

# Enhancing Private Sector Participation in Green Industrialisation in Ghana

Africa-China Centre for Policy and Advisory



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This policy brief has been prepared for ACCPA by Sylvia Sinkari, a Research Fellow at the Africa-China Centre for Policy and Advisory (ACCPA). The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of ACCPA and do not necessarily represent the views of its partners or supporting institutions.

The brief forms part of a thematic series developed under the Sino-African Green Finance Alliance (SAGFA), with support from the African Climate Foundation (ACF), to facilitate knowledge exchange, and promote informed policy dialogue on green finance for Africa's sustainable future.

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# 1.0 Executive Summary

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Ghana's ambitions for green industrialisation are central to its sustainable economic transformation, climate resilience, and job creation goals. Nevertheless, private sector and SME engagement remains limited due to high-risk perceptions, insufficient technical capacity, and regulatory uncertainty. This policy brief identifies the primary barriers to private sector involvement and proposes solutions, including de-risking tools, blended finance mechanisms, investment readiness support, and regulatory improvements. It also outlines practical steps for unlocking private capital and scaling up sustainable industrial investments by drawing on successful global models.

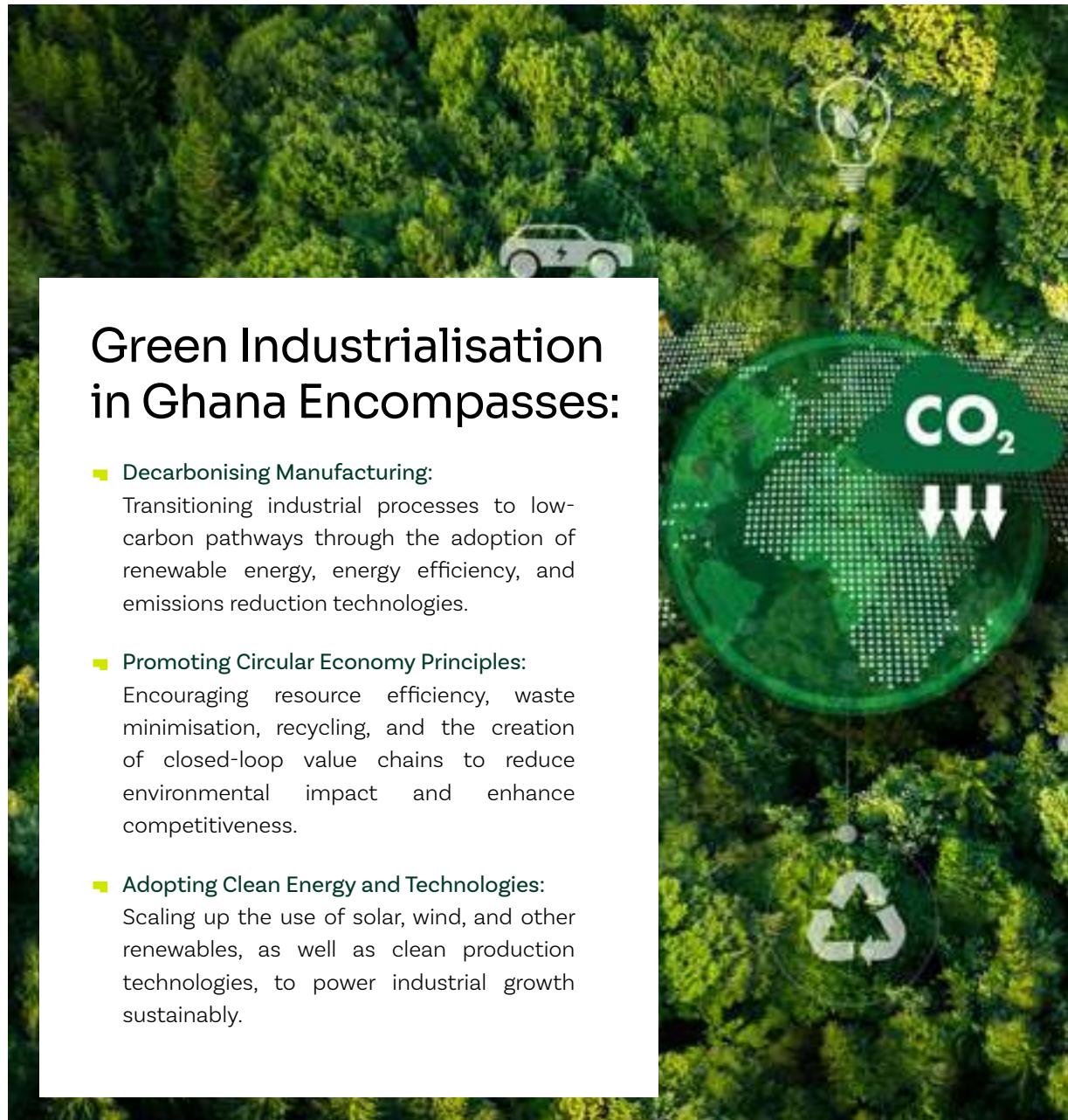
## This policy brief outlines:

- The key challenges inhibiting private sector involvement in Ghana's green industrial drive.
- Policy solutions including de-risking tools, blended finance mechanisms, investment readiness support, and regulatory improvements.
- Practical steps for unlocking private capital and scaling up sustainable industrial investments by learning from successful global models.

## 2.0 Background and Contextual Overview

### Defining Green Industrialisation:

Green Industrialisation refers to the transformation of traditional industrial practices towards sustainable and environmentally friendly operations. In Ghana, green industrialisation involves decarbonising manufacturing, promoting circular economy principles, and adopting clean energy and technologies to minimise environmental impact, enhance resource efficiency, and ensure the well-being of workers and communities while pursuing economic growth.



### Green Industrialisation in Ghana Encompasses:

- **Decarbonising Manufacturing:**  
Transitioning industrial processes to low-carbon pathways through the adoption of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and emissions reduction technologies.
- **Promoting Circular Economy Principles:**  
Encouraging resource efficiency, waste minimisation, recycling, and the creation of closed-loop value chains to reduce environmental impact and enhance competitiveness.
- **Adopting Clean Energy and Technologies:**  
Scaling up the use of solar, wind, and other renewables, as well as clean production technologies, to power industrial growth sustainably.

# Ghana's Policy Commitment

Ghana's medium to long-term development policies are strategically aligned to promote sustainable industrialisation as a core pillar of national growth. This commitment is reflected in a suite of interlinked policy instruments, including:

## Ghana's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs):

Ghana's updated NDCs under the Paris Agreement outline 47 climate actions across 19 policy areas, targeting both mitigation and adaptation strategies. The NDCs aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 45% (15% unconditional, 30% conditional) by 2030, create over one million green jobs, and enhance resilience for nearly 38 million people. These actions are integrated into national development planning and are designed to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy while promoting inclusive growth and job creation.

## Green Finance Taxonomy:

Launched in 2024, Ghana's Green Finance Taxonomy provides a clear framework for identifying and classifying environmentally sustainable economic activities. The taxonomy guides public and private investments toward sectors such as energy, agriculture, water, waste management, construction, and transportation. It is being implemented in phases, with the first phase focusing on priority sectors and subsequent phases introducing quantitative thresholds and incentives. The taxonomy is intended to unlock critical financing, enhance transparency, and reduce greenwashing, positioning Ghana as a leader in sustainable finance in Africa.





### National Energy Transition and Investment Plan:

Ghana's Energy Transition Framework and Investment Plan sets ambitious targets for decarbonising the energy sector, aiming for net-zero emissions by 2060. The plan prioritises the expansion of renewable energy, low-carbon technologies, and the development of green industrial parks, such as the Akosombo Net-Zero Industrial Park. This park, powered entirely by renewable energy, is designed to attract eco-conscious industries and serve as a model for sustainable manufacturing and the circular economy. The plan also supports the adoption of electric vehicles and sustainable transport solutions.

### Ghana Industrial Policy:

The national industrial policy framework integrates green manufacturing and resource efficiency as key objectives. It encourages the adoption of cleaner production methods, energy-efficient technologies, and circular economy practices. The policy also supports the development of green value chains and the integration of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards to enhance competitiveness and access to international markets.

### National Climate Change Policy:

Ghana's National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) provides a comprehensive approach to building a climate-resilient and low-carbon economy. It emphasises mainstreaming climate change into all sectors, fostering innovation, and mobilising finance for adaptation and mitigation. The NCCP supports the harmonisation of climate initiatives and the development of mechanisms for implementation, monitoring, and financing.

## 2.1 Green Lending Initiatives by Ghanaian Banks

The overall volume of green lending remains relatively small within Ghana's broader banking portfolios. A recent survey reveals that over 90% of funding for renewable energy projects has primarily come from development finance institutions, with local banks playing a minor role so far. Supporting this, research into the impact of green finance on Ghanaian banks further highlights the sector's infancy, noting that only 6 out of 24 universal banks have actively introduced dedicated green credit schemes aimed at encouraging private sector investments in renewable energy and environmental sustainability. Additionally, a separate study from Mensah (2025) highlights the limited immediate profitability of green finance for commercial banks, emphasising their cautious approach.

Drawing upon these insights, it can be inferred that green financing likely represents just a modest fraction (estimated between 5% to 10%) of total bank lending in Ghana. At the same time, traditional sectors overwhelmingly dominate, capturing around 90% to 95% of the financial resources. A conceptual bar chart comparing total bank credit allocations clearly underscores this disparity, emphasising the substantial opportunity and necessity to scale up local green lending in the near future significantly (Figure 2.1).

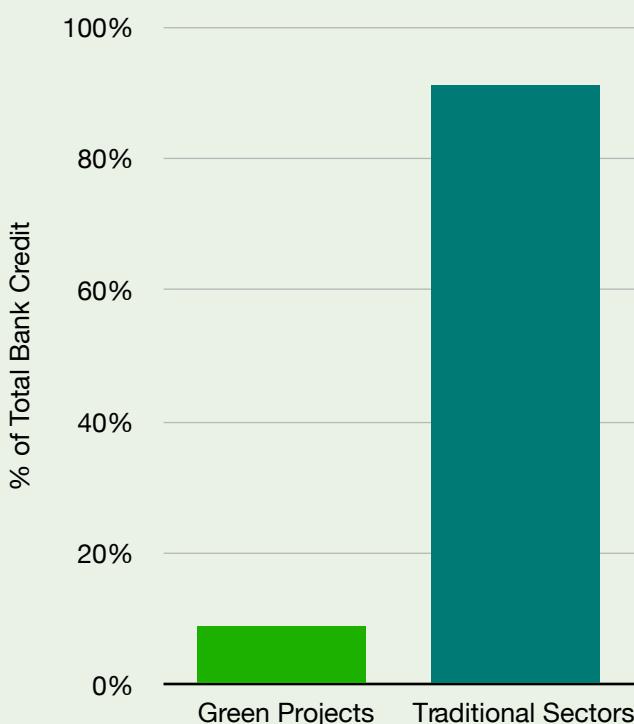


Figure 2.1 Estimated Proportion of Bank credit Allocation in Ghana: Green Projects vs Traditional sectors

Source: SAGFA Report (2025)



## 2.2 Global Case Study Context and Lessons

Globally, several countries have demonstrated the effectiveness of targeted incentives and blended finance mechanisms in mobilising private capital for green industrialisation.

■ **Kenya:** Through the Africa Green Industrialisation Initiative, Kenya has attracted over \$4 billion in private and international investment for green projects, including green hydrogen, geothermal power, and climate-smart agriculture. The initiative utilises public-private partnerships, de-risking instruments, and value-added green products to drive industrial transformation.

■ **Morocco:** Morocco's decarbonisation programme, supported by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and the EU, provides green loans and technical assistance to private-sector companies. This approach has enabled SMEs to invest in climate mitigation and adaptation technologies, with a focus on renewable energy and resource efficiency.

■ **Vietnam:** Vietnam's evolving green finance framework has facilitated the issuance of green bonds and concessional loans to fund large-scale renewable energy projects and sustainable manufacturing. State-owned enterprises and private companies have leveraged green finance to support solar, wind, and sustainable agricultural initiatives, underscoring the catalytic role of blended finance in accelerating the green transition.



# 3.0 Barriers to Private Sector and SME Engagement in Ghana

## A. High-Risk Perceptions in Green Investments

- Weak Project Pipelines: The sustainability sector frequently faces challenges with inconsistent project pipelines, resulting in uncertainty about investment opportunities. This instability is exacerbated by a lack of historical data showing reliable returns on green investments. Investors may be reluctant to commit resources when there is inadequate evidence of profitability.
- Currency Depreciation Risks: Many green projects operate in emerging markets where currency fluctuations pose significant financial risks. Depreciating local currencies can erode returns for international investors. Furthermore, the lack of robust long-term financing solutions exacerbates this issue, leaving potential projects without the necessary capital to withstand economic volatility.
- Perceived High-Risk by Financial Institutions: Banks and other lending institutions often categorise green small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as high-risk ventures due to perceived uncertainties in revenue streams and market acceptance. This perception can result in stricter lending criteria, making it challenging for these businesses to access essential credit. The cumulative effect of these factors contributes to a financing gap that stifles the growth of green innovation and sustainable practices.

## B. Lack of Technical Assistance and Capacity

- Many Ghanaian SMEs lack the technical know-how to design bankable green projects: They encounter difficulties in developing projects that are both financially viable and environmentally sustainable. This challenge primarily stems from a lack of technical expertise in green technologies and project design. Without suitable guidance, SMEs may struggle to develop projects that meet the financing criteria of banks or international climate funds. Consequently, this gap often leads to missed opportunities for securing funding for green initiatives.
- Insufficient access to Clean Technology, Energy-Efficient Machinery, and Market Data: Another barrier is the limited availability and affordability of clean technologies and energy-efficient machinery in Ghana. SMEs often struggle to procure equipment that meets modern environmental standards and enhances energy efficiency. The high initial costs of these technologies, coupled with inadequate market data on their performance and benefits, further deter SMEs from investing in green solutions. This hampers their ability to adopt sustainable practices and reduce their carbon footprint.
- Low awareness of international climate finance instruments: Many Ghanaian businesses, particularly SMEs, lack awareness of international climate finance instruments and the opportunities available to support green projects. These instruments include grants, concessional loans, and technical assistance provided by international organisations, development banks, and climate funds. Without adequate knowledge of these funding sources and how to access them, SMEs struggle to leverage external financial support for their green initiatives.

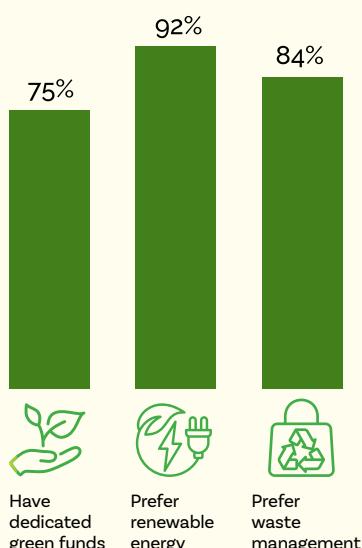
## C. Policy and Regulatory Uncertainty

- Unpredictable implementation of environmental regulations and tax policies: Ghana has developed various environmental and tax-related policies to encourage sustainable practices, such as tax exemptions for renewable energy products or regulations around pollution control. However, the inconsistent and unpredictable enforcement or rollout of these policies creates uncertainty for investors and businesses. For example, a tax incentive for solar energy products may be announced but not effectively implemented, or it may be suddenly changed without notice. This unpredictability makes it difficult for businesses to plan long-term green investments, as they cannot reliably anticipate the regulatory environment or associated costs and benefits.
- Lack of clear incentives or enforcement for green standards: While Ghana has established goals for sustainability and climate action, practical incentives, such as subsidies, tax breaks, or preferential treatment for green investments, are often unclear, insufficient,

or not systematically enforced. Similarly, environmental standards (e.g., energy efficiency benchmarks or emissions limits) may exist on paper but lack proper enforcement mechanisms. This undermines the motivation for businesses and financial institutions to align with green principles, as there are few consequences for non-compliance or tangible rewards for proactive green initiatives.

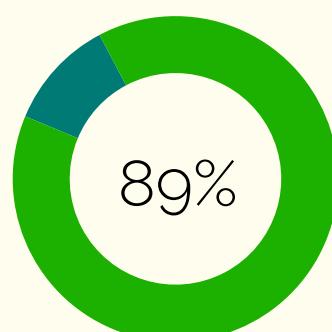
- Weak coordination across regulatory bodies: The development and regulation of green finance involves multiple government agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Finance, the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC), and the Bank of Ghana. However, poor coordination among these entities often leads to overlapping mandates, fragmented policies, and mixed signals to investors. For instance, one agency might promote renewable energy, while another continues to support fossil fuel subsidies. This lack of synergy and a lack of streamlined policy direction creates confusion and deters both local and foreign investment in green projects.

### Green Investment priorities among Private Equity, VC and Impact Funds



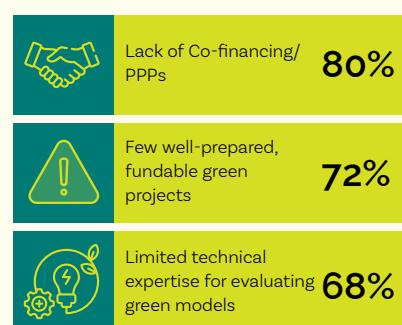
Investor interest is strong, especially in energy and waste

### How much are Investors committing?



- Small project sizes
- High risk perception

### Top barriers cited by Investors



# 4.0 Policy Recommendations

## A. Deploy De-Risking Instruments

Develop a Green Investment Risk Facility through strategic collaboration among public institutions, such as the Ghana EXIM Bank and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), and international development partners or donor agencies. The facility should be designed to mitigate the perceived and actual risks associated with financing green projects, particularly for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

- Deploy de-risking instruments such as partial credit guarantees, first-loss capital provisions, and tailored insurance products to reduce the risk exposure of commercial lenders and incentivise their participation in green finance.
- Introduce targeted incentives, including tax relief, risk-sharing guarantees, and technical assistance programs, to improve the investment readiness of SMEs and attract greater private sector engagement in climate-resilient and low-carbon initiatives.
- Leverage international best practices by adapting proven models such as the Climate Investor One and the African Guarantee Fund, ensuring contextual relevance to Ghana's green finance landscape.

## B. Scale Blended Finance Models to Accelerate Green Investment

Leverage blended finance as a strategic tool to mobilise greater private sector participation in green initiatives:

- Utilise concessional capital from international partners, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), African Development Bank (AfDB), International Finance Corporation (IFC), and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), to attract domestic private finance by reducing risk and enhancing returns.
- Embed scalable green financial instruments that include Green Bonds, Green Loans, Green Insurance, and Green Grants within Ghana's financial ecosystem. Complement these efforts with innovative mechanisms, such as Green Venture Capital, to support high-impact, climate-resilient enterprises and stimulate long-term, sustainable growth.
- Promote Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in strategic sectors such as renewable energy, waste-to-energy, and the development of eco-industrial parks. These green industrial public-private partnerships (PPPs) can serve as hubs for innovation, circular economy practices, and low-carbon production.
- Collaborate with national institutions such as the Ghana Infrastructure Investment Fund (GIIF) to support co-financing arrangements and unlock capital for sustainable infrastructure and industry development.

## C. Build Investment Readiness among SMEs

- Strengthen the Ghana Climate Innovation Centre (GCIC) and similar hubs to deliver comprehensive business development services, conduct feasibility studies, and assist in pitch preparation for SMEs.
- Introduce Green SME Accelerator Programs, particularly those supported by the Venture Capital Trust Fund, with a focus on agribusiness, manufacturing, and clean technology.
- Facilitate linkages and knowledge exchanges between SMEs and international value chains that prioritize sustainability practices.

## D. Improve Regulatory and Policy Environment

Strengthening policy consistency and ESG standards by ensuring regulatory clarity and alignment with international benchmarks to boost investor confidence and market access.

- The implementation of stable, long-term green industrial policies is essential. These policies should establish clear targets and provide necessary incentives to promote sustainable practices within the industry.
- Additionally, it is crucial to introduce tax relief measures, green procurement mandates, and carbon credit schemes, including both carbon credits and carbon offsets.
- Furthermore, enhancing the efficiency of environmental permitting processes and improving transparency through the use of digital platforms will facilitate compliance and engagement.
- Finally, aligning national standards with regional frameworks, such as those set by ECOWAS, as well as global standards, including ISO 14001 and the EU Green Deal requirements, will ensure coherence and enhance the effectiveness of our environmental initiatives.

By integrating these approaches, Ghana is well-positioned to catalyse its green industrial transition, unlock private capital, and achieve its sustainable development and climate resilience goals.



# 5.0 Implementation Considerations

**Establish a National Green Industrialisation Taskforce including MoTI, MoCC&S, MoEn, GIPC, AGI, MoF, and key financial stakeholders.**

1. Establishing a National Green Industrialisation Taskforce in Ghana would address critical gaps in policy coordination, financing, and implementation while leveraging existing frameworks. This will also ensure policy continuity and institutional coordination by establishing a bipartisan commitment to green industrialisation strategies and creating mechanisms for sustained coordination across ministries and agencies. A national green finance steering committee or inter-ministerial task force could help harmonise policy instruments and reduce duplication.

## Proposed Composition: Roles and Synergies

Agency	Mandate	Task Force Contribution
MOTI (Ministry of Trade and Industry)	Industrial policy (e.g., 1D1F, Strategic Anchor Industries)	Align industrial incentives with green standards; scale resource-efficient initiatives.
MoEn (Ministry of Energy)	Renewable energy deployment	Integrate clean energy into industrial zones (e.g., solar-powered agro-processing).
MoF (Ministry of Finance)	Fiscal policy and debt management	Design green bonds, tax breaks for ESG-compliance, and de-risk climate investments.
GIPC (Ghana Investment Promotion Centre)	Investment promotion	Attract FDI for green manufacturing (e.g., renewable tech assembly).
AGI (Association of Ghana Industries)	Private-sector advocacy	Bridge policy gaps; disseminate ESG standards to SMEs.
MoCC&S (Ministry of Climate Change & Sustainability)	Climate policy	Ensure NDC alignment; oversee carbon pricing for industries.
Financial Stakeholders (e.g., Retail and Commercial Banks, Development Banks)	Capital allocation	Develop green loan frameworks; pilot blended finance models.

**Above is a critical analysis situated within Ghana's institutional and economic context.**

2. In conclusion, a National Green Industrialisation Task Force is not just additive but crucial for unifying Ghana's fragmented approach to sustainable industry. By consolidating authority under MOTI/GIPC and enforcing cross-ministerial accountability, it can address policy incoherence, attract green finance, and establish Ghana as a West African hub for low-carbon manufacturing. Without it, industrial decarbonisation targets risk remaining aspirational.

**Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework with measurable KPIs for green investment flows and support for SMEs.**

3. A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework with clear, measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is essential for Ghana's Green Finance landscape to ensure transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in green investment flows and support for SMEs. Such a framework would monitor the allocation, disbursement, and impact of green finance, including public sector grants, green loans, and bonds, to targeted sectors such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable agriculture. KPIs might include the volume of green finance disbursed to SMEs, the number of SMEs accessing green finance, reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and progress towards national sustainability objectives. This approach would align with Ghana's Green Finance Taxonomy and Sustainable Financing Framework, offering investors and policymakers reliable data to evaluate outcomes, mitigate risks, and inform future investments. In a nutshell, a robust M&E framework with clear KPIs is essential for maximising the impact of green finance on SMEs and supporting Ghana's transition towards a sustainable, low-carbon economy.

**Facilitate regular public-private dialogues to adapt strategies and identify emerging opportunities.**

4. Facilitating regular public-private dialogues is a key strategy for Ghana's Green Finance landscape, enabling ongoing collaboration among the government, financial institutions, and private sector actors to adapt strategies, share insights, and identify new opportunities for green investment and innovation. These structured discussions help bridge knowledge gaps, address implementation challenges, and ensure that policies and funding mechanisms remain responsive to evolving market needs and global trends, ultimately supporting more effective and inclusive green finance solutions for Ghana's sustainable development.



# Conclusion

In conclusion, enhancing private sector participation in Ghana's green industrialisation requires a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach that addresses critical barriers such as fragmented policies, limited access to green finance, and knowledge gaps among SMEs.

The establishment of a National Green Industrialisation Taskforce, the development of robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks with measurable KPIs, and the facilitation of regular public-private dialogues are pivotal strategies to align incentives, improve transparency, and foster innovation.

By integrating these mechanisms, Ghana can create an enabling environment that attracts private investment, scales up green industrial activities, and accelerates the transition to a resilient, low-carbon economy. Such a comprehensive approach will not only strengthen the country's climate commitments but also position Ghana as a regional leader in sustainable industrial development.



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## About SAGFA

The Sino-Africa Green Finance Alliance (SAGFA) is a multi-stakeholder platform dedicated to advancing sustainable industrial development in Africa through innovative green finance solutions. By bringing together policymakers, researchers, financial institutions, and industry leaders from Africa, China, and beyond, SAGFA works to unlock investment opportunities, shape policy frameworks, and strengthen capacities for climate-resilient growth.

Through research, dialogue, and targeted initiatives, the Alliance positions Africa at the forefront of global green finance transformation while fostering stronger Africa-China cooperation for a just and sustainable future.



## About ACCPA

The Africa-China Centre for Policy and Advisory (ACCPA) is a Sino-African research and policy think tank based in Accra, Ghana, with teams in Morocco, Tanzania, Tunisia, the DRC, China, the UK, Ethiopia, and Botswana.

Through evidence-based research, strategic advisory, and multi-stakeholder dialogue, the Centre offers policy briefs, expert analysis, capacity-building programs, and forums that advance informed decision-making and sustainable partnerships.

With a pan-African outlook, ACCPA is committed to ensuring that Africa's voice is at the forefront of international cooperation with China—championing shared development goals, policy coherence, and equitable cooperation.

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## About ACF

The African Climate Foundation, established in 2020, is the first African-led strategic re-granter working at the nexus of climate change and development.

[www.africanclimatefoundation.org](http://www.africanclimatefoundation.org)



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