



Press Release

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Switzerland and Ghana sign an agreement on climate protection

Switzerland and Ghana today signed an agreement during a video conference in the Ghanaian capital Accra, which enables Switzerland to reduce its CO₂ emissions partly abroad through climate protection projects in the African country. This is the second agreement of its kind worldwide under the Paris Climate Accords (Paris Agreement). Switzerland concluded a similar agreement with Peru on 20 October 2020. For the President of the Swiss, Federal Councillor Simonetta Sommaruga, with this agreement Switzerland is assuming its responsibility in international climate policy and is also making a contribution to human rights.

Under the Paris Agreement, Switzerland has committed itself to halving its greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. Switzerland will achieve this goal primarily through domestic measures. The Paris Convention also allows countries to reduce their own emissions through climate projects abroad. The emission reductions achieved abroad can be credited to their national reduction target.

After Switzerland concluded the world's first agreement of this kind with Peru in October 2020, a similar agreement was sealed today with Ghana. Ghana's Foreign Minister, Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, and the Swiss Ambassador to Ghana, Philipp Stalder, signed the agreement during a video conference. President Simonetta Sommaruga witnessed the signing ceremony via video conference from Bern. Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), Prof. Kwabena Frimpong-Boateng was also present at the ceremony in Accra.

The agreement will come into force at the beginning of next year and enables the implementation of climate protection projects such as the installation of several hundred thousand decentralized solar systems as part of the "Ghana National Clean Energy Program". This program strengthens the expansion of renewable energies and energy-efficient technologies and thus reduces CO₂ emissions in Ghana. This is particularly true in cooking - where efficiency means less wood and charcoal is burned - and in lighting, where solar and LED technology is replacing kerosene lamps and candles. In addition, the program will encourage small businesses to use medium-sized solar plants in place of diesel generators.

Clear rules for the protection of the environment and human rights

The agreement obliges both parties to use a method that prevents double counting of achieved emission reductions. It also defines a clear framework for the international transfer of CO₂ reductions and their recognition by Ghana and Switzerland. The treaty establishes criteria to ensure that climate projects do not harm the environment, ensure sustainable development and respect human rights. According to the agreement, there must be no evidence of a violation of human rights or national legislation. In this case, the transfer of emission reductions from the project in question would be immediately suspended. These criteria are continuously reviewed over the duration of the climate projects.

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