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“Management of land use systems for enhanced food security:
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Conflict and Controversies in Land Use System: Case of Cocoa Verse Gold

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Abstract

Cocoa and mining both contribute immensely to the growth of the economy of Ghana. Major cocoa growing areas have also been found to be well-endowed with minerals including gold and diamond. About 230 companies had been listed by the mineral commission and over 40 of these companies had actually received mining leases by 2004 to develop new mines and carry out actual operations. Current trends show that many of these cocoa growing areas are being used for mining purposes. A case study was conducted to determine the conflict and controversies in relation to trade-off surrounding gold mining activities on cocoa farmers and cocoa production in the Asutifi District of the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. A multistage sampling technique was used for data collection through interviews of fifty (50) key informants whose cocoa farms have been affected by mining activities in the district. The results show that half (50 %) of the respondents have lost between 1–5 hectares of cocoa farms to mining activities while about one-third have lost between 6–10 hectares of cocoa farms. Compensation paid ranges between GH 1,3430 to GH 4047.33 per hectare based on the maturity level of the cocoa. These estimates are based on the assumption that there is an average of about 1350 cocoa trees per hectare. The study also shows that affected farmers in the district are not satisfied with the compensation package being offered by the mining industry. Farmers indicated the scarcity of land raising livelihood and food security concerns in the community though the mining industry has instituted programmes for sustainable agricultural and livelihood development. The findings suggest the need for continuous dialogue among major stakeholders in the cocoa production and mining companies.

Keywords: Cocoa, food security, Ghana, gold, livelihood