

Impacts of Urban Sprawl on Livelihoods and Ecology in Peri-Urban Fringe of the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area

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Abstract

The rapid increase in population and urbanization continue to exert growing pressure on resources in most cities. Accra, the capital city of Ghana, has been attracting migrants from all over the country resulting in escalating congestion and housing shortage in the inner cities. The resultant effect of these phenomena is the sprawl of human settlements to peri-urban areas. As a result natural reserves and farmlands are being converted into residential and non-residential developments in the urban fringes. This study assesses the impact of this trend on livelihoods sustainability and the ecology in the peri-urban areas of Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA). The study employed primary and secondary sources of data and used stratified sampling in the selection of major road corridors where sprawling was pronounced and intensive. A multi-temporal set of Remote Sensing data was used to classify Landsat images of GAMA for the years 1986, 1991, 2008 and 2016 to know the extent of land use and land cover change. Environment for Visualizing Image 5.1 was used to process, analyse and integrate the spatial data. The findings revealed that between 2008 and 2016, dense vegetation had decreased by 226.98%. Settlements continued to increase to 120.29 percent during that same period. The study also revealed that the land market was lucrative and the resultant implications are on livelihoods and ecology. The study recommends proper planning policies, development of an eco-city model and affordable housing in the inner cities.