supports an estimated population of 23,000 water birds, comprising 27 species of waders, 8 species of terns and 7 species of herons and egrets. There are 114 species

of terrestrial birds and several species of mammals. Three species of marine turtles nest on the beaches, i.e. Olive Ridley turtle, green turtle and leatherback turtle.

An important socio-cultural activity is the hunt for bushbuck using bare hands during the annual Aboakyer festival of the people of the Effutu Traditional Area. As a traditional conservation activity, and to support the festival, for the remainder of the year, the chiefs and elders restrict the normal hunting of bushbuck. Prior to the formal opening of the lagoon, there is a 2-3 week ban on fishing in (May June). Fishing is not allowed on Wednesdays.



## SONGOR LAGOON RAMSAR SITE

**S**ongor Lagoon covers 51,113 ha in the Dangbe East district of the Greater Accra Region. The area supports a seashore bird population estimated at 100,000, and 3 species of marine turtles, i.e. Olive Ridley turtle, green turtle and leatherback turtle. Stands of mangroves (*Rhizophora racemosa* and *Avicennia africana*) are found along creeks.

Birding watching, seasonal turtle watch, boating, wildlife viewing are some tourist activities. Tourists can partake in agro-tourism activities of marine fishing, lagoon fishing for tilapia and crab, cultivation and visits to cassava, maize, tomatoes, okra, pepper, beans, onions and watermelons farm. If you happen to be around in the dry season, tradition salt production is a key activity.





## DENSU DELTA RAMSAR SITE

**D**ensu Delta is located 11 km west of Accra in the Greater Accra Region, and covers 5,893 ha. The area supports 57 species of seashore birds, with an estimated population of 35,000, and 15 species of fish belonging to 14 genera and 9 families, with *Sarotherodon melanotheron* and *Tilapia zillii* as the dominant fish species. Three species of marine turtles' nest on the beaches, i.e. Olive Ridley turtle, green turtle and leatherback turtle. Scattered stands of mangrove (*Avicennia africana*) occur at the site.

Densu Delta is contiguous with the Accra Metropolitan Area, and is urbanizing at a

rapid pace. With Bortianor as the largest township. Land uses comprise large-scale commercial salt mining, lagoon fishing for tilapia and the blue-legged swimming crab, and arable agriculture involving the cultivation of cassava, maize and vegetables. Other common activities are quarrying of stones, clay and sand winning, and settlement and industrial development. The chief priest, who is the custodian of the lagoon, officially closes the lagoon to public activity to perform purification rituals. All local communities observe these days of informal closure.



## KETA LAGOON RAMSAR SITE

**K**eta Lagoon, also called Anlo-Keta lagoon, is the largest of the over 90 lagoons that cover the 550 km stretch of the coastline of Ghana. This lagoon is 126.13 km in length. It is located in the eastern coast of Ghana and separated from the Gulf of Guinea by a narrow strip of sandbar. This open salty water is surrounded by flood plains and mangrove swamps. Together they form the Keta Lagoon Ramsar site which covers 1200 km<sup>2</sup>

There is seasonal inflow of sea water during high tide from the Gulf of Guinea and regular inflow of rivers. The rivers which drain into the lagoon include the Aka, the Tordzi River and Belikpa stream which enter the lagoon from the north. The lagoon is surrounded by many settlements. The lagoon is important in conserving several species of mangroves, crabs, shrimps and raffia plants.

The Keta lagoon is the most important wetland on the Ghana coast for waterbirds and together with Songor Lagoon constitutes the fourth most important waterbirds site on the Gulf of Guinea coast. The site supports 76 waterbird species with an estimated total population of well over 100,000, including globally significant numbers of 21

species. The site is particularly important for waders, supporting almost one third of the estimated East Atlantic Flyway population of *Tringa erythropus*. Other species which occur in large numbers at the site include *Calidris ferruginea*, *C. minuta*, *Himantopus himantopus*, *Dendrocygna viduata*, as well as several heron and egret species. The most important parts of the lagoon for waterbirds are the Fiahor, Woe, Tegbi, Adina and Afiadenyigba sections.

This Lagoon is the most important water bird site along the entire Ghana coast with a record of 72 species of resident and migratory birds. The Keta Lagoon and its surrounding wetlands qualifies as an internationally important wetland under the Ramsar criteria by virtue of its total bird population of around 110,000 and the fact that it supports internationally important eight species of migratory waders.

The Anlo- Keta area abounds in native culture and tradition. Bird watching, turtle watching, lagoon swimming, sailing and fishing, cycling, beach volleyball and jogging are recreational activities for tourists. Do forget to join and learn native dances such as agbadza, gahu, atsiagbekor, babasiko and misago. Salt mining is also a special skill of tourist attraction.

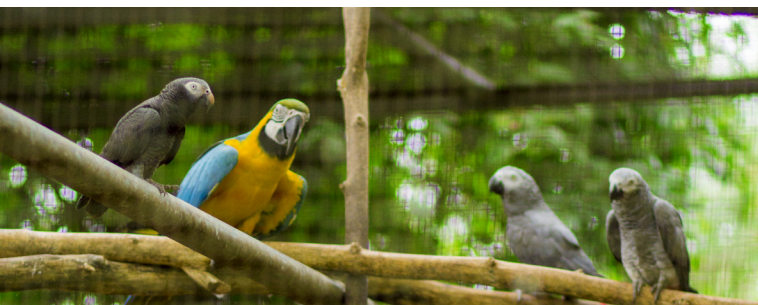


## ACCRA ZOO



The original Accra Zoo was founded in 1961 by the first president of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. The Zoo was then privately owned and only a few educational visits were allowed. Public access was allowed in 1967, when the Wildlife Division started managing it. At present, the Accra Zoo is located within the Achimota Forest Reserve near the Dzorwulu Roundabout

close on the N1 Highway. The zoo plays a very important role in educating the public about wildlife in general and endangered species. Animals are on display in close to natural enclosures which affords the animals space to move freely in their cages. Animals on display include the lion, wide variety of species of birds of both local and foreign origin, reptiles, different species of primates, warthogs and duikers.





## KUMASI ZOO

The Kumasi Zoo was established in July, 1957 and is the premier national Zoo in Ghana. It is situated in a natural marshland which serves as the source of the Subin River in Kumasi. It's history dates back to the early 1950s when the late Dr. A.A.Y. Kyeremanteng, the then Ashanti Regional Director of the National Cultural Centre and Mr. George Cansdale, the colonial representative brought up the idea of preserving the cultural and wildlife

heritage of the Ashanti Kingdom and the nation as a whole. The Zoo serves as a place for Conservation Education, Tourism, Rehabilitation of Rescued orphaned and stray wild animals, Scientific Research (human-wildlife disease dynamics), and Cultural Heritage as it preserves some animals that enable people to connect with their culture.

**The Zoo currently has over 150 animal exhibits including reptiles, rodents, and different primates.**





## ECOTOURISM SITES MANAGED BY THE FOREST SERVICES DIVISION OF THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

### ABASOMBA FOREST RESERVE

**The Abasomba Forest was reserved in 1927 and belongs to the Awutu Papaase stool covering an area of 1.5km<sup>2</sup> with a perimeter of 3.48 kilometers.**

It has a forest condition score of one and is mostly intact on an undulating land with scattered rocky hills. The name is derived from a group of four rocks. Three of which are arranged like a typical Ghanaian village tripod locally called mmukyia with the larger one lying on top of the other forming a cave underneath. It also has a

long stretch of rocks seated on top of the hills of the reserve. One side of the rock is shaped like a cave and is a potential tourist site. It is believed that the first settlers of the area ground their maize on top of this cave. Annual rituals are performed by the people of Essuman at the site of the cave. Tuesdays and Fridays are considered to be the resting days of the gods of Abasomba. It is a taboo for anybody to enter the reserve on these days.

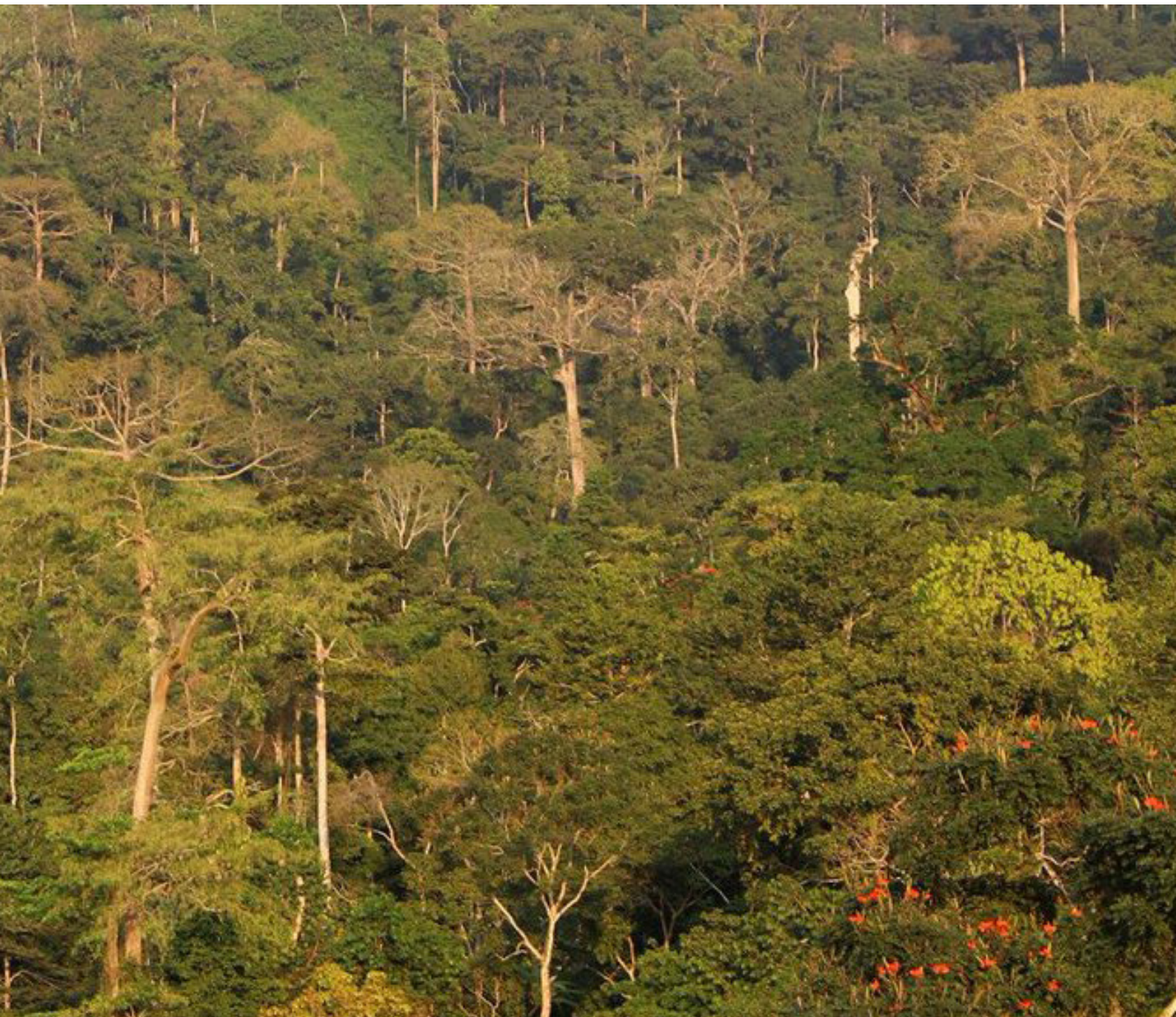


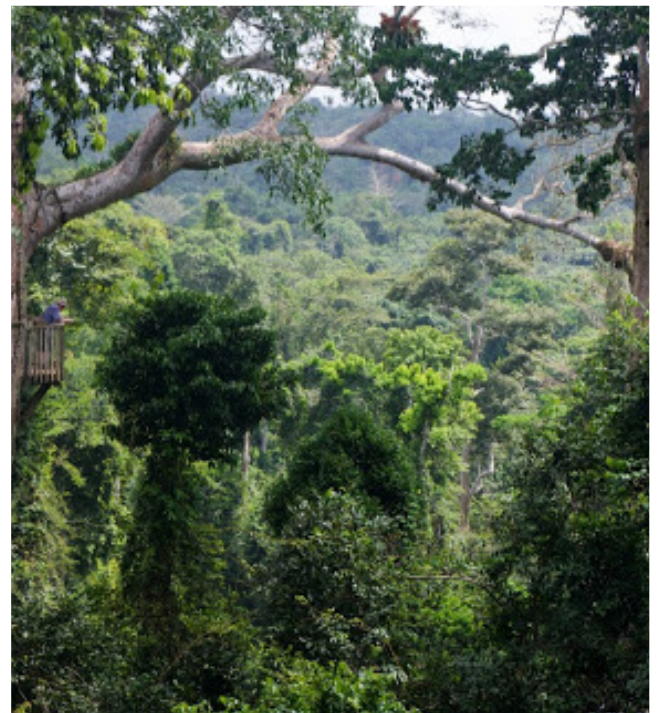
## AHIRASU I & II

**The Ahirasu I & II was reserved in 1927 and belongs to Ofadaa. It covers an area of 3.30km<sup>2</sup> and a perimeter of 4.16 kilometers. Tree species found in the reserve is Triploclition scleroxylon.**

Ahirasu forest reserve derives its name from a rock in the forest which holds small pockets of water. This water is said to serve the communities around.

Though the water looks very small, it is believed to be inexhaustible. Several buckets of water could be fetched at a time from the small pocket of water collected in the rock. The rock gods abhor any red item. The belief is that a snake will chase anybody who goes there in red attire. Friday is a taboo for Ahirasu I & II Forest Reserves.





## OBOTUMFO FOREST RESERVE

The Obotumfo forest reserve on the other hand belongs to the Agona Kwanyako stool and it was reserved in 1930 with an area of 1.3km<sup>2</sup>.

The forest reserve derived its name from a rock used as a shrine near the reserve. The land owners perform rituals at the shrine

whenever it is deemed necessary. The shrine is visited whenever there is a need to pacify it or thank the gods for something it has done for the community or the land owners. Friday is the taboo day and no entry is allowed into the forest.

## AKRABONG FOREST RESERVE

**The Akrabong forest reserve was reserved in 1930 and belongs to the Agona Kwanyako Stool. The Gold Coast appointed a Reserve Settlement Commissioner in 1929 for the purpose of its constitution.**

The Akrabong forest is believed to have several gods and a river called "OSONO AGUAREYE" literally means "elephants bath house" and it is believed that elephants used to bath in that river. The community

elders and chiefs perform their rituals at the shrine within the reserve annually. It is therefore believed that the forest is the abode of their gods. Inhabitants of the surrounding village do not enter the forest on Friday which is a taboo day.





## **APRA HILLS FOREST RESERVE**

**The Apra Hills is located in the Awutu Effutu Senya District in the Central Region of Ghana. The area lies between latitude 5° 35' N and 5° 30' N, and longitude 0° 30' and 0° 35' W, and covers a total land area of 226 ha.**

The area is made up of two adjacent West and Eastern hills. Vegetation type in the area falls within the Southern Marginal

forest type of Hall and Swaine and the forest reserve is one of best remaining patches of this forest type in Ghana. If one goes there early in the morning, one finds monkeys. There is a seasonal waterfall, falling on natural stone steps during rainy seasons.



## THE BIG TREE (ESEN APAM FOREST RESERVES)

The 'Oda Big Tree' is of the Bako species with *Tieghemella heckle* as its botanical name. The big tree is one of the prominent, astonishing and outstanding tourist attractions in the Birim Central and for that matter Ghana. It is located in the Esen Apam Forest Reserves, about 22 kilometers from Akim Oda on the Oda-Agona Swedru trunk road. The tree is believed to be the biggest in West Africa with a diameter of 3.22 meters at 1.37 meters, 2.72 meters at 3.1 meters, making 12 metres in circumference and 66.5-90 metres tall. It also has a girth of 10.11 meters at 1.4 meters and 8.63 meters at 3.1 meters.

The few available species are conserved through management intervention. This is because of the high demand of that unique type of tree species due to its durably hard and unusual cylindrical shape. The tree also has a low natural regeneration success rate which has also contributed to the likelihood of its extinction.

This magnificent tree is believed to be about 400 years old. The tree serves as a heritage object and an object of worship and has been reserved over the years. Typical of the African setting, especially

Ghana, many spiritual myths surround the existence of the tree. It is believed that the tree was first discovered by a hunter named Yaw Andoh from Akim Asanteman, several years ago.

Several attempts made to cut and/or uproot the miraculous tree has resulted in casualties for the victims. Legend has it that, traditionalist from Akim Asanteman who attempted to cut the tree down, died a few days after the attempt. In the year 1930, a farmer who also attempted to burn the tree by setting fire around it, died later. In 1966 too, a chain saw operator by name Antieh is said to have succeeded in cutting down the tree but it was believed to have mysteriously reinstated to its original position after three days. The operator is believed to have died later on. After all the mysterious events, the tree is now an ancestral home for the people of Akim Asanteman. It is also a spectacular tourist attraction in the country. The tree is a holy site where natives of Akim Asanteman pay homage to their ancestors and the spirit of the tree during their annual festival.

## CAPE THREE POINTS RESERVE

**Cape Three Points Forest Reserve is the last tropical forest reserve on the coast of West Africa, located near Princes Town in the Ahanta West District of the Western Region of Ghana. The site was declared a forest reserve in 1949. The forest reserve of Cape 3 Points covers an area of 51km<sup>2</sup>. The scenic beauty of the area and proximity of forest to the sea about 3 km from the coast, make it nationally unique.**

The site has a series of small hills with altitudes varying between 91–152m and is drained by only one river, the Nyan. The eastern part of the reserve adjoins rubber plantations and there are farms in the surrounding unreserved forest, while seven occur in the reserve itself. Although there has been some illegal felling of trees for fish smoking, a large proportion of the reserve (some 3,200 ha of the northern part) remains intact. The reserve has been extensively studied botanically, with plant collections dating from as far back as 1780.

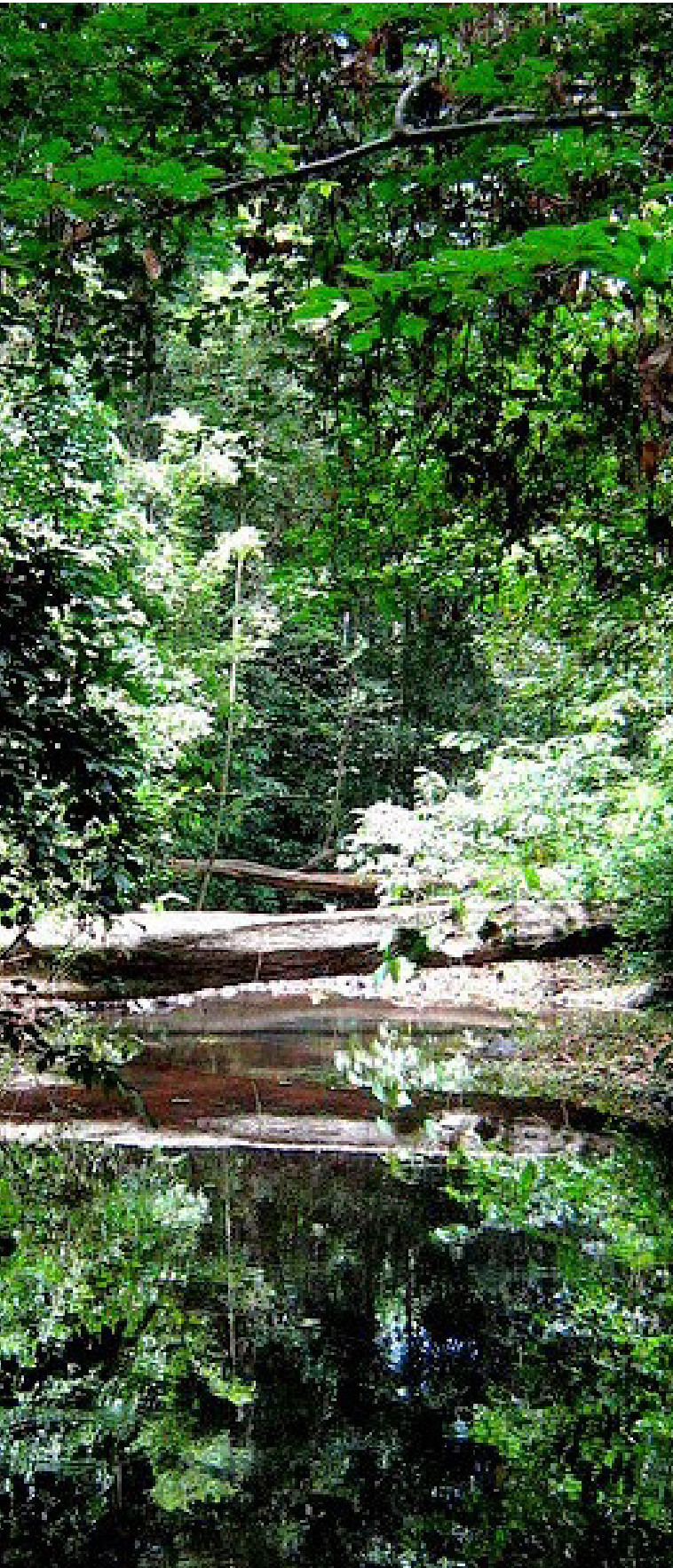
Although relatively small, Cape Three Points reserve supports an interesting avifauna and is one of the relatively few sites from where *Ceratogymna elata* was recorded.

Mammals reported include *Cercocebus atys lunulatus*, *Cercopithecus diana roloway* and *Tragelaphus eurycerus*.

A drive to Cape Three Points takes visitors through several rural communities, oil palm plantations and an extensive rubber plantation which was originally planted by Ghana's first president, some sixty years ago. Visitors view at first-hand how fresh rubber is collected from the rubber trees, before being part-processed in Ghana and shipped to Europe. Between the views of crop farms and rubber plantations, visitors



might have a bit of luck and run into a group of monkeys. If not, visitors will see a wide variety of trees, birds and butterflies that inhabit this area. Visitors can climb the solar-powered 1925 lighthouse and



enjoy breath-taking panoramic views, amid commentary supplied by the affable lighthouse caretaker. Afterwards, you can relax, sunbathe or have a picnic beside the lighthouse, while enjoying the sound of the waves lapping against the rocks. See the remains of the old 1875 lighthouse situated in the southern point of the peninsula. This old lighthouse is a fantastic place to admire the landscape, and even catch a glimpse of the whales (August-February), and dolphins (July-November) that use this sea route during their migration. Visitors may also see a squirrel or two frolicking around.

With a trained local tour guide, visitors can tour Cape Three Points village (also known as 'Atinkyin') for an encounter with local community life. View the traditional livelihood activities of this fishing and farming community, and see the fascinating traditional architecture featuring mud, bamboo and palm.

Hiking the lush green Cape Three Points Forest Reserve, trekking through the forest trails to explore the rich biodiversity of this tropical rainforest, enjoying the identification of the flora, and learning about the various medicinal plant applications. Viewing the nocturnal nesting of the endangered sea turtles from October to December each year, although they may arrive any time between August and March. Visitors can also join experienced fisher folk on a high sea fishing expedition in a wooden dugout canoe with outboard motor.



## ATEWA RANGE FOREST RESERVE

**The Atewa Range Forest Reserve of about 23,663 ha, is unique because it contains Upland Evergreen forest. Over the last 90 years, Atewa has been recognized as an important reservoir of biodiversity. It was officially classified in various ways as a national forest reserve in 1926, a Special Biological Protection Area in 1994, a Hill Sanctuary in 1995 and as one of Ghana's 30 Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas (GSBAs) in 1999. In 2001, Atewa was listed as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by BirdLife International.**

Atewa has also been recognized as a nationally important reserve because the Atewa Range provides the headwaters of three river systems, the Ayensu River, the Densu River and the Birim River. These three rivers are the most important source of domestic and industrial water for local communities as well as for many of Ghana's major population centres, including Accra. The Atewa Range Forest Reserve is part of the Upper Guinea Forest ecosystem. This type of forest ranks among the world's 34 most important biodiversity Hotspots. The Atewa Range plant communities are classified by botanists as Upland Evergreen forest. Atewa is one of only two such forests in Ghana, and is known to be very rich and unique. There are 765 different species of

vascular plants known from Atewa, including 106 Upper Guinea endemic species. No other place in the world has this rich combination of plants species and biological communities.

A large terrestrial fern, which can grow up to 8 m high, with individual fronds ("leaves") as long as 3.4 m. This species is very rare in West Africa, and occurs only in cool, humid places at higher elevations, up to 2000 m above sea level. Other fauna species is the earthstar, a beautiful fungus, with a fruiting body resembling a star. The "petals" of the earthstar protect the softer, round spore sack during dry weather, but open up and curl backwards when moistened, lifting up the spore sack, and allowing the fungus to release spores more effectively.

The Atewa Range Forest Reserve is one of the most important bird sites in Africa. It is classified as an Important Bird Area, with over 150 species recorded within its borders. Six of these species are of conservation concern, being ranked as either Vulnerable or Near Threatened, and one species (Nimba Flycatcher) occurs nowhere else in Ghana. The forests of Atewa are home to a wide range of rare and threatened forest mammal



species. Over 40 species have been recorded from Atewa, including 6 species of primates (monkeys and bush babies), pangolins, civets, and duikers.

Over 30 species of amphibians are known from Atewa, and all are typical of healthy, undisturbed forests. Almost a third of all amphibian species in Atewa are considered threatened, and their populations in this forest are some of the last ones remaining in the world.

Despite their small size, insects and other invertebrates are the most important animals in the Atewa forests. The forests of Atewa harbour probably tens of thousands of species of insects and other invertebrates, some still unknown to science. Recent scientific expeditions to Atewa discovered several new species of butterflies, katydids, dragonflies, and other small animals.





## **ONGWAN II FOREST RESERVE**

**Ongwan II Forest Reserve** popularly known as “Atwea mountain” is a unique mountainous reserve, famous for its attraction of Christian pilgrims. The reserve is an established religious destination with the nature and height of the cliff formation making it a famous site for praying and waiting on God by most Christians, as mountains have significance in the bible, and play a vital role with regards to prayers in Christianity.

The forest undergrowth and thicket, hilly and mountainous ridges is home to animal species such as the bush buck, duikers, snakes, etc, combined with rich bird life. The rock formations and a seasonal water fall, constitute unique attractions for ecological tourism in the reserve. The undulating terrain of the area is suitable for hiking, abseiling, mountain biking and climbing.



## **BOTI FALLS FOREST RESERVE**

**The reserve covers the head of a vault in the valley of the River Pawmpawm where the valley sides are very steep, The River Pawmpawm is the only river that run through the reserve. The reserve forms part of the moist semi deciduous type. The forest is open in the upper canopy with the emergent trees fairly scattered. The lower canopy is interspersed with dense undergrowth of *Chromolaena odorata*, other shrubs and grasses. There is a dual management between the Forestry Commission and the District Assembly (Yilo Krobo) in the management of the waterfall within the forest reserve.**

The following species were believed to be present in the reserve, Royal antelope, bush buck, rabbits, rats and bush pigs. Preservation of the forest cover was for protecting the very steep hill slopes at the head of the valley from erosion and to help protect the water supplies of the Pawnpawm river and also to maintain the natural beauty. There is a shrine located in the reserve, which is much of value to the people of Boti.

River Pawnpawm which forms the falls takes its source from Ahenkwa-Amalakpo before falling over an igneous rock outcrop at the Boti Langmase. That is how the falls get its name. The fall was hidden in the forest until it was discovered by a white catholic priest. It is recounted by locals that the priest used

the base of the falls as an entertainment ground for his friends and himself.

There are actually two falls at Boti: The upper falls and the lower falls. These are the main features of the Boti Falls. The locals describe it as male and female. When the volume of water is high especially during the rainy season, the two meets in what the local describe as 'a mating ceremony'. This ceremony is 'graced' by the rainbow that is formed by the splashing water. To get to view this beautiful 'mating' ceremony, visitors will have to descend over 70 steps. The steps offer a timely exercise for people who have not had an exercise in a long time and the plunge pool formed at the base of the falls should provide a refreshing cooling down effect for those who want to take a bath.

Another feature of this reserve is the Umbrella Rock overhang on the top is large enough to cover 12 to 15 people. The umbrella rock was found by a hunter and up to date has been a site to behold. The rock is held by little rocks and provides good shade whilst viewing the mountain. Even though the pivot on which the top rock lies on might seem small, it's very strong.

# OTHER ECOTOURISM SITES NOT MANAGED BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

There are other important ecotourism sites in Ghana which are not under the direct management of the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission. These sites are briefly described as follows:



## **PAGA CROCODILE POND**

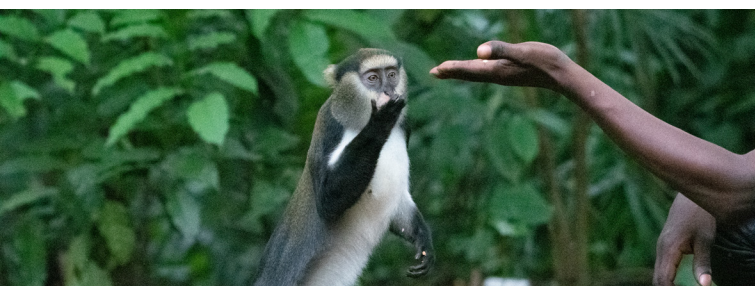
Located in the north-eastern border of Ghana, Paga is a sacred crocodile sanctuary. Although crocodiles are considered as wild creatures, the Paga crocodiles are friendly and coexist with humans. The friendly relationship between the crocodiles and humans continue to baffle the minds of many. This is in contrast to the perception of crocodiles

as dangerous. It is a customary offence to harm, kill or show any sign of disrespect to the crocodile of Paga. It is not uncommon to find children and or visitors sitting at the back of or holding the tale of a crocodile without any harm, after a sacrifice of fowl. This is normal for the people of Paga but a mystery to visitors.

## BOABENG – FIEMA MONKEY SANCTUARY

Boaben-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary is a community-based Sanctuary located at Boaben and Fiema a twin community in the Nkoranza north district of Bono East Region. The sanctuary protects the headwaters of the streams that are consumed in the locality. It has a good number of the Black and White Colobus, Mona, spot nosed monkeys and a variety of birds. The monkeys in the reserve are regarded as the children of the gods of the community; therefore, they are neither hunted nor killed. A system of traditional taboos and their community enforcement protected the monkeys for generations.

Recent affluence and behavioral patterns, coupled with weakening of traditional enforcement of the sanctions associated with the taboo systems however threatened the continued survival of the monkeys. The situation created the need to offer statutory legal instruments to strengthen the traditional protection of the animals. Consequently, the local people were assisted to constitute the reserve under district Assembly byelaws which they are being assisted by the Wildlife Division to enforce. It is the first protected area where local indigenous protection system has been given statutory back-up enforcement of traditional/indigenous protection of wildlife in the country. The reserve is quite accessible by road and has a modest rest house facility.



## TAGBO FALLS

Liate Wote, home of the serene Tagbo Falls and Mt Afadjato, the highest mountain in Ghana (899 m above sea level) is a peaceful village nestled at the foot of the range of mountains that make up the Ghana-Togo border. It is 27km east of the Hohoe township.



## WLI FALLS

Wli waterfalls is the highest water fall in West Africa and very popular in the sub-region. The falls is known locally as Agoomatsa waterfalls - meaning, "Allow Me to Flow." It is located in the Hohoe municipality of the Volta Region about

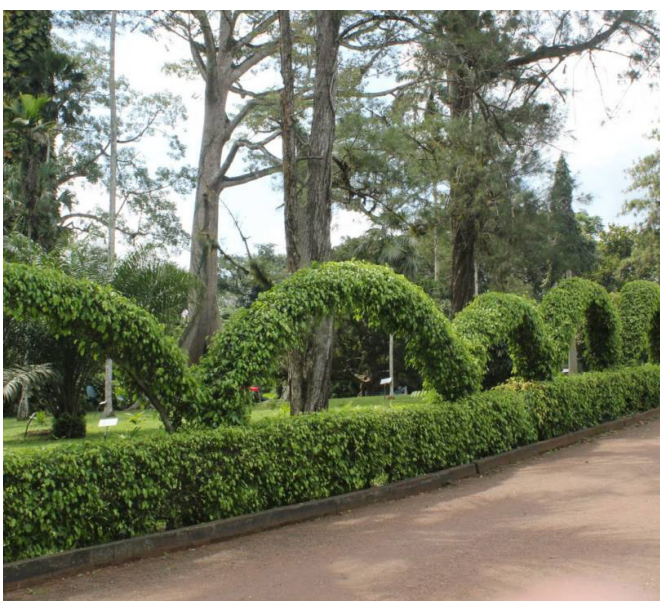
20km from Hohoe. It is approximately 280 kilometers from the capital Accra. The fall is in the Agumatsa Wildlife Sanctuary, which houses hundreds of fruit bats and a few monkeys and antelopes. The water falls from a height of about 488m. It is perennial.





The Aburi Botanical Gardens is one of the most beautiful, peaceful and fascinating places in Ghana. Opened in March, 1890, and covering 64.8 hectares and overlooking the Accra coastal plain from an elevation

of 370 to 460m above sea level, the Aburi Botanical Garden is a must experience for every Ghanaian as well as visitors to Ghana. The Aburi Botanical Garden is about 32km north of Accra.







## XAFI BIRD WATCHING SANCTUARY

The Lotor River at Xafi is nestled by coastal savannah fringing the wetlands of the Avu Lagoon in Keta in the Volta Region. Here, a great diversity of birds can be viewed whilst paddling a canoe across the river.





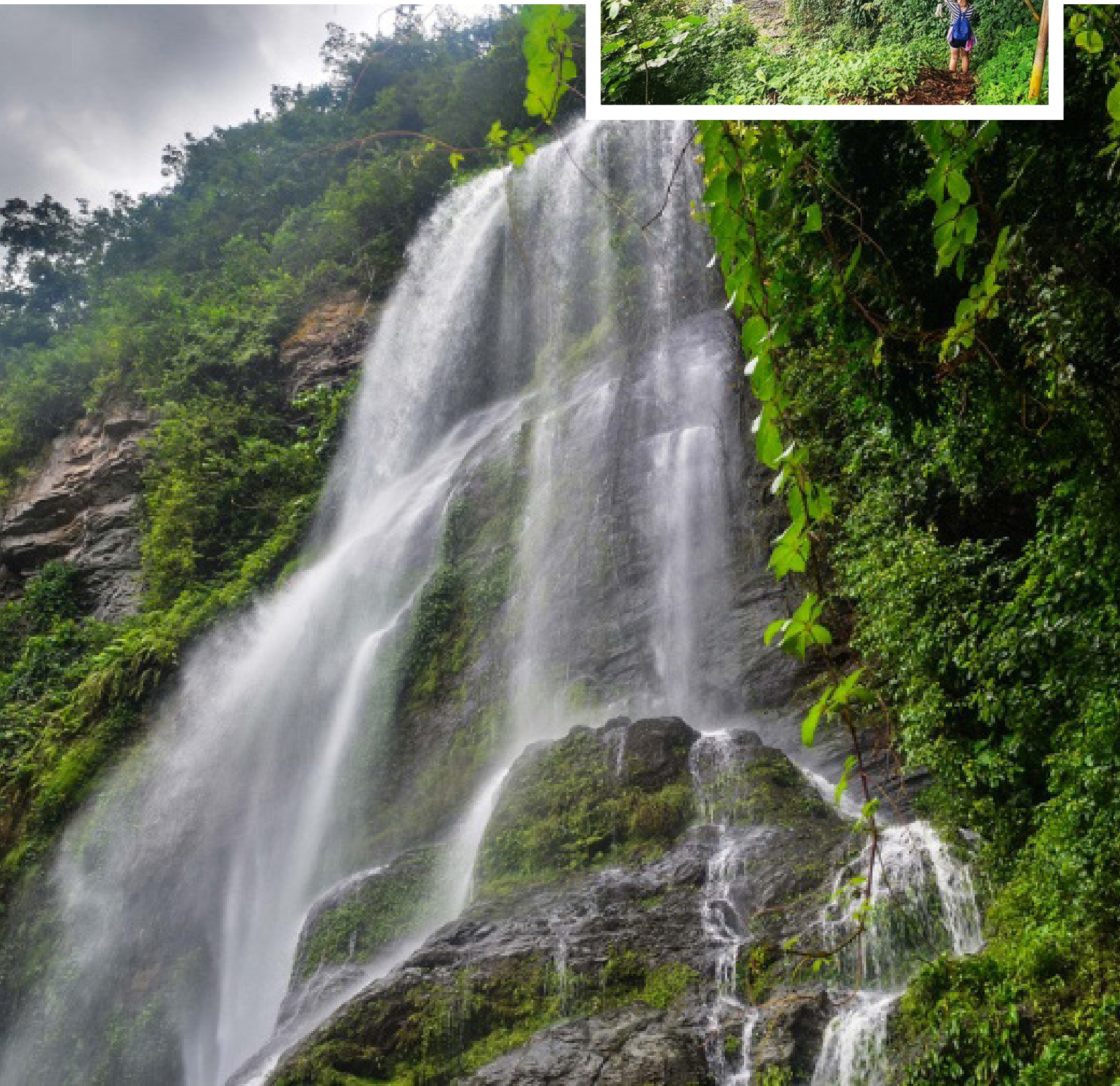
## **BUNSO ARBORETUM**

Discover the beauty of Bunso Arboretum located in the Eastern Region of Ghana. It is just two hours' drive from Accra. This is a 6.5 hectare protected forest reserve. It offers visitors a combination of semi-deciduous native forest and species introduced to Ghana by the Plant Genetic Resources Centre of Bunso, which uses the facility for research. The site contains over 110 species of birds, 30 species of butterflies and herb garden with over 40 species. Tour

the arboretum with a guide to learn about the native and exotic plants, including their medicinal properties for traditional healing, or go on an indigenous foods tour to learn the many ways in which local people harvest food from local plants. Guests can also experience village life and cocoa farming on a tour of the nearby village.

## AMEDZOFE WATERFALLS

You are welcome to this picturesque hilltop settlement of extraordinary beauty, which rests at 762m above sea level. It is an ideal location for tourists looking for a refreshing, near temperature climate and panoramic views.



## TAFI ATOME MONKEY SANCTUARY

Tafi Monkey Sanctuary (a sacred grove) is a traditional conservation area backed by statutory enforcement in co-operation with local communities. It is located in the Volta Region of Ghana. Tafi Atome is the home of Mona and Patas monkeys. These monkeys are found in a remnant patch of forests, which has survived fire

and human disturbance around the village. These monkeys are regarded as gods and as such the natives do not kill them. They are protected by tradition.

Similar sacred groves and burial grounds protected by local people are widespread in the region.





## NZULEZU STILT VILLAGE

Near the coast at the far western side of Ghana, near the border with Cote d'Ivoire, is a village that is unique in all of Ghana. Spectacular scenery of the 400-year old stilt propped water settlement of Nzulezu, is a unique village built on stilts in Lake Tadane, which is home to hundreds of people in the Western Region. Nzulezu is an Nzema word meaning 'surface of water'. The inhabitants of the village are said to have migrated from Walata, a city in the ancient Ghana Empire, the earliest of the Western Sudanese States.

The serene ambiance of the surrounding landscape, coupled with the general activities of life on stilts points to a dynamic relationship between man and nature. It is essentially one long pier, called Main Street

by the locals, with buildings constructed on both sides. One side of the 'street' are living quarters while the other side of the street has businesses, the school, a community center and other commercial ventures. Village life is adapted to the unique environmental conditions, and all activities such as, schooling, worship, baptisms and burials are carried out on the lake.

The people of Nzulezu still adhere to traditional norms and taboos. For instance, Thursday is a sacred day on the lake, and on this day, the villagers do not engage in any strenuous activity. Today the village subsists on fishing, farming on nearby land, and tourism. There is also guesthouse at the village, but do not expect modern standards.



## BOBIRI FOREST AND BUTTERFLY SANCTUARY

The Bobiri Forest and Butterfly Sanctuary is 54 square kilometres of virgin semi-deciduous tropical rainforest offering natural delights and one of the nicest ecotourism visitor centers and guesthouses in Ghana. Bobiri has massive trees, wide variety of birds, landscape butterfly garden (to showcase the sanctuary's 400-plus butterfly species) and arboretum with plant labels.

The forest is enjoyable anytime, but butterflies are most abundant March through June, with May being the peak

most visible and active between 11am – 4pm on warm, sunny days. Sturdy shoes are recommended for hiking, as well as rain gear during the rainy season.

Bobiri is just off the main Accra-Kumasi Road and directional for the turnoff at Kubease. Take the dirty road from the village 3.5 km to the visitor center. By trotro from Accra, ask to be dropped off at Kubease and then hire a taxi or walk 3.5 km to the guesthouse. From Kumasi, take a trotro to Ejisu, then hire a taxi or take a second trotro to Kubease.





## **WECHIAU HIPPO SANCTUARY AND RIVER SAFARI**

Wechiau is a small town and is the capital of Wa West district, a district in the Upper West Region of north Ghana adjacent to the border with Burkina Faso. Stretching along 40 km of the eastern bank of the Black Volta River, the Wechiau

Hippopotamus Sanctuary is a protected area for hippos and associated species. It is home to one of only two remaining groups of hippopotamuses in Ghana. Birdlife is also spectacular, with over 200 species on record. The river has had marked success in providing tourists with a unique and unusual eco-travel experience. Experience a river safari in a dugout canoe and see the resident hippo group, birds and mammals as well as fishermen plying their nets.



# SAFARI VALLEY RESORT

The Safari Valley Resort is an upper market tourist resort with an area set aside for wildlife safari. Located in the typical rain forest secondary forestlands on the outskirts of the Akwapim Adukrom, within the Eastern Region of Ghana. It occupies a total area of about 200 acres, with the build-up area taken up 40 acres, while the rest of the 240 acres fenced area proposed for the wildlife safari is currently being developed to provide an enabling environment for carefully selected wildlife species to enrich visitor experience.

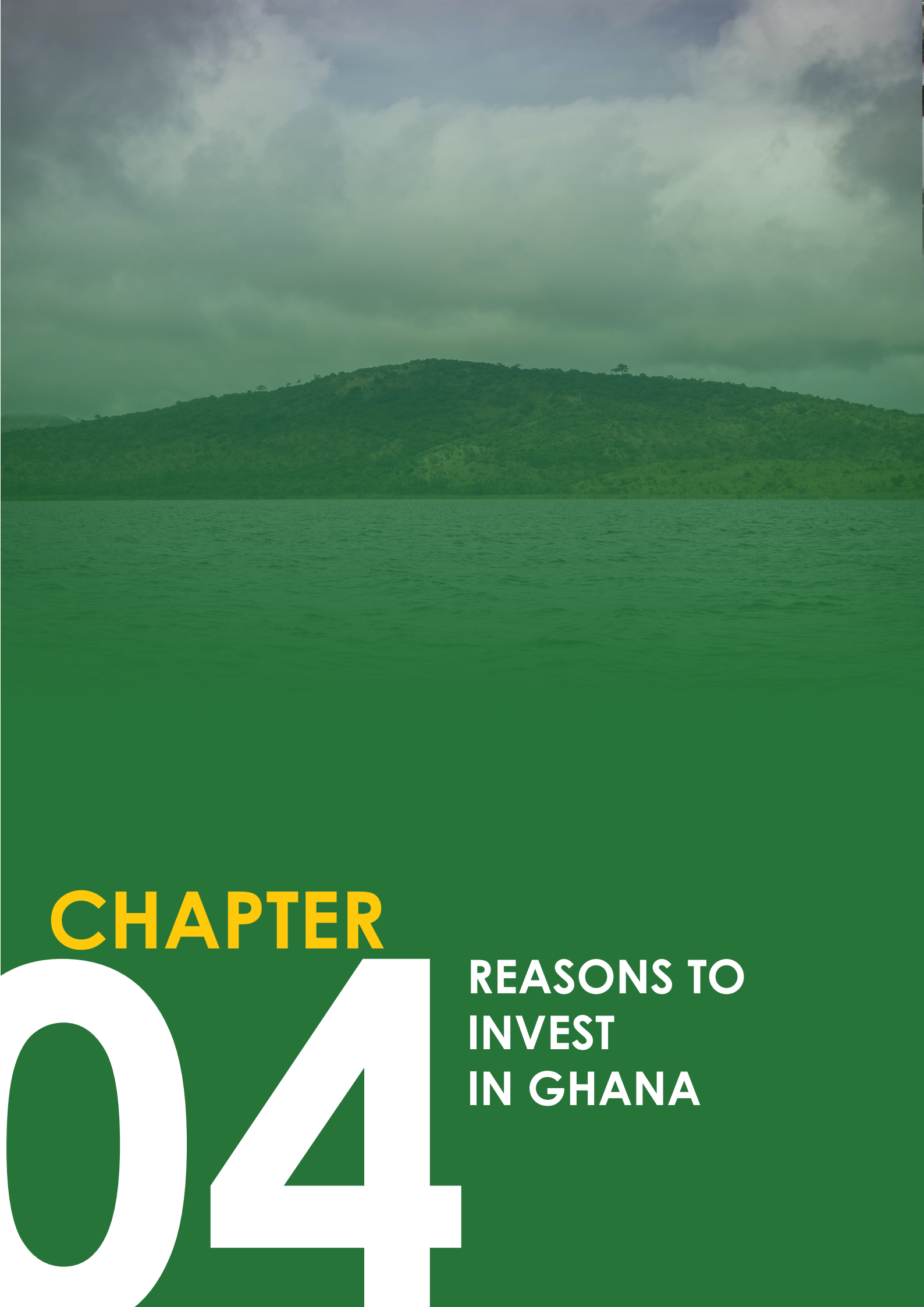
The Safari Valley Resort is a unique initiative by the Aqua Safari Group of companies, a major leader in the Ghanaian hospitality sector. It provides visitors with serene forest environment with enormous investment in stand-alone upper class chalets tourist's accommodation facility with executive double-bedrooms and presidential suites, a very rare facility in this part of the country. Some of the visitor-use facilities include Ceiba Restaurant, 9-hole Safari Golf Course, a workout Aburi Gymnasium and the grass-

lawned Amanokrom Soccer Pitch. It is also include Mampong Lawn Tennis arena, Kitase Basketball Court and the Ahwerease Volley Court. The resort is of international standard and a complete game-changer as it could easily become a major tourist's destination in Ghana, creating jobs and employment normally not associated with this part of the country.

A key objective of this initiative is the creation of a safe sanctuary for wildlife populations in Ghana, ensuring survival of selected species for future generations; maintaining genetic integrity within wildlife population with the potential for reintroduction where these animals are depleted in the wild. To this end the Safari Valley Resort has entered into MoU with the Forestry Commission to ensure collaboration and improvement in forest and wildlife management; undertake research and development activities of mutual interest; capacity building and skills transfer and explore areas of socio-economic interest beneficial to both parties.







**CHAPTER**

**04**

**REASONS TO  
INVEST  
IN GHANA**



**G**hana's wealth of natural resources, stable democratic political system and dynamic economy, makes it undoubtedly one of Africa's leading lights. Gaining the world's confidence with a peaceful political transition and a grounded and firm commitment to democracy has helped in expediting Ghana's growth in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in recent years. Investors can be rest assured that their investments will be safe in Ghana where we protect FDI and promote Public Private Partnership (PPP) in various investment arrangements.

The Ghana Investment Promotion Council (GIPC) established by Act 867 (2013) is the government agency responsible for the encouragement and promotion of investments in Ghana. The GIPC is mandated to formulate investment promotion policies and plans, promotional incentives and marketing strategies to attract foreign and local investments in advanced technology industries and skill-intensive services which enjoy good export market prospects. There are various investment guarantees and incentives available to investors depending on the sectors. Ghana guarantees investments against expropriation and offers free

transferability of profits and dividends for foreign investors. Within the tourism sector, companies enjoy a reduced corporate tax rate of 22%, a 10% concessionary rate on imported goods for tourist establishments and import duty exemptions for plant and machinery.

Ghana has attracted the attention of well-known international businesses, investing in all sectors of our economy. All these investors have come to Ghana because they know it has a wonderful conducive social, political and economic environment in which they can invest, grow and be successful.

Building on significant natural resources, our dear nation is committed to improving its physical infrastructure. Moreover, Ghana has recently embarked on an ambitious but achievable reform programme to improve the investment climate for both local and international investors. These efforts have paid off tremendously with Ghana being recognised by the World Bank Doing Business Report 2014 as the "Best Place for Doing Business in the ECOWAS Region". Also, with the difficult times during last year where most countries did not show good growth levels due to the global economic downturn, Ghana had an economic growth rate provisional of 7.4%.

## WHY INVEST IN WILDLIFE PROTECTED AREAS FOR ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT?

There are many good reasons for investing in ecotourism development in Wildlife Protected Areas in Ghana, including the following

- All the PAs have undergone extensive donor-funded development and improvements in resource protection
- Most PAs are connected to national electricity grid
- Most PAs are established tourist destinations in Ghana
- The areas are located on well-used tourist circuits throughout Ghana though some access routes requires improvement
- Marked increase visitor numbers in recent years. (See Table 3 beneath)
- Security of the land guaranteed
- There is a guarantee of a favorable return on investment

PROTECTED AREA	ANNUAL VISITATION		
	2017	2018	2019
MOLE	17,758	16,806	18,740
KAKUM	111,910	129,525	141,637
ANKASA	1,156	1,612	986
BUI	67	32	94
BIA	71	41	49
ACCRA ZOO	17,073	13,343	19,198
OWABI	95	623	319
SHAI HILLS	20,684	23,663	27,263
KALAKPA	130	120	221
BOMFOBIRI	79	566	705
SONGOR	56	9	94
MUNI	31	317	115
GBELE	7	6	0
KUMASI ZOO	17,780	15,917	32,701
KYABOBO	357	360	713
DIGYA	9	0	125
KOGYAE	5	25	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>187,268</b>	<b>202,965</b>	<b>242,961</b>

Table 3: Annual visitation numbers in Protected Areas of Ghana (2017-2019)

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

### MOLE NATIONAL PARK

#### Principal investment opportunities:

- Eco-Lodges accommodation for middle to high-end market
- Rehabilitation of existing 1200 m Airstrip
- Air shuttles and charters
- Various types of Mobile Tented accommodation to satisfy different visitor preferences
- Visitor receptive facilities



### KAKUM CONSERVATION AREA

#### Principal investment opportunities:

- 60 to 70-bed middle-market eco-lodge
- 30-bed lower-middle-market tree house
- Butterfly stations
- Wilderness experience
- Zip-line
- Other out-door recreational facilities

## ANKASA CONSERVATION AREA

### Principal investment opportunities:

- lower-middle-market forest chalet
- luxury private corporate guest lodge
- lower-middle-market tree house
- Cable Car
- Construction of standard centre/ facilities for corporate events and conference
- Water sports (e.g. Rafting)
- Off-road Bicycle Trails
- Other Innovate eco-friendly outdoor public recreation facilities



## KYABOBO NATIONAL PARK

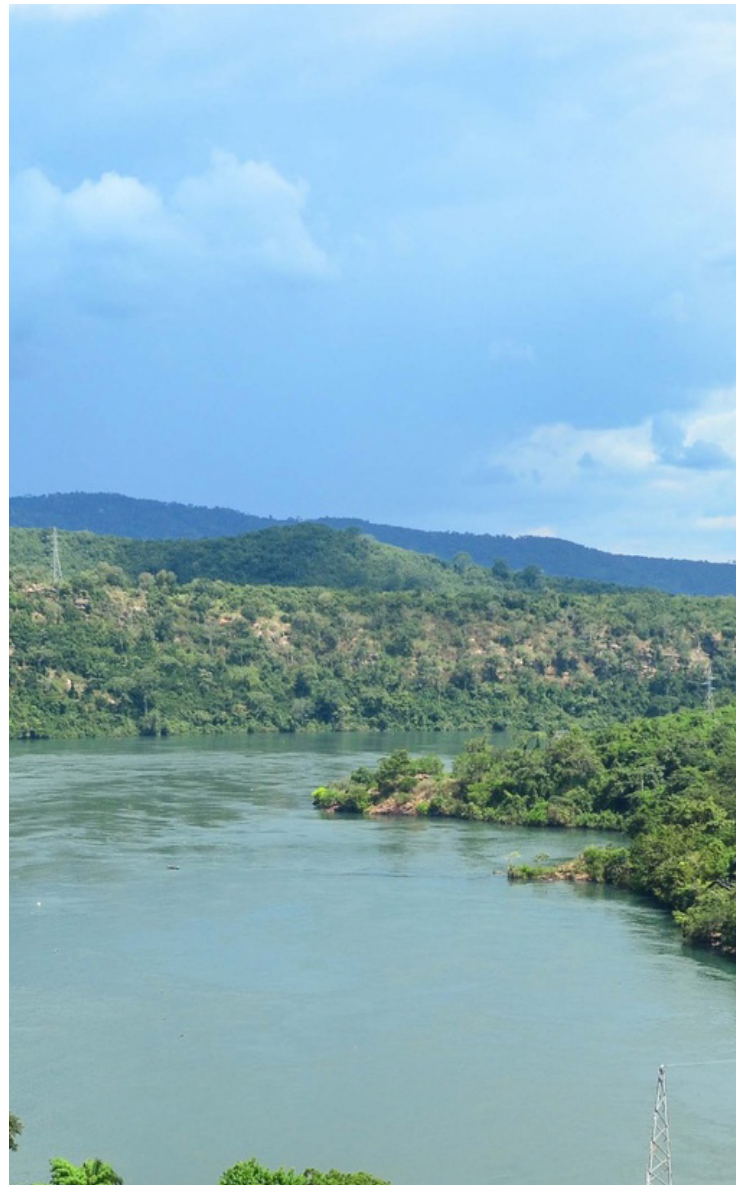
### Principal investment opportunities:

- lower-middle-market tree house
- Outdoor public recreation facilities

## DIGYA NATIONAL PARK

### Principal investment opportunities:

- Ecolodges /Tented camps
- Floating Lodges
- Campsites
- Picnic sites
- Game Viewing hides
- Interpretation and Tourist Information Facilities
- Entrance Gate
- Airstrip
- Perimeter Fence
- Game Restocking Program
- Hot balloon safari
- Cable cars
- Any innovative eco-friendly outdoor facilities



## BOMFOBIRI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

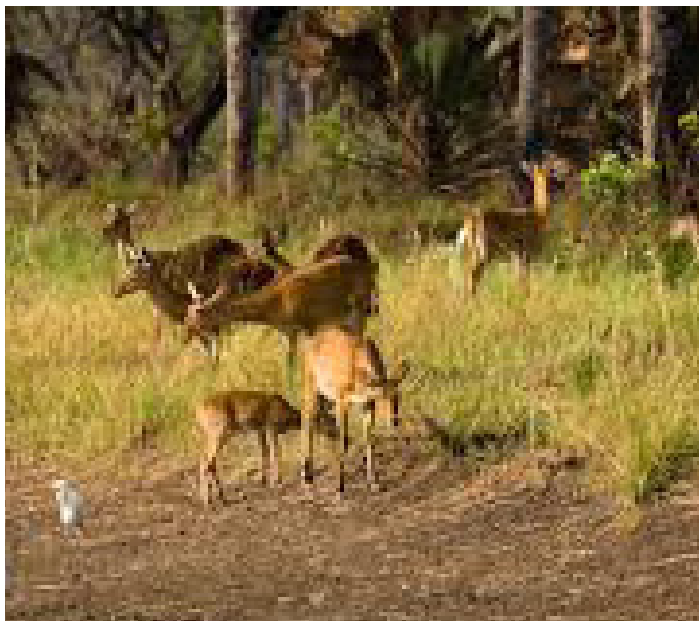
### Principal investment opportunities:

- 24 to 36-bed lower-middle-market eco-lodge
- Visitor receptive facilities
- Fencing
- Outdoor public recreation facilities

## **GBELE RESOURCE RESERVE**

### **Principal investment opportunities:**

- lower-middle-market eco-lodge
- Visitor receptive facilities
- Develop nature trails to facilitate visitor-use experiences
- Develop game-viewing platforms
- Develop sport-fishing areas (boats to facilitate sport-fishing and boat-riding)
- Develop picnic sites and tented camp facilities
- Develop appropriate signage and directional signs
- Establish a network of mobile camp sites linking Mole NP
- Outdoor public recreation facilities



## **KALAKPA RESOURCE RESERVE**

### **Principal investment opportunities:**

- Ecolodges
- Viewing platform near the dam
- Campsite with reception center

## SHAI HILLS RESOURCE RESERVE

### Principal investment opportunities:

- Viewing platforms
- Cable cars
- Perimeter fencing
- Ecolodges with conference facilities
- Outdoor recreation facilities



## BIA CONSERVATION AREA

### Principal investment opportunities:

- Construction of Zip line
- Ecolodge
- Outdoor recreational facilities





## BUI NATIONAL PARK

### Principal investment opportunities

- Development of landing sites for boat cruising
- Ecolodges
- Receptive facility



## ACCRA ZOO

### Corporate Sponsorship Opportunities

- Adoption of animals
- Refurbishment of animal cages
- Erection of billboards at vantage locations in the country
- Erection of signages within the zoo
- Production of brochures

## KUMASI ZOO

### Corporate Sponsorship Opportunities

- Adoption of animals
- Refurbishment of animal cages
- Erection of billboards at vantage locations in the country
- Erection of signages within the zoo
- Production of brochures





**CHAPTER**

**05**

**FORESTRY  
COMMISSION'S  
EFFORTS TO  
BOOST  
ECOTOURISM**



## Ecotourism Concessions

The new Wildlife Resources Management Bill (FC, 2019) which is before parliament and soon to be passed states that one of the functions of the Forestry Commission is to promote private sector and community partnerships and grant leases, concessions and access for the development of wildlife-based tourism facilities and services in a way that maximizes benefits to the local communities and the nation as whole. The Forestry Commission through the Wildlife Division is implementing this mandate by awarding concessions to private sector to develop ecotourism infrastructure in the Protected Areas. There are set criteria (Appendix 2) for selecting a Private Partner to carry such development. The concession period and terms of the agreement are flexible to ensure a win-win situation for the Forestry Commission and the Private Partner.

In 2012, the Forestry Commission entered into partnership with Ecolodges Company Ghana Limited for the development of 50 bed luxury tented camp, with a swimming pool, restaurant conference facilities and a bar in the Mole National Park. Commercial operations commenced in October 2015, and since then tourists have been patronizing the facility. There is opportunity for night safaris and wildlife viewing at close range. Tourists experience nature and wildlife in a unique way. This partnership has been successful and can be showcased to the world as a positive example.

There are two ongoing ecotourism development projects with the private sector in the Achimota forest and Sakumo Ramsar Site namely the Accra Ecopark Project and the Sakumo Ecotourism Concession Project respectively. These two projects are in the preparatory stages.

## Capacity Building

With the very limited resources from central government, the Forestry Commission periodically organizes training sessions for tourism officers and Protected Area Managers to enhance their skills in visitor handling and interpretation techniques. However, there is a need for more frequent

re-training to ensure that staff have the requisite skills and are abreast with modern trends in ecotourism. The presence of a well-trained cadre of tourism staff will boost visitor confidence, thereby increasing referrals to the Protected Areas, hence increasing revenue.

## Investment Promotion, Marketing and Communication

The Forestry Commission participates in local and international travel, trade and investment fairs to reach a wide range of stakeholders. The purpose is to create awareness about the tourism potentials, attractions and investment opportunities in the Protected Areas. Periodically, schools education and awareness programs are organized to engender the support and interest of the youth and students for conservation and ecotourism. In addition, door-to-door campaigns are undertaken to inform target organizations about the ecotourism products available in our Protected Areas. The Forestry Commission engages with media houses to air documentaries on the ecotourism potentials and attractions of the Protected Areas.

Annually, the Ghana Tourism Authority holds Awards Ceremonies to reward organizations which have contributed to the tourism sector. Protected Areas like Mole National Park, Kyabobo National Park, Bomfobiri Wildlife Sanctuary and the Kumasi Zoo have received Awards for various categories including Visitor Attraction of the Year. In 2017, Zaina Ecolodges won the TripAdvisor award of Certificate of Excellence and they were adjudged one of the best hospitality facilities at the City Construction and Properties Awards Ceremony.

The Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission also partners with Corporate Organizations, Non-governmental Organizations, Philanthropists and others in promoting and marketing of ecotourism products and services by leveraging on sponsorship packages of mutual benefits.

## Barriers to Ecotourism Development and Measures to Address Them

Barriers to ecotourism development and measures taken to address them are indicated in Table 4 beneath.

Challenges	Measures	Remarks
Inadequate Funding and Government fund releases to the sector could change due to shifting priorities	Forestry Commission has taken steps to at all times maintain a diversified portfolio of revenue sources including sourcing project funds from multi-lateral and local institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many ecotourism projects have been initiated by government and non-government institutions</li> <li>• Research and funding proposals to identified donors and private sector</li> </ul>
Poor infrastructure and communication network to national parks and other tourist destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government through its decentralization policy is undertaking various infrastructure development projects (e.g. roads and railway system)</li> <li>• Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements are being pursued for various infrastructure and communication projects</li> </ul>	Government is consulting with Telecommunication Companies on how best to extend network coverage to some remote areas with ecotourism potential
Inadequate investment in the tourism sector	Government has put in place the necessary steps to attract investment in the sector through various incentive packages	There are good examples of PPP arrangement already in operation in Ghana which can be improved further
Limited Overnight accommodation	Private Sector partnerships and concession arrangements being promoted by the Forestry Commission	Zaina Lodge at the Mole National Park is a good example of a private sector partnership to provide accommodation
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Challenges	Measures	Remarks
Limited attraction points at the various tourist destinations	Forestry Commission has initiated various projects to diversify and improve visitor attraction points in the Protected Areas and Zoos across Ghana	Some projects have been initiated in the Kakum National Park, Shai Hills Resource Reserve and Mole National Park.
Inter-sectoral/ agency conflict or differing interest in natural resource use may lead to lack of effective coordination and participation	Forestry Commission is engaging with relevant Ministries/Agencies in project governance and also, including other beneficiaries as appropriate; clarify legal mandate and ensure buy-in of all agencies involved; receive intervention endorsement from designated authorities	Engagement process for collaborative ecotourism projects are on-going
Low patronage of domestic ecotourism and lack of capacity of technical service providers in meeting standards of international best practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Government has prioritized policy on domestic tourism promotion</li> <li>•There are various programs/ projects in place that is targeting capacity enhancement of actors in the tourism and hospitality industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Government through the Ghana Tourist Authority (GTA) has taken steps to market and promoted various the ecotourism destination in the country</li> <li>•GTA is on course to establish a hospitality training center in Ghana to train actors in the industry</li> </ul>

**Table 4: Barriers to ecotourism development and measures to address them**



**CHAPTER**

**06**

**ECOTOURISM  
DIRECTORY**

One of the main problems for businesses interested in the ecotourism sector is access to information. There are many organizations which support sustainable tourism initiatives through information and training, as well as publications and websites.

Furthermore, there are many organizations in Ghana that provide literally, a whole world of inspiration and education to those committing to ecotourism ventures. Many of them have played and will continue to play important roles in the use and research needs of this handbook. Some key organizations and their respective contact addresses are provided beneath for ease of reference.







## CONTACT DETAILS OF ECOTOURISM STAKEHOLDERS

### Forestry Commission

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### Ghana Tourism Authority

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### M&J Travel and Tours

Chief Executive Officer  
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### Zaina Ecolodges Limited

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### The Diaspora Affairs-Office of the President

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### Tour Operators Union of Ghana

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ghana-tourism-federation

### Tour Guides Association of Ghana

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World Data Atlas (2018): <https://knoema.com/atlas/Ghana/topics/Tourism/Travel-and-Tourism-Total-Contribution-to-GDP/Contribution-of-travel-and-tourism-to-GDP-percent-of-GDP>

World Tourism Organization (2015): *Affiliate Members Regional Report. Volume Four- Tourism in Africa: A Tool for Development*, UNWTO, Madrid.

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# APPENDIX

# 01

## Building Design Standards and Guidelines for Reserve-Based Ecotourism Infrastructures

## Introduction

National Reserves, resource reserves and other protected areas are designated and managed on account of their outstanding value as areas representative of the nation's natural ecological heritage. They are places where nature is allowed to take its natural course, without undue influence from man, where people can learn, relax and find pleasure from the undisturbed animals, plants and natural environment around them. It is therefore important that in such areas, man's influence is kept at a minimum and any infrastructure, such as staff housing and facilities, should be built outside the boundaries of the Reserve wherever possible. When it is necessary to develop infrastructure inside a Reserve, such as with tourist lodges and other facilities, it should be developed in a way that is as unobtrusive and as 'natural' as possible.

In its quest to enter into fruitful ecotourism developmental and promotional engagements with the private sector and other critical stakeholders, the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission has ensured that sustainability of the resource base is captured in all concession agreements drafted for purposes of our investment drive. The Division seeks tourism development that meets the needs of present tourists and destination communities while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future i.e. Management of resources in such a way that economic, social and esthetic needs can be fulfilled while ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems are maintained. The Division, in essence, insists on sustainable tourism products that are developed and operated in harmony with the local environment and community cultures, so that these become permanent beneficiaries, not victims of tourism development.

The following general guidelines are to be regarded as guide to best practice and should be the goal wherever feasible. In essence, the standards and guidelines aim to promote the development of infrastructure that is sensitive to the local natural and cultural environment in the area where the development is taking place. This is the heart and soul of ecotourism.

## General principles

- Overall building design to be imaginative, innovative, functional, exciting and aesthetically pleasing

- Buildings and landscaping should provide a 'natural' setting
- Focus on low maintenance facilities
- Focus on producing a high quality product at reasonable cost

## Overall design and structural guidelines

- Design concepts and plans to be agreed upon by Wildlife Division
- Incorporate local architecture and style into design if possible or desirable
- Maximum height of two stories/levels( ie ground and 1 other level)
- Structures must not protrude above skyline
- Facility unobtrusive to outside viewers
- Avoid brightly-painted external walls
- Favour open and airy public rooms
- Favour open and bright internal rooms
- Avoid louver windows where possible
- Install air-conditioning where possible
- Burglar proofing, if required, should be aesthetic
- Implement policy of inward-facing lighting where absolutely possible
- Avoid use of neon strip lighting, especially outside

## Building materials

- Favour using local stone for construction and facing
- Avoid concrete where possible
- Face concrete, if used, with local stone, wood or appropriate surfacing
- Favour using wood and thatch where possible
- Use only Forestry Commission/Wildlife Division-approved sources of treated wood
- Strive for minimum/ease of maintenance
- Baboon –proof (Animal proof) thatch where used
- Consider fire-proofing when using wood and thatch

## Site layout and landscaping

- Plan entire site, making allowances for possible future development options
- Plan buildings and landscaping together
- Design facility around existing features and vegetation

- Do not restrict facility to an unnecessarily small area (but within the area site)
- Incorporate water features in landscaping if possible or feasible
- Clusters of small buildings are generally preferable to large blocks
- Spatially separate guest facilities, offices, services, kitchens, staff accommodation, stores, etc
- Consider privacy needs of guests and staff
- No tree above 15cm diameter at breast height [dbh] to be removed without permission of the Wildlife Division
- Use indigenous plants in landscaping where possible, but not exclusively so
- Do not use invasive/potentially invasive plant species in landscaping
- Aim for attractive 'oasis-like' facility for tourists

## Roads, Reserving and paths

- Avoid straight roads – rather curve them around features
- Favour brick/gravel roads and Reserving areas
- Avoid tarred roads and Reserving areas
- Avoid straight paths – rather curve them around features
- Lighting of paths should be shielded but effective

## Utilities and services

- Provide mains electricity if at all possible
- Bury electricity cables within site
- Site electricity generators away from main tourist buildings
- Bury and noise-insulate any electricity generator houses
- Favour gas as alternative energy source
- Provide mains water if at all possible
- Site main water tanks in un-obtrusive and/or secluded areas
- Bury telephone cables within site

## Waste disposal

- Use suitably appropriate sewerage/sewage treatment system
- Use septic tanks for toilets if necessary
- Site soak-away pits for non-sewage waste water in appropriate areas

- Site transit/disposal areas for metals, glass, paper, plastic, organic food waste, etc, in appropriate area
- Fence waste transit/disposal areas

## Safety and security

- Consider aesthetic forms of security with respect to burglar bars, fences, railings, etc
- Use animal exclusion structures (eg. fences, ditches, etc) only where absolutely necessary
- Pay due attention to fire prevention and fire-fighting
- Provide safe storage areas for hazardous materials (ie. fuel, poisons, paints, cleaners, etc)

## Signage

- Use aesthetically-designed signage
- Favour good quality, low maintenance signage
- Avoid large signs
- Provide sufficient but not excessive signage
- Signage to be approved by Wildlife Division
- Site signs carefully

## Building practices

- Favour local contractors/sub-contractors where possible
- Use locally-employed craftsmen/labour where possible

## Environmental impact mitigation

- Conduct appropriate pre-construction environmental assessments (EPA requirement)
- Implement and rigidly enforce environmental management plan during construction phase
- Implement and police strong policy on effective and environmentally-friendly waste disposal during construction phase.



# APPENDIX

# 02

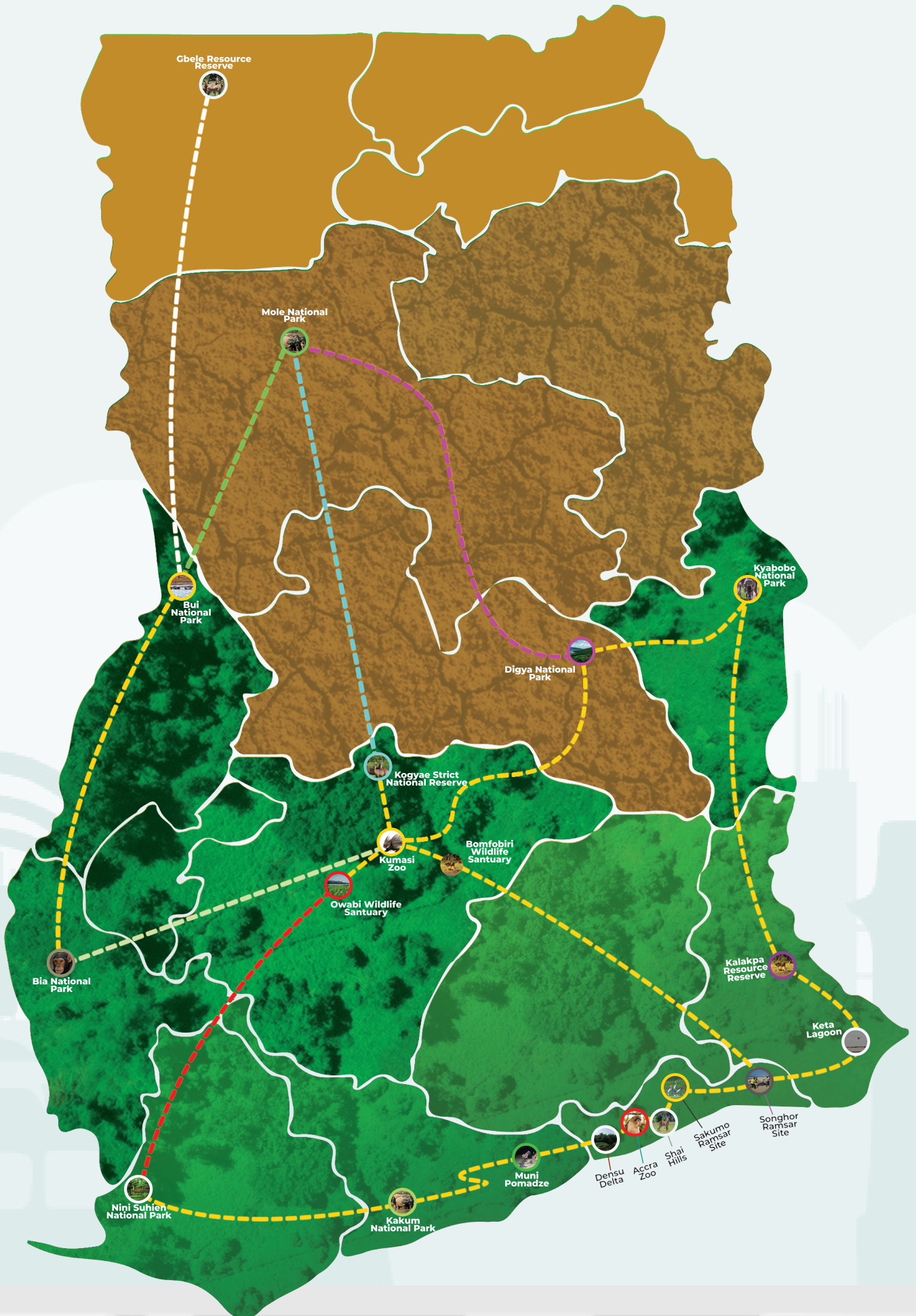
## CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING ECOTOURISM INVESTMENT PROPOSALS

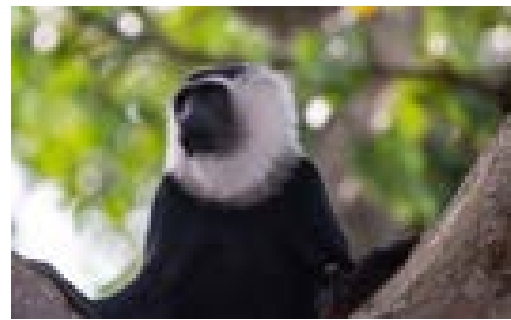


Evaluation Criteria	Scoring (out of 100)	Minimum score deemed to be responsive to tender
Past Experience and Performance	30	60% of overall score for evaluation criteria
Architectural Design Concepts and Site Plan	25	
Business plan	20	
Environmental Management Plan	10	
Payments and Payment Schedule	5	
Community Support and Civic Responsibility	5	
Staffing Plan	5	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	

# PROTECTED AREA DIRECTIONAL MAP

NOTE: Scan QRCode in the main document for google directions.





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