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# JOURNALISTS' GUIDE ON ENVIRONMENT- RELATED ISSUES

By

*By Albert Oppong-*

*Ansah*

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## ABOUT THE WRITER

Albert Oppong-Ansah is a journalist at the Ghana News Agency, Northern Region and also a freelancer. He writes about environmental and science related issues.

He has reported from United Nations Environment conferences, including the first World Indigenous Network Conference in Australia, the 11<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties on Biological Diversity in India and the 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Mexico.

Albert was named the 2012 Best Human Rights (Focus on Child) Journalist by the Ghana Journalists Association. He was a 2014 Press Fellow at Wolfson College, University of Cambridge, in the United Kingdom.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## PHOTO SOURCES

MR IDDI Zakaria, Coordinator of the SHEA NETWORK GHANA

Peacefmonline

Author

# INTRODUCTION

The physical environment affects all facets of human existence and livelihood. It also plays an important role in the development of every country, including Ghana, which is why its proper management and conservation must be a priority. Some key issues are waste management, sand excavating, climate change effects and deforestation.

As one example, many hectares of land have been degraded through the clearing of vegetation and topsoil to expose the sandy layer, which is then collected and used for building houses. Often, there is no reclamation after winning the sand. Similarly, the temperature continues to rise, especially in Northern Ghana, and the survival of coastal communities in the south is being threatened by the rising sea level. Reduced rainfall is impacting on rain-fed agriculture and hydro-power, causing significant decreases in industrial production. Meanwhile the lives and livelihoods of rural people, especially farmers in the northern regions of Ghana, are being threatened by droughts and annual flooding.

Environment and science related issues in Ghana have not been given the needed attention by authorities. State agencies responsible for the implementation of various laws have often not discharged their mandates and this has paved the way for individuals and firms to degrade the environment.

People's attitude towards the environment is poor owing to lack of knowledge. It is common to spot people defecating openly, burning bush indiscriminately and dropping empty sachets of water as well as envelopes of liquid and solid waste in plastic bags anywhere. As a result, certain places in some cities stink.

Journalists generally have not done well in reporting on environmental and science related issues largely due to lack of adequate knowledge. Political issues have dominated the front pages and radio discussions. Journalists mostly report on the environment only when there is a disaster.

I was inspired to write this guide largely because of my experiences working in Northern Ghana. As one instance, while on assignment I noticed women were carrying buckets to and from a particular location. I was told they were fetching water from a dugout which was the only source of water for the community of about 900,000. The borehole built for the community by the United Nations Children's Fund was broken.

I learned that animals shared the pond water with humans and that the water was polluted by human waste any time it rained heavily because many households had no toilet facilities. I wrote a story and based on that the borehole was fixed, showing that journalism can be make a difference.

The guide offers three case studies in which journalists explain how they got the ideas, how they reported the stories, how they surmounted challenges and the impact of the stories.

It also suggests some sources where the necessary background information can be obtained and where journalists can get story ideas.

Reporting on environment and science related issues is very challenging because of the complexity of the issues. It calls for extra commitment and reading. I hope that this guide will help journalists to effectively play their educational, agenda setting and watchdog roles in order to help the nation develop sustainably.

# CASE STUDY ONE

*Journalists generate story ideas from different sources and one mark of a good environmental journalist is the ability to observe and think beyond what every other person sees as ordinary. An example of an observation story that caused a lot of discussion in Ghana was written by Emelia Abbey Ennin, formerly of the Daily Guide (Now Daily Graphic). Here is an excerpt of Emelia's story:*

## **Trash to Cash- A Sustainable Environmental Cycle**

**By Emelia Ennin Abbey**

(9th November, 2011) Selina Aku Mensah is making profit and helping to preserve the environment at La, a suburb of Accra as she collects empty water sachets and bottles.

She works to reduce the amount of rubbish illegally dumped in the area and the amount of work done by the city's solid waste department. She does not even take into account the fact that her work is helping to save the environment, but is grateful that she is putting food on the table.

"Well, I do not know about the environment, a friend started this business and she was making money so I joined," said the former stenographer, who stayed at home for years after losing her job with a private company in Accra...Most of the sachets and other waste can be recycled into something new and Blowplast says "it's easier with our state-of-the-art machinery"

"We are seeking to work with Ghanaians to support keep-our-country-clean efforts for financial rewards," said Manoj Lakhiani, Managing Director of the company. Blowplast, which was established in 2006, ordered a recycling plant and its accessories worth more than \$2 million from Italy and Austria to begin the recycling process.

With the plant, the company would be able to recycle about 50 per cent of water sachet waste generated daily throughout the country but it is now producing under capacity. He said the plant would be the first big recycling plant in West Africa with advanced technology. To read the full story: <http://www.businessguideghana.com/?p=4874>

## THIS IS HOW EMELIA GOT HER STORY

Emelia says she first saw Selina picking empty sachets at the La lorry station, a suburb of Accra, one late afternoon after work.

Initially, Emelia thought Selina worked for one of the sanitation companies in the city but upon a second thought, she realized that employees of those companies worked mostly early dawn. A week later she saw the woman in the same area and continued to monitor her for a month. One day she decided to ask her in a polite way why was always picking up empty sachets.

“When I got there she was friendly and told me her story behind her plastic trash and said she sold a full 28 X 50 inch bag for C6.00 Ghana Cedis (about two dollars and fifty cents)”.

Emelia gathered her information and discussed the idea with her editor and she was asked to go ahead with the story.

“The major challenge was that I had to personally finance the cost of doing the story”, she said.

Emelia explained that it is very difficult to combine daily schedule work with specialized stories, because employers are always demanding for productivity.

“I mostly visited my sources after attending my regular schedule assignment,” she said.

Emelia visited the recycling companies at least five times, and that of the local assembly and the ministry six times to collect data and other details.

According to her, she had to work an extra hour after work to translate interviews and put the day’s interview together.

“It took 12 days to finish the story due to the back and forth. I could have done it in four days if I had the information fast and easy,” Emelia added.

She expressed her disappointment at how both local assembly and the recycling companies she visited denied her data on waste.

“I am passionate about working to create awareness on the need to preserve the environment and keep it clean and to change the negative behaviour of people. I was happy when my case study told me on a visit after the story that she heard her name on the radio”.

Her work was rewarded by her being named by the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) as the Best Environmental Reporter in 2012.

## CASE STUDY TWO

*Every story needs a well-planned approach in order to achieve the needed results. Here is an environmental story about the alleged timber deals between Malaysia and Indonesia.*

### **Malaysia 'laundering rainforest logs'**

**By Roger Harrabin, BBC Environmental Correspondent**

(22nd May, 2002) An investigation by the BBC has revealed that Malaysia is importing timber which has been felled illegally in nearby Indonesia, and then disguising its origin by using it for the manufacture of garden furniture or other products which are labelled as of Malaysian origin..... A junior manager at the Kuala Lumpur-based company Harvest, admitted that some of the timber coming in was from Indonesia and it was being stamped by the state government as an official import.

Julian Newman from the The Environmental Investigation Agency, said: "This is one of the many places where Indonesian timber is coming into Malaysia and being laundered and sold onto the international market. The EIA is doubly angry that while the Malaysian Government condemns the trade officially, it has supplied a customs post there so they can raise money on it.

The port company and the Malaysian Government declined to be interviewed by the BBC, but one Malaysian trade spokesman said off the record that if they did not process the illegal logs, someone else would. The Indonesians needed to do more to stop the logs being cut in the first place.

This attitude outrages Indonesian forest campaigners such as Telapak.

Spokesman Hapsoro said: "Malaysia is stealing our natural resources and claim it as their own. This is unbelievable to me because Malaysia is like our brother. It's a neighbouring country." To read the full story:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/2002590.stm>

## THIS IS ROGER'S ACCOUNT OF HOW HE GOT THE STORY.

Roger got the story idea from an official of the Environmental Investigation Agency, an independent campaigning organisation committed to conservation. The concern was that Malaysia, allegedly bought illegal timber from Indonesia, added value to it and branded it as a Malaysian product for export to Europe.

Initially, it was difficult to convince the editor to allow him to pursue the story because the Malaysian government had already denied it at an international meeting.

“I insisted that the story idea was good due to public interest and besides, the forest reserve at the center of the issue was of great importance to the whole world due to its biodiversity”, he noted.

Roger explained that it took some few weeks to convince his editor with using data of a report from the EIA on the level of degradation and the type of biodiversity has been lost as a results the illegal trade. According to Roger, in the end his superior assigned the best available cameraman as well as best producer and suggested possible ways of getting the story.

“He planned with us, the team, where and what to do to get my story done. Sometimes editors are a bit hesitant to support such story ideas because it is capital intensive,” Roger said.

“With the advice from the EIA and Malaysian Timber Organisation, my team and our editor planned the trip. These institutions helped the crew to contact people we identified to interview, take video footage and pictures. We booked a hotel accommodation and hired a boat to visit the timber trading spot”, Roger added. Roger said that he finished the story in six weeks and also used the opportunity to do other stories.

“I took my time to collect every important detail to make the story worth listening to and reading”.

He thinks journalists need to get the authorities who occupy positions to respond to questions, because the public believes in what authorities say.

One other major challenge associated with the story was the danger of the location. A journalist called Abi had his hand chopped off, when he tried reporting on the same alleged fictitious timber deals. However, they went to the area unannounced.

“The whole crew had a passion for the story and we got results”, Roger said.

Roger said the story was widely used on the BBC’s main channel and it became a big topic for public discussions. The story confirmed the long held rumour that indeed Malaysians were buying illegal timber from Indonesia because the story was able to unravel the modus operandi of those deals.

As a result of the story, the Malaysian decided to review the existing regulation to halt imports of timber from Indonesia.

Here is the follow-up story, which makes clear the story impact:

### ***Illegal Timber Trade***

**Story by Roger Harrabin, BBC Environmental Correspondent**

An investigation by Today has led to the promise of a clampdown on the criminal timber trade. The Malaysian forests minister has told the BBC that he’ll act to block imports of illegal Indonesian logs.

We discovered last month that Malaysia was buying timber illegally felled in Indonesia, then turning it into legitimate timber products for export. These are sold on to consumers in Britain who have no way of knowing that they are effectively buying stolen goods.

Malaysia’s Primary Industries Minister, Dr Lim King Yaik, has now told the BBC that he’s tired of Malaysia’s reputation being damaged by association with illegal timber, so he’ll urge his Cabinet to impose a total ban on Indonesian illegal imports within a fortnight. Environmentalists say they’ll wait and see if the ban is put in place, then made to stick.

If the ban is imposed it will badly affect some areas of Malaysia which are heavily dependent on illegal log imports for their own timber industry. The Indonesian government has slapped a total ban on exporting uncut logs in a desperate attempt to stem the destruction that is sweeping the nation’s forests. Some ministers privately admit that they can’t stop illegal felling because of widespread corruption, and they have asked other nations to help them by banning the imports of illegal wood. To read the full story:

## CASE STUDY THREE

*Stories are sometimes told better through individuals' experience. Hannah Asomaning's article below illustrates how journalists can use anecdotes to spark discussions and draw attention of the authorities to critical issues. It also shows that one's inability to interview officials does not mean a story cannot be done.*

### *Sanitation is dignity indeed!*

**By Hannah Asomaning**

Accra, November, 17, GNA- Kwaku, a 21 year-old man, born and bred in Obuasi in the Ashanti Region, had lived all his life in one of the luxurious mining bungalows.

After obtaining a Diploma in Information Technology at the Koforidua Polytechnic, he decided he would stay with a relative in Accra to seek a job and probably greener pastures. Kwaku was lucky to have a cousin staying at Akweteman, a suburb of Accra, so his dream to come and stay in Accra really did materialize.

It was one room, probably a boy's quarters to the main building, with about 10 different families living in the house. On the compound of the house was a cemented structure with four sides used as a bathroom, which all the 10 families used. Even those who were not tenants in the house sometimes came and bathed there. To his surprise, he realized that there was no toilet in the house, the reason being that the toilet was full and nobody was prepared to pay for it to be emptied, so the landlady broke down the place.

Very early in the morning, Kwaku would walk from Akweteman to the main Achimota Market where a public toilet was situated. He had to be in a queue for hours to empty his bowels. And this wasn't for free, as a patron of the public toilet would have to buy toilet roll or newspaper to clean himself. When you get the chance to enter the toilet, only half of the problem is solved.

Kwaku says, "There are faeces on some toilet seats and on the floor and one has to employ special acrobatics to empty your bowels." That aside, this is a man who had no clue that coming to Accra in search of a job would also mean being able to adapt to slum life. To read the full story:

<http://ghananewsagency.org/features/sanitation-is-dignity-indeed--22634>

## HERE IS HOW HANNAH'S ACCOUNT OF HOW SHE GOT THE STORY

Hannah lived in Akweteman, a suburb of Accra, where household toilets were uncommon. Most people queued early morning at the community's only toilet to attend to the nature's call.

She happened to use the facility one day and she met Kwaku. Hannah was standing next to him as Kwaku continued to complain about the long winding queue. "It pricked my mind that it was a good story to commemorate the World Toilet Day, so I interviewed him. I was able to finish the story in seven working days", said Hannah.

"I have observed that most people like reading articles in narrative style and also relates to their daily lives hence, my reason for choosing the narrative approach to write the story", Hannah said.

Her inability to obtain information from the public toilet operator because he was busy coupled with the fact that the public affairs officer of the Mayor of Accra Metro Metropolitan Assembly did not respond to her calls did not deter her from doing the story, so she searched for information from the United Nation's websites to compensate.

She explained that the sector minister had made a recent remark about the issue, so she was able to use some of his comments in her story. Besides Kwaku, she planned to interview an official of the local assembly, but she was unable to reach him.

"My story idea was not too complicated, so I had alternatives to access desktop information and spoke to a co-worker who recently attended an event on sanitation," she said.

That notwithstanding, Hannah thinks it is very important for journalists to strive to contact relevant agencies to get the appropriate answers to their questions to enhance the credibility of the story.

Although she had a disappointing experience with both the government and non-governmental agencies in accessing information, believes it was important to push hard to interview them.

After the story ran, Accra city authorities started enforcing the bylaw that mandates landlords to have toilets in their rental homes. Some local assembly, environmental and sanitation laws were amended.

United Nations agencies and government ministry initiated projects that helped homes to have such facilities through loans.

Hannah said that since her story there has been improvement in access to toilets in Accra according to the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. The Ghana journalists Association named her story as the Best Environmental story in 2011.



#### Sources of Story Ideas

- Observation
- Books
- Articles
- Reports
- Press Conferences
- Workshops
- Brainstorming
- Daily Events/assignments

# GOVERNMENT SOURCES OF RELEVANT INFORMATION

*Forestry Commission of Ghana* is responsible for protecting forest and wildlife resources. It has offices in all the ten regions of the country and journalists can get information on national forests, wildlife conservation and the protection and management of both forests and animals.

The commission can provide accurate data on the different tree species in the country and their geographical location. It can give information on government and civil society's projects on tree planting and how many have been depleted.

Journalists looking for companies involved in timber harvesting and where they operate can contact its office. It does not have a dedicated office for public relations in the ten regional offices, but officials in those offices can give information to journalists.

## Contacts

Telephone: [+233 302 401210](tel:+233302401210), 401227, 401216,  
+233 302 7010031 / 3 / 4

Email: [info.hq@fcghana.org](mailto:info.hq@fcghana.org)

Website: <http://www.fcghana.org/index.php>

*The Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MEST)* is the government ministry created to establish a strong national scientific and technological base for accelerated sustainable development. It can provide information on the national climate change adaptation strategy, biological diversity, scientific innovation and genetically modified regulations.

Their officers can provide specific yearly national positions and negotiations on United Nations environmental conferences. The ministry has a public affairs directorate.

## Contacts

Telephone: [+233-302 660005](tel:+233-302-660005).

Website: <http://www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/2012-02-08-08-18-09/ministries/250-ministry-of-environment-science-technology-and-innovation>

***The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources*** manages Ghana's land, forest, wildlife and mineral resources. A public affairs directorate can answer questions about national policies on natural land and forest resources.

It is the only body mandated to issue mining concessions, so information about the number of companies mining and their operational areas in the country can be obtained from this ministry.

#### Contacts

Telephone: +233-302) 672336

Website: <http://www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/2012-02-08-08-18-09/ministries/264-ministry-of-lands-and-natural-resources>

***The Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA)*** aids in providing sustainable potable water and related sanitation services as well promoting hygiene in rural communities.

It can provide information on water coverage in rural communities and the types of community water systems. The agency can also provide journalists with detailed information on completed and ongoing water supply and sanitation projects in the various districts.

It has useful and up-to-date information for journalists as it coordinates most of the international organisations and government intervention programs in the water and sanitation sector. The agency has offices in all the regions of the country.

#### Contacts

Telephone: +233-(0)21-518401/3

Email: [webmaster@cwsagh.org](mailto:webmaster@cwsagh.org)  
[info@cwsagh.org](mailto:info@cwsagh.org)

Website: <http://www.cwsagh.org>

# LOCALLY BASED NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

*ABANTU for Development* focuses on Gender and Governance, Gender and Climate Change and Gender and Peace Building, which are key areas of the 12 Critical Areas of Concern in the Beijing Consensus for Action, aimed at promoting women's empowerment.

It has a quarterly newsletter, called ABANTU News, which can be a source of information for journalists on the organisation's activities.

Journalists working on women's vulnerability and adaptation to climate change stories can obtain information from them. They have an office in Accra.

## Contacts

Telephone: +233 302 816 113

Email: [abanturowa@vodafone.com.gh](mailto:abanturowa@vodafone.com.gh)/[abanturowa@yahoo.com](mailto:abanturowa@yahoo.com)

Website: <http://abantu-rowa.org/>

*Friends of the Earth-Ghana (FoE-Gh)* seeks to protect the earth against further degradation of the environment.

Journalists can get story ideas on the protection of water bodies, forest, lands, climate change adaptation by communities and sustainable development from its advocacy and programmes.

It can be a source to obtain success stories on how its campaign on the environment has changed a negative practice such as open defecation.

## Contacts

Telephone: 00 233-30-2544257, 2512312

Fax: 00 233-30- 2544257

Website: [www.foe-gh.org](http://www.foe-gh.org)

Email: [info@foe-gh.org](mailto:info@foe-gh.org)

***Community Life Improvement Programme (CLIP)*** is a subunit of the Ghana Developing Community Association in the Northern Region of Ghana, which educates communities on water and sanitation as well as climate change awareness and adaptation.

Journalists can use their projects as case studies for climate change awareness and adaptation stories. The organization can give journalists information about other environmental issues such as indiscriminate bush burning and sand weaning in the Northern Region. It has a public affairs directorate.

Contact

Telephone: +233 (0)372025563/+233 (0)244722308

Email: [info@gdcaghana.org](mailto:info@gdcaghana.org)

[gdcagh@gmail.com](mailto:gdcagh@gmail.com)

Website; <http://gdcaghana.org/>

# THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

*The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)* is an expert group that evaluates climate change. Journalists can obtain information on up-to-date scientific perspectives on climate change and its potential environmental and socio-economic impacts. It periodically updates its scientific findings in publications, which journalists can use as background to their stories. Story ideas can also be generated by journalists from the various assessments.

Its secretariat has a communication directorate office. In order for journalists to receive the various reports, they need to sign up to their email mailing list on the organisation's website.

## Contacts

Phone: +41-22-730-8208/54/84

Fax: +41-22-730-8025/13

Website: <http://www.ipcc.ch/index.htm>

*The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)* is an environmental treaty negotiated at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), informally known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992.

It has a secretariat that journalists can contact to get detailed information about climate change negotiations/agreements from all of its conferences.

Again, journalists need to sign-up to the secretariat's emailing on its website to receive reports from adhoc meetings as well as press statements. Journalists can use the information from the secretariat as background to climate change stories and also get new story ideas from it.

## Contacts

Telephone: (49-228) 815-1000

Web: <http://unfccc.int>

Email: [press@unfccc.int](mailto:press@unfccc.int)

***The Convention on Biological Diversity*** is an agreement to which many countries, including Ghana are parties. It aims to conserve biodiversity, ensure its sustainability, promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, and ensure the appropriate use and transfer of technology bearing in mind the rights over those resources and to technologies.

It has a communication directorate at its secretariat and can give information on various initiatives by communities around the world towards conservation of biological diversity and its related issues.

Again, journalists need to sign-up to the secretariat's emailing list on its website to receive reports from adhoc meetings and periodic conferences as well as press statements. Journalists can use the information from this secretariat for background to biodiversity and generate new story ideas from it.

## Contacts

Telephone: +1 514 2882220

Email: [secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int)

Web: [www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int)

***United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)*** describes itself as acting to promote the wise use and sustainable development of the environment. The communications directorate can answer questions on the global, regional and national environmental conditions.

Journalists can get background information on many environmental and science related topics from its studies published on biosafety, energy, fresh water, gender, land, marine and coasts.

Also, journalists can sign up to the secretariat's emailing list on its website to receive reports of the meetings and press statements.

#### Contacts

Tel: (254-20) 7621234

Email List:

Champions of the Earth: [championsoftheearth@unep.org](mailto:championsoftheearth@unep.org)

Media: [unepnewsdesk@unep.org](mailto:unepnewsdesk@unep.org)

Publications: [publications@unep.org](mailto:publications@unep.org)

World Environment Day: [worldenvironmentday@unep.org](mailto:worldenvironmentday@unep.org)

UNEP Spokesperson Office of the Executive Director Tel: +254 20

7623084 Mobile: +254 733 632755 When Traveling: +41 79 596 57 37

***The United Nations Children Fund*** provides development assistance to children and mothers in rural communities to enable them to adapt to climate change health and educational threats.

The Ghana office can provide journalists with information on climate change and other environmental issues like water and sanitation. Journalists can use their projects as case studies for stories on the vulnerability of children due to climate change effects.

#### Contacts

Monica Arach, External Relations and Communications Specialist  
[marach@unicef.org](mailto:marach@unicef.org) +233244334996

Offeibea Baddoo, Communications Officer [ebaddoo@unicef.org](mailto:ebaddoo@unicef.org)

Madeleine Logan, Communications Officer Tamale Field Office  
[mlogan@unicef.org](mailto:mlogan@unicef.org)

***CARE Ghana*** educates women and girls on climate change effects to enable them to cope with the changing weather. Journalists can get story ideas from its climate change adaptation learning programs in Northern Ghana.

#### Contacts

Telephone: + (233) 30 701 2993

Email: [caregog@co.care.org](mailto:caregog@co.care.org)

# ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AND THINK-TANKS

*The Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS) of the University of Ghana* conducts research on the effects of climate change, environment, and demographic issues. It organises periodic seminars to share findings of its research with journalists and scientists. Journalists can obtain information from this meeting and also build good contacts.

The center has also instituted an annual conference for state and non-state actors to join researchers to discuss various environmental issues, for example, participants in the conference in July, 2014, were to discuss the threats posed by climate change and how they could be addressed. Journalists can get background information, story ideas and expert opinion on climate change issues at these conferences.

## Contact

Tel: +233 (0) 302 500274

website: [www.rips-ug.edu.gh](http://www.rips-ug.edu.gh) <<http://www.rips-ug.edu.gh/>>

email: [rips@ug.edu.gh](mailto:rips@ug.edu.gh) <<mailto:rips@ug.edu.gh>> [rips@rips-ug.edu.gh](mailto:rips@rips-ug.edu.gh) <<mailto:rips@rips-ug.edu.gh>>

*Kasa* is a civil society organization with expertise in natural resource management. With support from donor agencies it promotes research on natural resource and environmental governance policies.

Journalists can obtain information from its office and can also access funding to do advocacy and research on the environment.

## Contact

Telephone: 0302-239853/233-244-330957 /0262-653222

Email: [kasa@co.care.org](mailto:kasa@co.care.org)

Website: [www.kasaghana.org](http://www.kasaghana.org) <<http://www.kasaghana.org>>

*The University for Development Studies* scientists at its Wa and Nyapkala campuses have conducted research on environmental issues in the three regions in Northern Ghana. The school has an annual conference where most of the discussions are on climate change.

Journalists can get information on trends of the vulnerability of rural folks and projects as background information. They can make contacts and follow up on their case studies. The school has a Public Affairs Directorate.

Contacts

Telephone: + 233-3720-22078, 26633, 26634

E-mail: [prs@uds.edu.gh](mailto:prs@uds.edu.gh)

Website: [uds.edu.gh](http://uds.edu.gh) <<http://uds.edu.gh/>>

# RELATED HANDBOOKS

## CLIMATE CHANGE IN AFRICA: GUIDE BOOK FOR JOURNALISTS:

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has produced a manual to help practitioners improve their reporting on climate change. The manual also suggests possible story angles.

The ninety-page guide has six parts and each offers general knowledge and details on different aspects of the impacts of climate change in Africa.

It provides tips and ideas such as doing more stories that demonstrate how climate change affects all sexes but in different ways. The guide provides insight as to how stories can link climate change to both human development and environmental issues.

Part three of the guide deals with ways to limit climate change and adapt to its effects while explaining how governments are enacting policies and plans on these issues at national, regional and global levels.

To read the handbook: [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/news/unesco\\_publishes\\_climate\\_change\\_guidebook\\_for\\_african\\_journalists/#.U6HHG7Q1eSo](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/news/unesco_publishes_climate_change_guidebook_for_african_journalists/#.U6HHG7Q1eSo)

## GUIDE TO DIVERSITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING

The Society of Environmental Journalists (SEJ) handbook places emphasis on the need to widen the scope of environmental reporting by explaining environmental justice and how it is understood by different schools of thought.

The book further zeroes-in on topics such as toxic waste, flood and degradation which are often reported by journalists only when these issues

leads to a disaster. Essential reading materials and website resources give background information on a variety of topics.

To read the handbook: <http://www.sej.org/library/books/sej-guide-diversity-environmental-reporting>

## CLIMATE GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA: HANDBOOK FOR JOURNALISTS

This handbook is published by Inter Press Service-Africa. It looks at climate change as a governance, human rights, technical, scientific and development issue that needs to be mainstreamed into national development programmes.

It explains the evolution of the annual climate change conference organized by the United Nations, African's stand at every negotiation and the outcomes of these meetings. It also provides links to various authorities to read more on climate change.

The guide presents case studies of climate change stories and also explains processes to follow when developing a story, which include getting the right sources to interview and where to get background information.

It explains climate change terminologies such as Climate finance, Kyoto Protocol, carbon trading, voluntary emission reduction and climate governance.

To read the handbook: <http://ke.boell.org/2014/04/30/climate-governance-africa-handbook-journalists>