
GSAf MATTERS

The Ghana Institution of Geoscientists Makes a Leap

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The Ghana Institution of Geoscientists held another unique event on June 29, 2017 at the Yiri Lodge of the University of Ghana. As part of the rejuvenation of the Institution, there was a general meeting for the members, which was followed by a Public Lecture. Members at the general meeting successfully set up the 5 standing committees and 4 ad-hoc committees to propel the aspirations of the Institution.

The Public Lecture was delivered by Prof. Kwamina Panford of Northeastern University, Boston-MA, USA. The topic was "*Ghana's Natural Resources: assuring a better future*". In his delivery, Prof. Panford underscored the fact that though Ghana has not done badly in managing her oil and gas revenue as compared to what she did to her gold, diamond and bauxite, there was still much to be done. He opined that Ghana could use her oil and gas resource to diversify her economy. Gracing the event was the Metropolitan Archbishop of the Accra Diocese of the Catholic Church, the Most Reverend Bishop Charles Palmer Buckle. He on his part recounted where Ghana was 60 years ago and extrapolated where Ghana should have been today. He urged members of the Institution to develop position papers to help governments and charged members to see themselves as the sole solution providers on matters of the nation's natural resources. The event was another milestone by the new executives whose enthusiasm has been encouraging so far. The President of GhIG, Alhaji Yakubu Iddirissu in his closing remarks indicated that the event was one of many activities lined up for the Institution for the year. The event was streamed live and available on YouTube and the Institution's Facebook Account for posterity.



Archbishop Palmer Buckle and Prof. Panford



Ghana Institution of Geoscientists. Public Lecture by Prof. Kwamina Panford.

OPINION

Global hotspots for potential water conflict identified

July 17, 2017, Oregon State University

More than 1,400 new dams or water diversion projects are planned or already under construction and many of them are on rivers flowing through multiple nations, fueling the potential for increased water conflict between some countries.

A new analysis commissioned by the United Nations uses a comprehensive combination of social, economic, political and environmental factors to identify areas around the world most at-risk for "hydro-political" strife. This river basins study was part of the U.N.'s Transboundary Waters Assessment Program.

Researchers from the United States, Spain and Chile took part in the analysis, which has been recommended by the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe as an indicator for the U.N.'s sustainable development goals for water cooperation.

Results of the study have just been published in the journal *Global Environment Change*.

The analysis suggests that risks for conflict are projected to increase over the next 15 to 30 years in four hotspot regions – the Middle East, central Asia, the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin, and the Orange and Limpopo basins in southern Africa.

Additionally, the Nile River in Africa, much of southern Asia, the Balkans in southeastern Europe, and upper South America are all areas where new dams are under construction and neighboring countries face increasing water demand, may lack workable treaties, or worse, haven't even discussed the issue.

"If two countries have agreed on water flow and distribution when there's a dam upstream, there usually is no conflict," said Eric Sproles, an Oregon State University hydrologist and a co-author on the study. "Such is the case with the Columbia River basin between the United States and Canada, whose treaty is recognized as one of the most resilient and advanced agreements in the world.

"Unfortunately, that isn't the case with many other river systems, where a variety of factors come into play, including strong nationalism, political contentiousness, and drought or shifting climate conditions."

Geological Society of Africa Newsletter 7, 2017 ² T/O for SOURCE