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# A review of the effects of mining in the tropics and possible recommendations on environmental sustainability: A case of the mining industry in Ghana

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**T**his paper reviews the effects of mining in the tropical regions, especially in Ghana and make various recommendations that helps to promote environmental sustainability. The minerals and mining law of 1986 (PNDC 153), as amended by the minerals and mining (Amendment) Act of 1994 (Act 475) and the minerals and mining bill 2005 (Law No. 703), superintend over the mining industry in Ghana. Since the passing of the law in 1986, it has been the main legal body that legitimizes the over 300 registered small scale as well as 23 large scale mining companies in the country as a whole, with varying environmental impacts. Mining has contributed to the overall national gold output, foreign exchange earnings, youth employment and community development. As the second largest producer of gold in Africa, contributing to about 6% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Besides these socio-economic growths, there are several environmental intricacies that is associated with ore mining such as mercury pollution and land degradation/vegetation loss. The minerals commission, Environmental protect agency, forestry commission

and quite recently the joint military task force known as "operation vanguard" has been tasked with the territorial authority to control the fast depletion of the country's forest as well as pollution of the land and water bodies associated with mining activities. The data on this research is mainly focus on secondary research tools such as reviewing of admissible literature together with government policies and legal documentations and environmental impact assessment of mining companies. It is recommended that environmental sustainability can be achieved by involving local participation in environmental decision making, also registration process to acquire mining licenses should be less bureaucratic, again ensuring that the weakness in mining environmental policies be addressed and properly enforced as well as research outcome assistance from local government and the academic units to the agencies tasked with the protection of the environment such as minerals commission.

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