

# MOUNTING PRESSURE FROM LAND AND SEA

## China's Growing Influence in Africa Has Local Consequences



Cartographer: Bianca Malkoc  
Date: March 10, 2020

Sources: ESRI, Google Earth, Maxar Technologies, Natural Earth, American Enterprise Institution, Environmental Justice Foundation

Several hundred informal dwellings at Jamestown harbor were demolished in 2015, 2018 and 2019 by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. The region housed several thousand members of the local fishing community, many of whom left after losing their housing.

N  
100 meters

Delineates buildings that have been demolished since 2015

Saiko is an illegal fishing practice currently taking place off of the coast of Ghana. Foreign trawlers (90% are Chinese) smuggle large loads of fish back to shore in local canoes to sell in Ghanaian markets. This practice concentrates profits in the hands of a few while gradually decreasing fishing resources. Artisinal fishing communities like the one in Jamestown harbor are losing critical profits that provide the means for subsistence and survival.

10% of Ghana's entire population relies on artisinal fishing

\$50 million estimated worth of fish has been illegally caught by foreign trawlers

In Jamestown harbor, a region of Accra, Ghana nestled in the Gulf of Guinea, a community of traditional Ga fisher peoples and migrants from neighboring regions is threatened by modernization and growing Chinese influence. Jamestown formally served as the central destination for trade and the headquarters of the British Gold Coast, a colony that governed Ghana from 1867 to 1957, where an estimated 12 million African people were sold into slavery. In recent years, several informal buildings, including houses, schools, stores and public toilets were demolished by the local city government in order to clear the region for the development of a new port that will be constructed by the People's Republic of China. Over 1,000 people have been removed from this region since 2015 and have lost their housing. Many are forced to rebuild their dwellings here with nowhere else to go while living in fear of the next demolition. Illegal off-shore fishing, primarily by Chinese fishing trawlers, has further impacted the community, reducing the local fish stock and leaving local fishermen with fewer fish to bring back to shore. By inflicting these acts of violence on the people of Jamestown harbor, China's global influence beckons closer examination at local scales as well as, perhaps, regulation by international governing bodies.



CHINESE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS IN GHANA PER YEAR



China's foreign investment has steadily increased in the past decade with the *Belt and Road Initiative*, China's global development strategy for investing in new infrastructure projects in nearly 70 countries. In 2019 alone, construction contracts in Ghana reached close to \$2 billion within the energy, transportation, utilities and real estate sectors. The *Jamestown Fishing Harbor Complex* is a \$50 million contract between China and Ghana that was formally signed in 2019.