The most obvious land cover change in Ghana is the major increase in agricultural land in all regions of the country. However, the largest increases can be seen in the northeast, east-central, and southwestern regions of Ghana. This rate of agricultural expansion is unprecedented in the country’s history, overrunning many of the other land cover types, including Ghana’s savannas, woodlands, and forests.

Another important land cover change in Ghana is the degradation of forest. The forest class (represented primarily by Ghana’s dense evergreen rain forest and moist deciduous forest) shows a small decline in area from about 16,400 sq km in 1975 to 15,500 sq km in 2000, a reduction of 5 percent. This decline accelerated rapidly between 2000 and 2013, as forests were reduced by an additional 20 percent, to 12,400 sq km in 2013. The degraded forest, which occurs mainly in the off-reserve areas, represents a vegetation type that was derived from the dense and deciduous forests, modified by human activity.

Source: <https://eros.usgs.gov/westafrica/land-cover/land-use-land-cover-and-trends-ghana>

**Ghana**, country of western [Africa](https://www.britannica.com/place/Africa), situated on the coast of the [Gulf of Guinea](https://www.britannica.com/place/Gulf-of-Guinea). Although relatively small in area and population, [Ghana](https://www.britannica.com/place/Ghana-historical-West-African-empire) is one of the leading countries of Africa, partly because of its considerable natural wealth and partly because it was the first black African country south of the [Sahara](https://www.britannica.com/place/Sahara-desert-Africa) to achieve independence from colonial rule.

Ghana is also celebrated for its rich history—its habitation possibly dating from 10,000 BCE—and as a fascinating repository of cultural heritage. The country takes it name from the great [medieval](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/medieval) trading empire that was located northwest of the modern-day state until its [demise](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/demise) in the 13th century. Direct sea trade with Europe, established in the 15th century, had much impact on the area’s inhabitants, many of whom actively traded with the Portuguese, Dutch, British, and other Europeans.

Ghana’s administrative capital is the coastal city of [Accra](https://www.britannica.com/place/Accra). Originally founded on the site of several [Ga](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ga) settlements, Accra developed into a prosperous trading hub; today it serves as the commercial and educational centre of the county. [Kumasi](https://www.britannica.com/place/Kumasi), another prominent commercial centre, is located in the south-central part of the country. Known as the “Garden City of West Africa,” Kumasi is also the seat of the king of the [Asante](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Asante) people, the vestige of an empire (*see* [Asante empire](https://www.britannica.com/place/Asante-empire)) that existed in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Source: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ghana>

**Types of Land Ownership**

Land in Ghana is held from various [stool/skin lands](http://www.ghanalap.gov.gh/index.php/implementing-agencies/oasl), families or clans, which are the [allodial](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allodial_title) owners. These lands are known as customary lands and, according to Appiah(2011), these lands make up about 80 percent of all lands in Ghana.

There are also public lands, forming the remaining 20 percent, which is made up of state lands and vested lands. State lands mean that the state holds this area by acquisition from traditional allodial owners.

Vested lands refer to those plots owned by the state and customary authorities in a form of partnership i.e. split ownership (Larbi, 2008).

**Types of Interests on Land**

Land can be distributed and leased with various titles:

The allodial title: The allodial title is the highest title in land recognized by law. Only traditional leaders, families or the Ghanaian government can hold such a title.

There are two forms of freehold title interest:

**Customary freehold**: This is an interest that individuals or groups hold in a land, which is owned by a larger traditional community – the allodial owner – of which the interest holders are members or subjects. It is an interest that is [transferrable](http://meqasa.com/blog/qa-how-do-i-transfer-a-land-title-in-ghana/) to successors of the individual or subgroups until there are no successors.

**Common law freehold** – Common law freehold is similar to the customary freehold. The difference, however, is that this interest can be acquired by both strangers and members of the community that owns the land. A stranger in this regard refers to a Ghanaian who is not a member of the land-owning community.  It is important to note that the 1992 Constitution by article 267 (5) forbids the creation of freehold interests in stool land in Ghana.

**Leasehold** – A leasehold/lease is an interest in land that has a specified start and end for a period, subject to payment of annual ground rents and covenants.

There are some lesser land interest types created under contractual, share-cropping or other customary tenancy arrangements. Two very common tenancies in the Akan areas are “Abunu” and “Abusa” or “do ma yenkye.” Other areas have different names for these arrangements in the local dialects.

Source: <https://meqasa.com/blog/land-ownership-ghana-part-1/>

More links:

* <https://www.land-links.org/country-profile/ghana/>
* Ghana Map Source: <https://nominatim.openstreetmap.org/search.php?q=ghana&polygon_geojson=1&viewbox=>
* Land Rights and Development in Ghana: <http://www.focusonland.com/countries/ghana/>