

# Shipping Review

GHANA'S AUTHORITATIVE QUARTERLY SHIPPING AND LOGISTICS JOURNAL

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# Shipping Review

GHANA'S AUTHORITATIVE QUARTERLY SHIPPING AND LOGISTICS JOURNAL

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**The Withdrawal of Mali, Niger And Burkina Faso From ECOWAS: Implications for Trade Facilitation**



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**The 2023 Mid-Year Trade Report: Assessing the Key Findings and Mapping the Path Forward**



**GHANA SHIPPERS' AUTHORITY**

## Our Vision

To ensure a competitive, transparent, and predictable commercial shipping industry in Ghana that creates value for the Shipper across all modes of transport.

## Our Mission

Effectively and efficiently regulate the commercial shipping industry in Ghana.

Ensure that all business practices in the commercial shipping industry in Ghana are fair, competitive, and transparent.

Develop clear solutions and regulations for shippers on issues like demurrage, port/border crossing delays, freight rates, local charges, service standards, etc.

Create unique service experience for shippers in their import/export businesses.

Facilitating the provision of up-to-date infrastructure to meet the current development and technological changes in the shipping industry.

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# MEET THE NEW EDITOR IN CHIEF

**CREATING VALUE FOR THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY  
BY MITIGATING THE NEEDS OF THE SHIPPER**

## **Kwesi Baffour Sarpong: Creating Value for Shippers**

For the past 20 years, Kwesi Baffour Okyere Sarpong has gathered experience and knowledge in a broad spectrum of disciplines. After completing school as a Biochemist, he ventured into the oil and gas industry where he held various sensitive executive positions, including International Business Manager for UOP Chemicals, International Business Manager for Stupp Corporation, and Global Business Manager for Albemarle Corporation, a Fortune 500 company. He later worked for the United Nations Foundation as their Special Representative in Clean Energy from 2013 to 2020. After gathering various experiences that shaped his career path, Baffour established Vulcan Companies, Inc., an energy, and infrastructure consulting company, and became its first Executive Chair.

## **Education**

He attended primary school at Association International School in Accra and continued at Achimota School for his secondary education from 1987 to 1995. At Achimota, Kwesi Baffour demonstrated leadership skills alongside his academic prowess and the ability to network and connect with people from all backgrounds. After

completing sixth form at Achimota School, and his post-sixth form National Service at the Noguchi Research Institute, he travelled to the USA on an academic scholarship to attend Louisiana State University (LSU). Kwesi Sarpong completed his studies at LSU in 1999 and holds degrees in Biochemistry, with minors in Industrial Engineering and Economics.

## **Assumption of Office**

In November 2023, he assumed the role of Chief Servant of the Ghana Shippers Authority (GSA). With a sharp vision to enhance the value shippers derive from the mandate of GSA, I currently stand in the oasis of possibilities that aims to go all out for the shipper (importers, exporters, and transitters).

I stand proudly in the halls of the house built by the hard work of past CEO's like Mr. Magnus Teye Addico, Dr. Kofi Mbiah and Benonita Bismarck, who have all served the Authority and the nation with distinction and great purpose. I intend to leverage all the learnings of the past to build a great future for the entire shipping industry.

For us, the shipper is king, and our vision is to create experiences for shippers (importers, exporters, and transitters), and their agents





A presentation made to the Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) Mr. Kwesi Baffour Sarpong by representatives of the neighbouring landlocked countries during a meeting to discuss ways to improve transit trade in Accra

*Hence the creation of highly efficient and competitive ports, where cargo throughput is best-in-class and prioritized will automatically lead to successful and satisfied shippers. Ghana will also see accelerated trade, and consequently increased commercial cargo throughput through our various sea, air, and land ports. Our infrastructure will not mean much if the shipper refuses to use the port or if their businesses are frustrated, and they turn elsewhere or go out of business."*

### **Collaboration with Key Stakeholders to Create Value for the Shipper**

For the GSA, stakeholder collaboration is key to executing its mandate. Two of its sister agencies, the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) and the Ghana Maritime Authority (GMA), are integral players in providing essential services that enhance shipper operational experience. Among other things, the GPHA manages the ports and harbours infrastructure, facilitating the smooth movement of goods in and out of the country, ensuring efficient cargo handling, and maintaining port security. On the other hand, the GMA oversees maritime safety, regulation, and enforcement, ensuring adherence to international maritime standards, promoting maritime security, and protecting the marine environment. Together, these agencies must commit to always collaborating and working in tandem with GSA to ensure a seamless and efficient shipping process.

*It is imperative that these agencies continue to collaborate and foster great working relationships with each other to ensure that all cargo is cost-effectively, and hassle freely transferred through Ghana's ports.*

I bring to focus strategies to enhance the shipper's experiences, including engagements with relevant Ministries, Departments, & Agencies (MDAs), Multilaterals, shipping services providers, and other industry players to shape policies that benefit the shipper. To us, the current landscape leaves the Shippers (importers, exporters and transitters) vulnerable to many unpredictable shocks in the shipping space, so promoting their interests requires not only meeting their existing needs but also anticipating future demands and providing innovative solutions. I will emphasize the importance of offering shippers, their agents and service providers a range of benefits and services that enhance their overall shipping experience and contribute to their success in international trade.

(service providers) that do not only protect and promote their interests in relation to international trade across Ghana's land borders, airports, and seaports effectively and efficiently, but more importantly to create opportunities, markets, and networks that enable the shipper's business to thrive.

Under our leadership, *"GSA will work to create value for the entire shipping industry, especially as it pertains to the movement of shipper cargoes via different types of carriers through various modes of transport, across different borders (land, air, sea) at an optimum cost."* I remain poised to translate some of our experience and skills to reposition GSA to take on its role as the authority in the dynamic and ever-changing shipping and logistics landscape to firmly establish Ghana as Africa's premier trade hub.

### **Articulated Vision**

I seek to reinforce the mandate of the GSA as the state entity seized with the mandate to ensure that the interests of the entire commercial shipping industry, led by shippers, their service providers and supporting MDAs across the country. These principles of prioritizing a cost-effective and hassle-free port activities for the transfer of goods, enabling increased international and regional trade throughput via our ports, remain key to propel growth in the shipping and logistics sector, and in effect make a positive impact on national economic growth.

Speaking to the Shipping Review Journal, Mr. Sarpong said, *"Just as the buyer or consumer is king in a free market economy, for us at the Ghana Shippers' Authority, the shipper should be king. This is simply because all of us, the MDAs, the service providers, and the port infrastructure exist because of the shippers and their service providers."*

Our inaugural visits to GSA's facilities and projects across the country, including its zonal offices at Takoradi, Kumasi, Tamale, and Tema, as well as to the Boankra Integrated Logistics Terminal (BILT), the Elubo and Paga Freight Parks, Takoradi Logistics Platform, and Tacotel have acquainted us with current operations, and I am ready to roll. **GSA is indeed set for a new era where the shipper and its agents are the raison d'etre and receives focus accordingly.**

#### Editor-in-Chief's Note:

I am thrilled to address you for the first time as the new CEO of the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA). It is with great honour and enthusiasm that I assume this role, and I am committed to leading GSA with transparency, energy, dedication, and a relentless pursuit of excellence. One of our primary objectives is to ensure that our services serve the best interests of you, our valued shippers, and your service providers.

Our commitment to providing informative, insightful, and relevant content remains unwavering. I recognize the importance of keeping our stakeholders informed and empowered to navigate the dynamic landscape of international trade. To this end, I am developing a strategic plan to enhance our content offerings, catering specifically to the needs of shippers across Ghana. Our content will be designed to provide practical guidance, industry insights, and actionable information that directly benefits shippers in their day-to-day operations.

Through our publications, newsletters, and online platforms, I will address key topics such as trade regulations, shipping procedures, supply chain

management, and emerging trends in the maritime industry. Our goal is to empower shippers with the knowledge and resources they need to eradicate cargo delays, detention, and demurrage costs, optimize their shipping processes, mitigate risks, and capitalize on new opportunities. Additionally, I am committed to fostering transparency and dialogue, both face-to-face and with all players within the shipping community. I encourage shippers to continue to organize and actively engage with the information I put out through these channels, share their feedback, and participate in discussions that drive positive change and innovation in the industry.

I am fully dedicated to championing the interests of the entire shipping industry and ensuring that GSA is positioned as a fair arbiter, a trusted partner and advocate for the shipping community.

“Together, we will work tirelessly to uphold a hassle-free customs process, competitive costs, transparent and legal charges, coupled with highest standards of service delivery, and professionalism.”

I invite you to join us on this journey as I strive to create value, drive progress, and empower shippers to thrive in an ever-evolving global marketplace.

Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to serving you in this new capacity.

Warm regards,

**KWESIBAFFOUR SARPONG**



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-Unknown.*

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**The Withdrawal of Mali, Niger And Burkina Faso From ECOWAS:**

# Implications for Trade Facilitation

Shipper Services and Trade Facilitation Department-GSA

In today's interconnected world, efficient trade facilitation plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth, fostering international cooperation, and enhancing trade by streamlining and simplifying the processes involved in the movement of goods across borders. It encompasses a range of measures and initiatives aimed at reducing trade barriers, cutting red tape, and promoting efficient customs procedures. Effective trade facilitation is not just about reducing bureaucratic hurdles but also about enhancing connectivity, promoting transparency, and building trust among trading partners.

Moving beyond the traditional focus on tariff reduction and market access, trade facilitation addresses the procedural and

administrative aspects of cross-border trade, aiming for a seamless and cost-effective space. The implementation of trade facilitation measures not only benefits businesses by reducing transaction costs but also contributes to overall economic development by promoting transparency, predictability, and increased cooperation among trading partners. Consequently, various trade facilitation mechanisms have been promoted by international bodies, including the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement which was concluded at the 2013 Bali Ministerial Conference and entered into force in February 2017 and the World Customs Organization's Kyoto Convention which was adopted in 1973 and entered into force in 1974 as the International

Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures. Within the ECOWAS subregion, the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) Protocol also aims to promote trade liberalization among ECOWAS member states by eliminating tariffs and non-tariff barriers to trade. It facilitates free movement of goods within the region and encourages economic integration among member states.

These initiatives underscore the global and regional commitment to fostering an environment that supports smoother and more efficient international trade.

Amidst these efforts to enhance international trade, the recent decision by Heads of State for Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger to withdraw from the Economic



Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has ignited concerns and prompted questions about the potential impact on regional trade. As these countries redefine their regional alliances, a careful analysis of the implications for trade within the West African region becomes essential.

### **The ECOWAS Legacy and its Multifaceted Impact**

Established in 1975, ECOWAS emerged as a beacon for regional integration, providing member states with a platform for collaborative efforts for economic development, political stability, and social progress. The organization's commitment to fostering unity and cooperation has been instrumental in mitigating historical tensions, contributing to a shared vision for a harmonious West Africa.

Intra-regional trade facilitation has been a cornerstone of ECOWAS's mission, envisioning a West Africa where the movement of people, goods, and services, seamlessly across national borders remains a priority. The organization's commitment to increasing trade volumes among member states has fostered economic growth, strengthened interdependence, and laid the groundwork for a more integrated regional

market. According to Ghana's mid-year 2023 report, Burkina Faso stands out as Ghana's primary export destination within ECOWAS. Notably, 26.0 percent of Ghana's exports to Burkina Faso consist of plastics, while 10.0 percent comprise fertilizers.

Data from the Ghana Incentive-Based Risk-Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (GIRSAL) indicates that Ghana heavily depends on Burkina Faso for 90% of its fresh tomato imports. Additionally, Burkina Faso and Mali combined account for nearly 70% of Ghana's livestock imports.

Similarly, Niger remains a significant exporter of dry onions in the region, responsible for almost two-thirds of total exports, according to the market intelligence platform, Indexbox. The leading destinations for onion exports from Niger are Ghana, Ivory Coast, Benin, Togo, and Nigeria.

Consequently, the decision of the three countries to pursue new alliances outside of ECOWAS introduces uncertainty regarding the continuity of existing trade facilitation mechanisms. The potential disruption to the seamless flow of goods and services raises critical questions

about the adaptability and resilience of the regional trade infrastructure, particularly the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) and the ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET). Both the ETLS and CET, were designed to reduce trade barriers and foster economic cooperation. The policies mentioned above have been instrumental in facilitating cross-border commerce within the ECOWAS region. The success of these facilitation mechanisms has been dependent on the collective commitment of member states.

*The departure of key players may necessitate a re-evaluation of the existing frameworks.*

The withdrawal may also pose a potential reduction in ECOWAS' bargaining power in its negotiations with the broader African continent under the AfCFTA. This shift may engender a need for renegotiation or adjustment of terms previously agreed upon, introducing complexities that affect the region's ability to fully engage with the AfCFTA as negotiations were done in bloc.

### **Implications for Trade Facilitation**

#### **Disruption of Supply Chains**

The withdrawal of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger could lead to a disruption of existing supply chains within the ECOWAS region. Established trade dependencies for products like salt from Ghana to Niger and Mali, and onions, potatoes, and tomatoes from Niger and Burkina Faso to Ghana, may face logistical challenges. Common membership in the region through ECOWAS ensures that



trade is conducted within the established Regional Protocols, and their departure may pose challenges in terms of logistics, transportation, and distribution. Notably, transportation may face hurdles as withdrawing countries may enforce axle load regulations that differ from the ECOWAS standards. Such a situation could create difficulties for transporters adhering to varying weight restrictions, potentially resulting in delays, and escalated transportation costs, due to non-compliance. These additional costs would then be passed on to the consumer by the shipper, who consequently bears the burden and experiences adverse effects on their standard of living.

There may also be implications for the ECOWAS Brown Card system, potentially leaving vehicles from these countries without coverage when crossing borders within the region.

The ECOWAS Brown Card Insurance Scheme is a regional motor vehicle insurance scheme established by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to facilitate the free movement of vehicles within the member states. It provides insurance coverage for third-party liability in the event of road traffic accidents involving vehicles registered in ECOWAS member countries.

The Brown Card insurance scheme operates similarly to the Green Card system in Europe and the Yellow Card system in East Africa. It ensures that victims of road accidents involving foreign-registered vehicles have access to compensation for bodily injury, property damage, or death caused by the insured vehicle.

The implications of the withdrawal of the three countries from the Sub-region could give rise to disputes, financial losses for victims, and heightened legal complexities in the event of accidents involving vehicles from the withdrawing nations. The absence of coverage under the ECOWAS Brown Card insurance scheme may exacerbate the challenges faced by affected parties and necessitate a reevaluation of the region's regulatory frameworks to address these newfound issues. For transporters from Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, additional insurance cover may be required to mitigate the effects of incidents resulting in an additional operational cost.

#### **Trade Barriers and Tariffs**

With the exit of these nations, new trade barriers and tariffs may emerge, hindering the smooth flow of goods across borders. Negotiating trade agreements and establishing new protocols will become

necessary to navigate the altered trade landscape. Unless existing bilateral agreements, usually negotiated under the Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation (PJCCs), provide a framework for continued collaboration, the region may witness increased trade barriers. For instance, the imposition of tariffs or quotas on specific goods may be a consequence of the distorted trade dynamics.

*The introduction of these barriers could disrupt the previously harmonious trade relationships, leading to increased costs for businesses and potentially diminishing the overall volume of cross-border trade.*

This, in turn, may negatively impact the economic efficiency that ECOWAS member states had previously enjoyed through the elimination or reduction of trade barriers within the regional bloc.

Additionally, non-tariff barriers, such as differing technical standards and regulations, may emerge as a significant challenge. Without the unifying force of a shared economic framework, countries may adopt divergent standards, making it cumbersome for businesses to adhere to varying regulatory requirements resulting to increased compliance costs, delays in product approvals, and heightened complexities for shippers.

Another potential trade barrier could manifest in the form of restrictive licensing and certification requirements. The absence of a unified regulatory system may prompt individual countries to institute stringent licensing procedures, complicating the process for businesses to operate





seamlessly across borders. This bureaucratic hurdle has the potential to impede the free movement of goods and services, defeating the overall economic integration that ECOWAS seeks to achieve.

### **Economic Impact**

The withdrawal of these nations from ECOWAS is poised to have significant economic repercussions, extending beyond the departing countries to impact the broader landscape of the remaining member states. One of the primary areas where this impact will be apparent is in trade dynamics. With the departure of key players in the subregion, trade volumes within the ECOWAS region are likely to experience a decline. Reduced trade activity can potentially trigger a ripple effect across various economic facets leading to diminished market opportunities for businesses, due to the possible introduction of regulations in an otherwise liberal market, thus limiting growth prospects and contributing to a decrease in economic activities.

“*The withdrawal is also likely to exert pressure on employment levels within the region.*”

The interconnected nature of economies in ECOWAS means that a decline in trade can lead to

downsizing and decreased job creation across various sectors. This, in turn, could contribute to higher unemployment rates, potentially exacerbating socio-economic challenges within the affected nations and, to some extent, spilling over to neighbouring countries.

### **Customs and Border Control**

The withdrawal may lead to inconsistent customs practices. Customs procedures and border control mechanisms will need to be revised to accommodate the changing geopolitical landscape resulting in delays at border crossings and increased administrative complexities. The delays may stem from the time required to implement and adapt to the revised procedures, possible introduction of tariffs and quotas, regulatory and compliance issues, as well as potential disruptions caused by the recalibration of systems. Additionally, the increased administrative complexities may arise from the need for thorough documentation verification, enhanced security checks, and coordination among various agencies involved in border control.

### **Opportunities for New Alliance**

On the positive side, the exit of Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso from ECOWAS may open up opportunities for the formation

of new alliances and trade partnerships. These nations may explore alternative regional groupings like the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), Sahel region or even upscale their alliance to pursue their economic and political objectives. The exploration of alternative regional groupings may also lead to the creation of specialized trade partnerships that focus on specific industries or sectors that deliver both comparative and competitive advantage thereby serving their interests more directly. This targeted approach can facilitate more efficient and effective cooperation, fostering the development of key sectors and promoting economic growth in a manner tailored to the specific strengths and priorities of the departing nations.

### **Conclusion**

The withdrawal of Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso from ECOWAS marks a significant development with far-reaching implications for trade facilitation in West Africa. As these countries chart new paths, it becomes imperative for the remaining ECOWAS member states and the international community to adapt to the changing regional dynamics. Collaborative efforts, negotiation of trade agreements, and the establishment of effective frameworks will be crucial in ensuring that the withdrawal does not undermine the progress made in regional trade facilitation over the years. Strategic cooperation and diplomacy is required for the West African sub-region to overcome the challenges posed by the current geopolitical shift and continue to build a prosperous and interconnected economic community.





**GHANA  
STANDARDS  
AUTHORITY**



## OVERVIEW

Ghana Standards Authority is an Agency of Government responsible for developing, publishing and promoting standards in the country. It does this through Standardisation, Metrology and Conformity Assessment, i.e. Inspection, Testing and Certification. These activities ensure that products or goods and services produced in Ghana, whether for local consumption or for export are safe, reliable and of good quality.

## VISION

To become a customer-focused world-class standards organisation.

## MISSION

To contribute towards the growth of industry, protect consumers and facilitate trade through Standardisation, Metrology and Conformity Assessment.

## CORE VALUES

- Excellence
- Customer-focus
- Integrity
- Teamwork

## OUR SERVICES

Standards Development  
Inspection  
Testing  
Certification  
Calibration and Verification  
Library and Information Dissemination  
Training and Sensitisation  
Public Education and Consumer Protection

## OUR AFFILIATES

- International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO)
- The African Electrotechnical Standardisation Commission (AFSEC)
- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)
- ASTM International
- International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM)
- American Concrete Institute
- International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)
- International Organisation for Legal Metrology (OIML)
- African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO)
- International Code Council
- CODEX International Food Standards Alimentarius

## OUR ACCREDITATION

- Six (6) ISO/IEC 17025:2017 Accredited Testing Laboratories (Pesticide Residue, Metallics, Histamine and Mycotoxin, Food and Drinks, Microbiology and Cosmetic Laboratories)
- Six (6) ISO/IEC 17025:2017 Accredited Calibration and Measurement Laboratories (Mass, Temperature, Volume, Balance, Humidity and Pressure Laboratories)
- ISO/IEC 17020:2012 Accredited Inspection Body
- ISO/IEC 17065:2015 Accredited Product Certification Body
- ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 Accredited Management System Certification Body
- ISO/IEC 9001:2015 Accredited Training Body





## The Role of Quality Institutes in Raising the Standards of Ghanaian Imports and Exports

Corporate Affairs Department - GSA

Quality Institutes refer to organisations, institutions or entities dedicated to establishing, promoting, and maintaining standards of quality within specified industries. Contextually, in the shipping industry, a Quality Institute may focus on areas such as safety standards, environmental sustainability, professional development, and adherence to regulations. In this publication, we feature the two major Quality Institutes in Ghana: Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) and the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA).

**The Ghana Standards Authority** is a government agency responsible for setting and promoting standards and conducting conformity assessment activities. These activities ensure that products and services produced in Ghana, whether for local consumption or export, meet the high standards of safety, reliability, and quality. The Authority plays a critical role in the issuance of Export Certificates for high-risk commodities and serves as the EU's Competent Authority for inspecting fish and fishery products for export to the European Union. Additionally, the Authority houses the National Enquiry Point, which provides assistance to exporters seeking information on the standard requirements of destination countries.

**The Food and Drugs Authority:** The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) is the national regulatory body that oversees the quality, safety, and efficacy of products such as food, medications, and cosmetics that are imported or produced in Ghana,

whether for local consumption or export. Using registrations, inspections, licensing, surveillance, and clinical trials, the FDA ensures adherence to both national and international standards and the regulation of all food and drug-related products. Their key functions include establishing and enforcing standards for a range of products, monitoring compliance through District Assemblies and other agencies, advising the Minister of Health on measures for consumer health protection, and approving the initiation and conduct of clinical trials within Ghana.

### Benefits derived by the Shipper

Quality Institutes play a crucial role in ensuring that shippers receive high-quality products and services that meets widely acceptable standards.

“These institutes, such as the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) and the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), set and enforce standards to uphold quality and safety across various industries, including shipping.”

- Firstly, Quality Institutes help to organize shippers by grouping and registering them according to the commodities they import or export, providing them with numerous benefits. Firstly, it provides them with legal recognition, granting them a formal status in the eyes of the law. This recognition enhances their credibility and legitimacy in





conducting business activities. Registration also opens doors to various support services provided by government agencies, such as access to trade finance, capacity-building programs, and market information. These services help shippers improve their business operations and expand their market reach. For instance, used vehicle importers are required to register with the Ghana Standards Authority, while importers of pharmaceutical products are to be registered with the Ghana Food and Drugs Authority (FDA).

- Moreover, Quality Institutes play a crucial role in ensuring regulatory compliance. Shippers must adhere to various regulations and standards when transporting goods, especially across international borders. Quality Institutes provide guidance and assistance to shippers in understanding and complying with these regulations, thereby minimizing the risk of regulatory violations and associated penalties. For instance, in November 2022, the Ghana Standards Authority informed importers of used vehicles that beginning 1st January 2023, all used vehicles imported into Ghana should be accompanied by a valid Certificate of Conformance (CoC) from an

approved body. Enforcement of the regulation by the GSA is to ensure improved safety, quality and asset value of used vehicles imported into Ghana, while sustaining the value chain of the used vehicle industry.

- Additionally, Quality Institutes offer training and educational programs to industry stakeholders, including shippers. These programs equip shippers with the requisite knowledge and skills necessary to maintain quality standards throughout the shipping process. From handling time-sensitive goods such as perishable fruits and vegetables to storage practices, documentation and reporting requirements, shippers could enhance their capabilities and ensure compliance with industry regulations.

Quality Institutes play a vital role in safeguarding the interests of shippers by upholding quality and safety standards, providing certification and conformity assessment services, driving innovation and efficiency, ensuring regulatory compliance, and offering training and educational programs. By partnering with Quality Institutes, shippers can enhance the reliability, reputation, and efficiency of their operations, ultimately benefiting from improved customer satisfaction and business success.



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## Driving Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in the **Air Cargo Industry**

GSA News Desk

Air cargo has had a challenging 2023 but concluded the year near pre-pandemic performance levels. Despite mounting challenges, e-commerce continues to grow, reaching \$6.91 trillion in retail sales worldwide in 2023, indicating double pre-pandemic sales. It is interesting to note also that high-value specialised cargo, such as pharmaceutical products, is proving resistant to economic fluctuations, and the industry continues to indicate a better trajectory in a more efficient space than it was pre-pandemic.

As geopolitical uncertainties continue, the significance of air cargo is expected to increase further. Signs are emerging that retail shippers are sending more goods by airfreight as the Red Sea crisis persists. However, air cargo is expected to remain ready and focused on elements

of cost and reliability to be prepared for opportunities.

The World Cargo Symposium (WCS) is the largest and most prestigious air cargo annual event, offering plenary sessions, specialised streams, workshops, and executive summits that tackle specialised innovation, security, customs, cargo operations, and sustainability. WCS is a pivotal event in the industry's calendar that promotes a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient air cargo sector equipped to adapt to the ever-evolving demands of global trade and e-commerce. The event assembles industry leaders from around the world for networking and business development opportunities, providing a unique platform to discuss and implement industry standards, policies, and procedures.

The 2024 WCS featured a diverse lineup of experts who showcased the breadth of expertise to address the industry's challenges. Brendan Sullivan, IATA's Global Head of Cargo, joined forces with industry leaders such as Marie Owens Thomsen, IATA's SVP of Sustainability and Chief Economist; Ronald Lam, Group Chief Executive Officer of Cathay Group; Tom Owen, Director of Cathay Cargo, and executives from Atlas Air, Jardine Aviation Services Group, WestJet, and Accenture. Their insights were shared at the Cargo Symposium, which is expected to fuel meaningful discussions and promote collaborative solutions.

### **Charting a Sustainable Future: Transforming the Air Cargo Industry**

The need for sustainable and inclusive growth in air cargo





becomes more pressing than ever in the face of global challenges.

In this context, the World Cargo Symposium (WCS) stands out as a bastion of innovation and collaboration bringing together diverse experts in the Air Cargo space, including industry luminaries, WCS 2024 sparked meaningful discussions and propelled the industry forward. Let's delve into some of the significant announcements and developments.

The 18th International Air Transport Association's World Cargo Symposium (IATA WCS) in Hong Kong served as a catalyst for change and championed a vision of a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient air cargo sector that can adapt to the ever-evolving demands of global trade and e-commerce.

### Digital Transformation and Sustainability Take Center Stage

The World Cargo Symposium (WCS) in Hong Kong has showcased the latest advancements and priorities shaping the air cargo industry, emphasising a shift towards digitalisation and a steadfast commitment to safety and sustainability.

In his address, Michael Sullivan, Head of Cargo at the International Air Transport Association (IATA), underscored the industry's shift from inefficient paper-based processes towards digital solutions. "Inefficient paper-based, manual processes are being replaced with digital solutions in all aspects of cargo operations from tracking to customs clearance. That's a fact," Sullivan remarked.

He highlighted three key areas where significant progress had been achieved:

1. **Digital Information Sharing:** Sullivan emphasised the seamless sharing of digital information, citing the adoption of IATA's ONE Record data standard. Notably, Cathay Cargo and Lufthansa Cargo announced their implementation of ONE Record well ahead of the target date of January 2026.
2. **Digitalization of Customs and Trade Facilitation:** The symposium recognised global efforts in developing and implementing trade

facilitation strategies through digital customs and trade facilitation processes. These initiatives aim to streamline border operations and securely manage the flow of goods.

3. **Shipment Tracking:** With the surge in pharmaceutical shipments and e-commerce, there has been a heightened demand for real-time shipment tracking. The industry is responding to this demand by enhancing tracking capabilities.

In a push for industry-wide collaboration, Sullivan announced the introduction of the IATA Digitalization Charter. This charter benchmarks excellence, security, and sustainability within the digital domain, with several industry players already signing on as the first signatories.

Safety and sustainability emerged as another key priority for the air cargo industry. Sullivan stressed the importance of handling dangerous goods, particularly lithium batteries, and highlighted progress made in updating IATA's Dangerous Goods Regulations. Additionally, advancements in sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) were acknowledged, including Virgin Atlantic's completion of the first transatlantic flight powered entirely by SAF.

*IATA is developing CO2 Connect for Air Cargo to address sustainability goals in partnership with the Smart Freight Centre.*

This initiative aims to standardise carbon emission calculations and reporting along the air cargo value chain. Complementing this effort is the IATA Environmental Assessment (IEnvA) for Cargo, which has seen significant adoption within the industry.

In a transformative era for the industry, Sullivan affirmed the collective commitment to making air cargo operations more efficient, safer, and environmentally sustainable. "For any industry to survive, change is essential, and constant change for anyone is never easy. But it is absolutely worth it when that change delivers 60 million tonnes of cargo which powers economies, improves peoples' lives, and genuinely makes our world a better place," Sullivan remarked, echoing the industry's determination to drive positive change.

Additionally, Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is the latest technology buzz sweeping the world, but potential air cargo users must keep an open mind and not get carried away if its implementation is to prove successful. In an earlier session, AWS Amazon's Ghion had identified two potential use cases for GenAI in air cargo. She noted that it could provide sales

staff with real-time negotiation feedback with a 10% improvement in win rates and a 20% increase in 'pricing realisation'. It could also help provide answers to regulatory questions that staff may have. In this example, there could be a 90% reduction in the work time required to find information and an improvement in accuracy.

The potential and sustainability of e-commerce were also extensively discussed as they emerged as driving change and demand in air freight, whilst industry experts focused on the medium and long-term strategies and ways air cargo would continue to meet the needs of the e-commerce shippers.

This was represented by Marie Owens Thomsen, IATA's senior vice president, sustainability and chief economist at the 2024 IATA WCS that, international cargo tonne-kilometres (CTKs) were up 3% in 2023 for the Far East – North America trade lane, notably above other trade lanes underscoring the e-commerce revolution.

However, the drive for sustainability must extend beyond developed economies. Developing countries like Ghana stand to benefit immensely from a more sustainable and inclusive

air cargo industry, given the growth of e-commerce and the need for speed in the contemporary business environment. Also, improved access to efficient air cargo services can reinforce trade, foster economic growth, and enhance connectivity with global markets, driving regional development and prosperity. According to the Aircargo newsletter, demand is rapidly growing at double-digit percentage (11% in March) levels globally at the start of the year and Africa has particularly benefited from the buoyant market conditions. IATA indicated demand increased by 16.8% year on year after a rather turbulent couple of years for the African airfreight market as e-commerce has led to the development.

Ghana should foster a more sustainable and inclusive air cargo industry with feasible policies and strategies such as;

#### **1. Infrastructure Development:**

- The Ghana Airports Company Limited (GACL) oversees for the development, management, and operation of airports in Ghana should ensure the modernization and expansion of airport infrastructure, as well as enhancing handling facilities at cargo terminals to accommodate increased air cargo traffic to keep up with demand.
- It is also prudent to enhance warehouses and ground support equipment fleet, to improve efficiency and capacity.







## 2. Technology Adoption:

- Together with other relevant stakeholders, the Ministry of Communications and Digitalization responsible for driving the adoption of digital technologies across various sectors could lead the implementation of advanced technologies such as RFID tracking and automated cargo handling systems and data analytics to optimize operations and enhance transparency in the air cargo industry.
- Utilize digital platforms for booking, tracking, and managing air cargo shipments, improving accessibility for businesses of all sizes.

## 3. Capacity Building:

- Together with other relevant stakeholders, Ghana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) the regulator and overseer of civil aviation activities in Ghana, could lead capacity-building programs for the local workforce including terminal operators to enhance skills in air cargo handling, logistics

management, and customs procedures to ensure compliance with industry standards and regulations.

GCAA may also foster partnerships with educational institutions and industry stakeholders to develop specialized training programs tailored to the needs of the air cargo industry.

## 4. Regulatory Framework:

- With the emergence of other thriving markets in contemporary shipping, GCAA in partnership with the Ministry of Transport, should develop and enforce regulatory frameworks to promote safety, security and environmental sustainability in air cargo operations.

## 5. Collaboration and Partnerships:

- With other stakeholders, the Ministry of Trade and Industry in promoting trade and industrial development in Ghana could foster collaboration among government agencies, private sector entities, and international

organizations in the air cargo industry to address common challenges and promote best practices.

- Forge partnerships with global logistics companies and e-commerce platforms to leverage their expertise and networks for the benefit of local businesses.

## Green Initiatives

- Promote the adoption of eco-friendly practices and technologies to reduce the environmental footprint of air cargo operations.
- Encourage the use of sustainable aviation fuels and invest in energy-efficient infrastructure to minimize carbon emissions.

## Inclusive Policies:

- Develop policies and initiatives that promote inclusivity and support the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the air cargo industry.
- Provide incentives and support programs to help SMEs access air cargo services and integrate into global supply chains.

## Market Access:

- Advocate for improved market access and air connectivity to enable easier access to international markets for Ghanaian businesses.
- Negotiate air service agreements and partnerships with airlines to increase flight frequencies and routes

connecting Ghana to key global trade hubs.

Also, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) presents several goals that can greatly benefit developing countries like Ghana in fostering a more sustainable and inclusive air cargo industry amidst the growth of e-commerce and the demand for speed in the business environment. These goals can be leveraged through the following;

✓ **Promote Intra-African Trade**

Strategically enhance air cargo connectivity within Africa by improving air transport infrastructure and increasing flight frequencies between African countries.

By way of implementation, invest in modernizing and expanding airport facilities, streamline customs procedures, and negotiate air service agreements to facilitate smoother air cargo operations between African nations.

✓ **Enhance Economic Integration**

By Fostering regional cooperation and collaboration in air cargo logistics to reduce trade barriers and enhance efficiency through the establishment of regional air

cargo hubs and logistics centers to facilitate consolidation and distribution of goods across multiple countries, reducing transit times and costs for businesses.

✓ **Boost Industrialization and Economic Diversification**

Support the growth of industries such as e-commerce and manufacturing by improving access to efficient and reliable air cargo services through the development of specialized air cargo facilities and services tailored to the needs of emerging industries, such as temperature-controlled storage for perishable goods and express delivery services for e-commerce shipments.

✓ **Create Employment Opportunities**

By investing in training and capacity-building programs to develop a skilled workforce in air cargo logistics and related fields.

This could be achieved by collaborating with educational institutions and industry partners to offer training and certification programs in air cargo handling, customs procedures, and logistics management, creating employment opportunities locally.

✓ **Ensure Inclusive Growth and Development**

Purposely promote inclusivity in the air cargo industry by supporting the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and women entrepreneurs. By providing targeted support and incentives for SMEs to access air cargo services, such as preferential rates, simplified procedures, and capacity-building initiatives. Facilitate access to financing and market opportunities for women-owned businesses in the air cargo value chain.

✓ **Foster Sustainable Development**

Promote environmentally sustainable practices and technologies in air cargo operations to reduce carbon emissions and minimize environmental impact by investing in renewable energy sources for airport operations, incentivize the adoption of fuel-efficient aircraft and eco-friendly cargo handling equipment, and implement carbon offset programs to mitigate the environmental footprint of air cargo transportation.

By aligning efforts to achieve the goals of AfCFTA with initiatives aimed at developing a more sustainable and inclusive air cargo industry, Ghana can capitalize on the opportunities presented by the growth of e-commerce and the increasing demand for speedy logistics solutions to drive economic growth, enhance trade competitiveness, and create lasting benefits for its people and businesses.





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# Lessons from Cop28 in Dubai

Freight and Logistics Department - GSA



*President of COP28, Dr. Sultan al-Jaber*

## Background

In an ambitious move towards a sustainable future, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in 2023 set forth new climate targets during the COP28 event held in Dubai, aiming to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping. By 2030, the IMO pledges to cut emissions by at least 40% and ensure that at least 5% of the energy used by international shipping comes to zero or near-zero greenhouse gas emission technologies, fuels, and/or energy sources.

The commitment of stakeholders underscores a global consensus on the urgent need for the maritime industry to transition away from traditional fuels towards more sustainable alternatives. Achieving these targets will necessitate unparalleled collaboration across various sectors including finance, industry, government, and academia, alongside the introduction of new regulatory measures to facilitate this shift.

## Shaping the Future of Shipping: Delivering a Net Zero World Summit

The "Shaping the Future of Shipping: Delivering a Net Zero World" Summit held during COP28 played a pivotal role in charting the course for the IMO's net-zero strategy to be achieved by 2050. The Summit convened over 300 leaders from more than 30 nationalities, representing the entire energy-maritime value chain, to discuss and deliver robust regulatory outcomes for future IMO negotiations to advance infrastructure, fuel availability and financing.

Some of the submissions made include Emanuele Grimaldi, Chairman of the International Chamber of Shipping, who underscored the essence of decarbonisation and noted shipping as an integral part of meeting climate targets. Melina Travlos, President of the Union of Greek Shipowners and Chair of Neptune Shipping Lines, highlighted the chance not only to foster a sustainable future for shipping but also to play a significant role in driving the global economy towards achieving net zero emissions. Travlos stressed the necessity of collaboration, determination, and commitment from all stakeholders to effectively achieve decarbonization goals.

Arsenio Dominguez, the incoming Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) emphasized the importance of taking tangible actions to realize the objectives outlined in the





strategy. Dominguez noted that the IMO is actively conducting impact assessments on both fleets and states to provide essential information for upcoming Marine Environment Protection Committee meetings. These meetings will pave the way for the adoption of measures by 2025, with implementation scheduled for 2027, thereby translating the strategy's goals into practical technical and economic measures.

Anders Hammer Strømman, the Lead Author of the Transport 6th Assessment Report for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), underscored the urgency of decarbonization efforts in his presentation. Strømman also issued a caution based on the IPCC's synthesis report, indicating that the current pace and scale of climate action are insufficient to address climate change adequately. He urged stakeholders to consider the long-term implications of their decisions, as the choices made in shaping the future of shipping will have repercussions for the future.

Delegates provided insights and experiences to better understand the challenges and to identify solutions to address

the climate crisis in the context of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) revised greenhouse gas strategy, updated climate science, dynamic energy and industrial transition policies.

Capt. Abdulkareem AlMessabi, Chairman of Emirates Shipping Association, noted that organisations present at the event held the key to the future of shipping, and issues should be tackled by innovating, developing and scaling next-generation fuels, engines and vessels and the ability to carry new fuels like hydrogen and ammonia.

Addressing the delegates H.E. Hessa Al Malek, Advisor to the Minister for Maritime Transport Affairs, the UAE Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure said: "The IMO 2023 strategy stands as a testament to our shared ambition outlining a course toward a greener and more sustainable maritime future. This strategy is not just a document, it reflects our collective resolve to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and guide industry towards a more environmental path. While the IMO 2023 GHG strategy sets a high bar, the time has come to translate this aspiration into concrete action. Aspiring to change is no longer enough."

The Summit was part of the COP28 presidency programme and hosted under the patronage of the UAE Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure. The event was organised by a coalition of leading maritime industry bodies and coordinated by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), in partnership with the Emirates Shipping Association.

### **New Green Shipping Challenge Announcements made at COP28**

At COP27, two members of the Ocean Panel, Norway and the USA launched a new initiative to cut greenhouse gas emissions from shipping and challenged other countries, ports, and companies to employ same. One year on, COP28 in Dubai saw an update on progress and further commitments made towards this ambitious goal.

International shipping carries approximately 80% of all global trade, taking a considerable toll on the planet in terms of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

At this year's Green Shipping Challenge event, John Kerry, US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate remarked, "if shipping were a nation, it would be the eighth largest emitter in the world. This is not inconsequential, on the contrary it's of enormous significance because you don't get to net-zero global by 2050 – you don't get anywhere near where we need to be to keep 1.5 alive — without this industry being front and centre in the transition."

Emissions from shipping have on average increased over the last two decades despite a break in global shipping growth in 2020 due to COVID-19. And, while there have been efforts to



reduce these emissions through measures like refurbishing ships to improve fuel efficiency, more action in this area is needed to meet global climate goals. To achieve net zero emissions by 2030, a nearly 15 percent reduction in international shipping emissions is needed.

Since the Green Shipping Challenge was launched last year, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), published its new strategy with a target to hit net zero “by or around” 2050 depending on “national circumstances”. This internationally recognised target will spur further action in tackling emissions from shipping vessels.

A recent Ocean Panel-commissioned report, identified decarbonising shipping as a key component of seven ocean-based climate sub-sectors that together could deliver up to 35% of the annual emission cuts needed by 2050 to keep global temperature rise below 1.5°C.

In his closing remarks at this year's Green Shipping Challenge event, Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre praised the announcements made by those participating in the initiatives, particularly the private companies stating, “this is not

about competition but about collaboration” ... “[we need to] build the infrastructure upon which you will compete”.

This year's event saw multiple new announcements from countries and private partners that further the goal of the Challenge, they included:

#### Green Shipping Corridors

- USA announced partnership with UK, Canada, and the Republic of Korea to form Green Shipping Corridors for major trade routes.
- USA and Korea – carrying out feasibility studies on using green ethanol or ammonia to power ships on selected routes.
- Namibia – Green Hydrogen Program will develop Green Corridors
- with Mærsk McKinney Møller Center for Zero Carbon Shipping.
- Wallenius Wilhelmsen – committed to developing the first green corridor by 2027 including land and sea transportation.
- Japan – enhanced efforts towards developing Green Shipping Corridors, including development and introduction of zero-emission ships and Carbon Neutral Port Initiative which includes amending Japan's Port and Harbour act, implementing a system to visualise port decarbonisation efforts and conducting demonstration projects with new hydrogen technologies and other new energy sources to ports.
- UK – Bilateral green shipping corridors agreements including International Green Corridor Fund with the Netherlands, Norway, and Denmark, and the Clydebank Declaration for Green Shipping Corridors.
- Chile – Chilean Green Corridor Pre-Feasibility Study has been finalised,





feasibility studies now in progress.

### Regulatory and Commitment Progress

- Norway – announced their concrete mandate to reach net zero shipping emissions in various domestic sectors by 2024.
- Australia – announces a Maritime Emissions Reduction National Action Plan.

### Alternative Fuels and Vessels Progress

- USA – Department of Energy invests \$7 billion in hydrogen hubs across the country, working with several ports to unlock maritime decarbonisation.
- Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership (Fiji, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu) – retrofitting/replacing >11 000 vessels in the 7-member countries.
- France – announced \$800 million towards green shipping innovation, and the creation of a \$1.2 billion public-private investment fund as part of the future national Maritime

decarbonisation Roadmap, including \$500 million of public funding, and currently \$200 million from CMA CGM to go towards investments in port infrastructures, production of sustainable marine fuels, retrofitting and replacing current ships, and decarbonisation of government fleet.

- Høegh Autoliners (Norway) investing \$1.2 billion in building 12 new net-zero ammonia carriers known as the Aurora Class. The first vessel expected to run on clean ammonia in 2027. Working with Yara (fuel provider) and Hyundai (producer of ammonia engine).
- A.P. Moller-Maersk – announced green methanol offtake agreement of 500,000 tonnes for 12 large dual-fuel new buildings, aiming for 180 green-fuel vessels next year. By 2030 projected to need 21 million tonnes of green fuel.
- CMA CGM – invested > \$15 billion in decarbonising fleet, aiming for 180 vessels capable of using

alternative fuels by 2028.

- E U + Wallenius Wilhelmsen – testing wind propulsion at scale, with the aim of developing a full RORO (roll-on, roll-off) vessel being propelled solely by wind power. “Orcelle Wind” vessel set to be launched in 2027.
- DP World – investing £250 million into hybrid electric PNO pioneer feeder which decreased fuel consumption by 40%. Investing in 4 methanol powered vessels and on track to reduce emissions by 700,000 tonnes by 2027 as agreed at COP27.
- Amazon with IKEA, Patagonia, the Aspen Institute and Tchibo – Zero-Emission Maritime Buyers Alliance (ZEMBA) coalition announced in March 2023, with the aim to accelerate commercial deployment of zero-emission (ZE) shipping, enable economies of scale, and help minimize maritime emissions. September 2023 announced Request for Proposals (RfP) for ZE shipping services to be delivered by 2025, through this seeking ocean shipping services powered by ZE fuels for 600,000 20 foot contained over a three year period.



### Key Achievements at COP28 for the Maritime Industry

1. **Unity in Action:** At COP28, there was a remarkable sense of unity among maritime leaders. Thirty shipping giants came together to commit to scaling up



zero-emissions fuels made from renewable hydrogen, aiming to reach nearly 11 million tonnes by 2030. This bold move is a significant step towards achieving a carbon-neutral maritime sector.

## 2. **Leading by Example:**

Major players like MSC, Maersk, CMA CGM, Hapag-Lloyd, and Wallenius Wilhelmsen made a joint declaration urging a swift transition from fossil fuels to greener alternatives. Their collective voice resonated strongly, signaling a pivotal moment for the maritime industry.

## 3. **National Commitments:**

Countries also showed support for sustainability in the maritime sector. Norway, for instance, pledged to achieve net-zero shipping emissions in certain sectors by 2024, setting a bold precedent for others to follow.

## 4. **Green Shipping Corridors:**

An exciting development at COP28 was the focus on Green Shipping Corridors—maritime routes designed for low

and zero-emission fuels and technologies. Namibia took a lead by signing an agreement to explore green shipping corridors, partnering with international organizations and governments to drive sustainable practices forward.

Looking ahead, while COP28 showcased significant progress, it also highlighted the challenges that lie ahead. Achieving sustainability in the maritime sector requires substantial investments, bold actions, and collaboration. As H.E. Dr. Sultan Al Jaber wisely noted, "An agreement is only as good as its implementation." This underscores the importance of not only celebrating achievements but also preparing for the journey ahead, working

together towards a carbon-neutral maritime future.

## **Conclusion**

In the face of mounting climate challenges, the maritime sector has recognized its responsibility as a major contributor to global emissions and has embraced a proactive approach towards sustainability.

The palpable anticipation leading up to COP28 was met with a resounding commitment from the maritime industry to transition from passive compliance to tangible action. The momentum generated at the conference, buoyed by groundbreaking announcements, has positioned the maritime sector as a leading force in the global effort to combat climate change.



*COP28 served as a turning point for the maritime industry, shining a spotlight on its crucial role in driving global sustainability initiatives.*



No longer content to remain in the background, the industry has stepped up to the plate, demonstrating its determination and capability to reduce carbon emissions and propel itself to the forefront of climate action discussions.







## Assessing the trends and outcomes from surveys conducted on **Ghana's major transit routes to Burkina Faso**

Corporate Affairs Department -GSA

Ghana and Burkina Faso share a vibrant and longstanding trade relationship facilitated by the efficient transit routes connecting the two countries. As key players in the sub-region, Ghana and Burkina Faso have established robust trade linkages, with goods flowing smoothly between their borders. Analyzing the trends and outcomes from surveys conducted on the major transit routes to Burkina Faso provides valuable insights into the dynamics of this trade relationship and sets the tone for cross border reforms to enhance trade.

Stakeholders including shippers gain a deeper understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and evolving patterns shaping

the Ghana-Burkina Faso trade relations through the data gathering exercise. It is imperative to explore the trends observed in the surveys conducted on the major transit routes to Burkina Faso, the implications for enhancing trade efficiency and fostering continued economic cooperation between the two nations.

### **The Tema-Hamile and Tema-Paga Transit Corridors in Focus**

Burkina Faso serves as a major destination for transit cargo originating from Ghana's ports, particularly from the Port of Tema which is supported by various surveys and findings conducted in recent years. Statistics from the State Insurance Company (SIC) in

2022 on bonds issued to cargoes transiting from Ghana through the borders highlighted Burkina Faso as a major destination for transit cargo. The analysis of the data from the SIC suggested consistent trade trends over the past few years between the two nations.

The Fact-Finding trips conducted by the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) along the Tema-Hamile and Tema-Paga transit routes are crucial to understanding the effectiveness of Ghana-Burkina Faso trade relations. These routes serve as critical conduits primarily utilized by transit truck drivers to Burkina Faso, underscoring the robust trade ties between the two nations.



Police checkpoint on the Tema-Paga transit corridor

## GSA's Fact-Finding Trips (2019-2023)

Over the years, the Fact-Finding trips have proven invaluable, providing the GSA with key insights to engage stakeholders involved in transit trade and presents an opportunity to gather first-hand information on transit trade concerns such as delays associated with the Police and Customs checkpoints as well as axle load and other non-tariff barriers that impeded transit trade.

The quarterly exercise is conducted along the major transit routes; the Tema-Hamile and Tema-Paga corridors for cargo bound for Burkina Faso, and the Tema-Elubo corridor for cargo destined for Cote d'Ivoire. The GSA undertook six (6) exercises along the Tema-Paga corridor and four (4) along the Tema-Hamile corridor between

2019 and 2023 despite the disruptions of the pandemic.

## Analysing the trends and Outcome – Tema-paga and Tema Hamile Transit Corridors

In 2019, the Tema-Paga corridor saw about 79 Police and Customs checkpoints, indicating the highest in the five-year period. It included 37 permanent, 38 temporal police checkpoints and 4 Customs checkpoints justifying the 88 received complaints on the E-Platform on checkpoint delays.

In 2020, the number of Police and Customs checkpoints decreased to 69, but rebounded to 78 in 2021. The trend continued in 2022, with 77 Police and Customs checkpoints observed. However, in 2023, the checkpoints decreased to 73, marking the lowest count within the five-year period.

Meanwhile, the Tema-Hamile corridor witnessed a significant increase in checkpoint counts. In 2021, there were 60 Police and Customs barriers, which rose to 72 in 2022 with additional 3 reported in 2023, bringing the total to 75.

The total number of Police and Customs checkpoints along the Tema-Paga corridor reduced slightly by 6 in five years while the number increased by 15 on the Tema-Hamile corridor during the same period.

## The E-Platform

The E-Platform is an electronic system developed by GSA and Borderless Alliance which enabled Shippers, Agents, Hauliers and Stakeholders operating along the transit corridors to report concerns affecting their operations along the corridors in real-time.

According to the 2019 Annual Report of the Ghana Shippers' Authority, a total of 88 complaints were received on the platform of which 86 complaints were resolved.

Notably, 89% of the total complaints were related to extortion of transit truck drivers by personnel from the Ghana Police Service and the Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA).

The E-Platform received and resolved 48 cases reported by truck drivers in 2021. Approximately 90% of the reported cases related to police issues, while 8% and 2% were related to axle load and Customs concerns, respectively marking a 41% increase from the reported complaints in 2020.

In 2022, the E-Platform handled 44 reported cases of which 90%

CORRIDOR	AXLE LOAD	POLICE			CUSTOMS	PERIOD
		Temporary	Permanent	Total		
TEMA-PAGA	6	38	37	75	4	JUNE 2019
TEMA-PAGA	6	26	38	64	5	NOVEMBER 2020
TEMA-HAMILE	4	15	40	55	5	MAY 2021
TEMA-PAGA	3	16	56	72	6	OCTOBER 2021
TEMA-PAGA	7	11	56	67	10	MARCH 2022
TEMA-HAMILE	5	10	53	63	9	JUNE 2022
PAGA-TEMA	-	11	56	67		DECEMBER 2022
TEMA-HAMILE	5	25	42	67	8	MARCH 2023
TEMA-PAGA	5	11	56	67	6	SEPTEMBER 2023
TEMA-HAMILE	4	13	38	51	7	DECEMBER 2023





*A cargo truck at the Hamile border post undergoing inspection*

involved the police, 8% were related to axle load issues, and 2% represented concerns on GRA-Customs. The platform recorded a 9% decrease in complaints compared to 2021.

Data gathered in 2023 on the E-Platform represented 34 received and resolved cases reported by truck drivers where 91% of the reported cases were related to the police, while 5% concerned axle load issues and 4% were GRA-Customs issues.

Overall, while the total number of complaints varied each year, police-related issues remained the major concern for truck drivers throughout the period.

The decrease in reported cases in 2023 suggests improved awareness or resolution of related matters, although police extortion continued to be a significant challenge.

In summary, the findings derived from the Fact-Finding trips, as delineated in the GSA's Annual Reports spanning from 2019 to 2023, underscore the persistent challenges of extortion, delays, and harassment experienced by trucks traversing both the Tema-Paga and Tema-Hamile transit corridors.

A detailed analysis of the data indicates a discernible disparity between the two corridors.

While the number of Police and Customs checkpoints along the Tema-Paga corridor has remained relatively consistent, a notable escalation has been observed along the Tema-Hamile Corridor during the period.

Furthermore, there has been a decline in the number of complaints lodged on the E-Platform, decreasing from 86 complaints in 2019 to 34 in 2023. Although this reduction suggests a positive trajectory over the past five years, concerns continue regarding the predominant role of law enforcement agencies as the source of these complaints.

Failure to address the issues stemming from the identified trends could potentially endanger Ghana's trade relations with Burkina Faso, given the latter's status as a landlocked country. Such a scenario would exert significant economic ramifications on Ghana's trade, particularly amidst the ongoing decline in transit trade along key corridors to Burkina Faso.



*Former President of Burkina Faso, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, paid a two-day visit to Ghana in 2018 to discuss ways to improve trade relations between the two countries.*





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## The 2023 Mid-Year Trade Report: Assessing the Key Findings and Mapping the Path Forward

Corporate Affairs Department -GSA

The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) marked a significant milestone with the launch of the second 2023 Mid-Year Trade Report on 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2023 coinciding with the celebration of African Statistics Day 2023. The theme, "Modernizing Data Ecosystems to Accelerate the Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA): The Role of Official Statistics and Big Data in the Economic Transformation and Sustainable Development of Africa," underscores the critical role of data in driving Africa's economic growth and sustainability.

The Ghana 2023 Mid-Year Trade Report offers valuable insights into the intricacies of Ghana's trade dynamics and commodities during the initial six

months of the year. Building upon the findings of the Ghana 2022 Trade Vulnerabilities Report, which delved into trade statistics from the previous year, the 2023 Mid-Year Trade Report serves as a vital tool in understanding the evolution of Ghana's trade landscape and the way forward.

This comprehensive assessment identifies Ghana's trading partners, and shifts in trade values for specific commodities across continents and countries. By analyzing these changes, the report aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing Ghana's external trade.

The launch of the second 2023 Mid-Year Trade Report signifies a

significant step in harnessing the power of data to drive economic transformation and sustainable development in Ghana and across Africa.

### Key Findings

In the ever-evolving landscape of international trade, this report highlights critical patterns and trends that have emerged in the first half of 2023.

**Trade Surplus and Deficit:** The report revealed that Ghana's trade dynamics have undergone a remarkable transformation, with a notable trade surplus of GH¢ 2.4 billion in the first half of 2023, in contrast to the trade deficit of GH¢ 2.3 billion in the corresponding period of 2022. This shift indicates a positive trend in the country's economic performance because the



figures as announced by the Government Statistician Prof. Samuel Anim signified that during the period under review, Ghana exported more than she imported, which is an indication that the country's export trade activities during the specified period have been successful in generating a surplus, and is expected to have positive implications for the country's overall economic health. This is significant especially as the country recorded a trade deficit during the same period in 2022. The report suggested that Ghana's trade dynamics have undergone a positive transformation, as reflected in the shift from a trade deficit to a trade surplus indicating an improved economic performance.

#### Value of Exports and Imports:

The value of both exports and imports experienced an upward trajectory in the first half of 2023, with exports rising by GH¢ 24.3 billion and imports by GH¢ 19.6 billion. However, a closer examination in US Dollars revealed an interesting perspective where imports in the first half of 2023 were US\$1.1 billion lower than in the corresponding period of 2022, and exports have decreased by US\$1.7 billion. The decrease in the USD value of both imports

and exports is attributed to currency fluctuations. Variations established by Exchange rates between currencies could impact the reported value of trade when converted into a currency like the US Dollar. In this case, the fluctuation in exchange rates has influenced the decrease in the value of both imports and exports. In general terms the report underscores the complexity of assessing trade dynamics, emphasizing the need for an understanding that considers not only the absolute values of exports and imports but also the impact of currency fluctuations.

#### Trade Composition and Diversification Efforts:

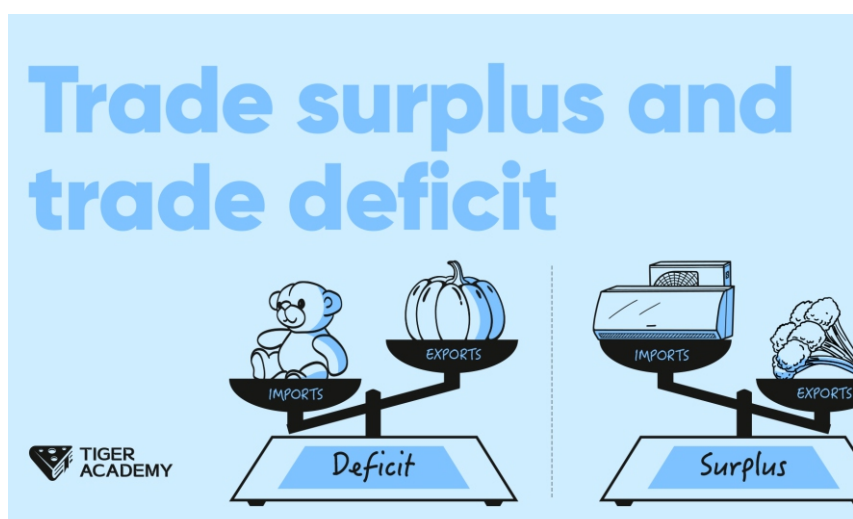
Over 50% of food imports were distributed among five specific categories: Cereals and Grain Products (22.8%), Animal or

Vegetable Fats and Oils (12.7%), meat (9.5%), and sugar products (8.6%). Additionally, cocoa products constitute more than half of all food exports (64.9%). Ten food items imported in the first half of 2023 make up over 50 percent of all imported food items. They include Cereal grains, frozen cuts and offal of fowl, Sugar, Palm oil and its fractions, Guts, bladders and stomachs of animals, rice and fish among others. While these figures reflect the current state of Ghana's trade dynamics, they also underscore the critical need for strategic interventions to enhance diversification and reduce the country's reliance on few key commodities, notably cocoa, gold, mineral fuels, and oils.

The implications of such focus in food imports and exports are multi-faceted. Firstly, it poses a vulnerability to external shocks, as an overreliance on specific categories or commodities exposes the economy to fluctuations in global markets. For instance, a sudden change in demand or price volatility for cocoa could have profound effects on Ghana's export revenue.

#### Intra-African Trade Potential:

In the first half of 2023, Ghanaians imported goods from





191 countries, surpassing the number of countries they exported to by 47 while exports were directed towards 144 countries.

*The report highlights that within the African continent, Ghana exported to 49 countries, the same number of countries it imported from.*

This balanced trade relationship within Africa indicates a significant level of intra-continental trade engagement. The report also underscores a significant upswing in trade during the first half of 2023, with Ghana's exports surpassing imports. Notably, trade activity reached its zenith in March, amounting to GH¢32.2 billion, reached its lowest point in April at GH¢26.2 billion. This represents a difference of GH¢6 billion between the two months, primarily attributed to heightened export figures in March, suggesting that while Ghana has a wide-reaching import network, there is still room for expanding its export destinations to a more diverse set of countries.

**Export Concentration Challenges:** The report suggests that despite some positive trends, the concentration on specific commodities such as gold,



mineral fuels, and oils for export poses vulnerabilities to Ghana's economy. Dependence on a limited number of goods can make the economy susceptible to fluctuations in global markets for those specific commodities. Gold exports accounted for a significant portion, specifically 43.1% of foreign trade during the period. This indicates a notable dependence on gold as a major revenue source from international trade. Mineral fuels and oils contributed to 20.9% of exports, further emphasizing a concentration in the export portfolio. Refined petroleum imports also constituted a substantial portion, reaching 35.3% highlighting a heavy reliance on refined petroleum.

#### Recommendations

The findings highlighted some key takeaways; the predominant reliance on gold, mineral fuels, and oils as export commodities,

Ghanaian traders imported from 47 more countries than the number of countries they exported to and the notable trade surplus of GH¢2.4 billion in the first half of 2023. Considering these observations, the following recommendations are imperative to improve on the overall outlook of Ghana's international trade statistics.

**1. Enhancing Trade Policies in Response to Currency Fluctuations:** Recognizing the significant impact of currency fluctuations on trade values, it is strongly recommended that the Government of Ghana takes proactive measures to support traders in navigating these challenges. One viable approach is to encourage traders to strategically leverage existing trade agreements, with a particular focus on the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

AGOA provides preferential access to the U.S. market for eligible African countries, including Ghana, offering an opportunity to strengthen trade operations.

Ghana, being a leading exporter of yams to the USA under the AGOA agreement, could re-negotiate explicit clauses



addressing currency fluctuation issues. For instance, the government could explore the possibility of pegging the currency at a predetermined rate for a specified duration under the AGOA agreement. This proactive measure would ensure a stable and predictable exchange rate, allowing Ghanaian traders to conduct cost-effective ventures when receiving payments for exports to the USA.

By strategically using the AGOA framework to address currency fluctuation concerns, Ghana can foster a more stable and conducive trading environment. This approach not only aligns with the broader goals of economic development but also showcases the government's commitment to providing practical solutions for the challenges faced by businesses in the dynamic international tradelandscape.

## 2. Diversify Export Commodities:

To reduce the vulnerability associated with dependence on cocoa, gold, mineral fuels, and oils as the primary export commodities, the government must concentrate on implementing policies that facilitate business diversification in Ghana's export portfolio. An effective strategy for broadening Ghana's export base could involve promoting and supporting non-traditional exports encompass a diverse range of products beyond conventional commodities, presenting an opportunity for Ghana to explore new markets and reduce its reliance on limited goods.

For instance, the government could provide incentives and support to industries engaged in the production of non-



traditional exports, such as processed foods, textiles, handicrafts, and technology-related goods. Offering tax waivers could encourage these industries to enhance their export capabilities, thereby reducing the country's dependence on traditional exports. This approach not only fosters economic resilience but also positions Ghana to take advantage of emerging opportunities in diverse global markets.

By encouraging a shift towards non-traditional exports, Ghana could establish a more dynamic and adaptable trade structure which aligns with the goal of economic diversification but also enhances the country's ability to navigate fluctuations in global commodity markets.

## 3. Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:

The dynamic nature of international trade necessitates continuous monitoring and evaluation of trade patterns. Implementing continuous monitoring involves closely examining the diversification of Ghana's export portfolio. Decision-makers can assess the growth of non-traditional exports compared to traditional commodities like cocoa and gold. For instance, if the data reveals a significant

increase in non-traditional exports such as horticultural products or processed foods, policymakers should acknowledge successful diversification efforts and potentially incentivize further expansion.

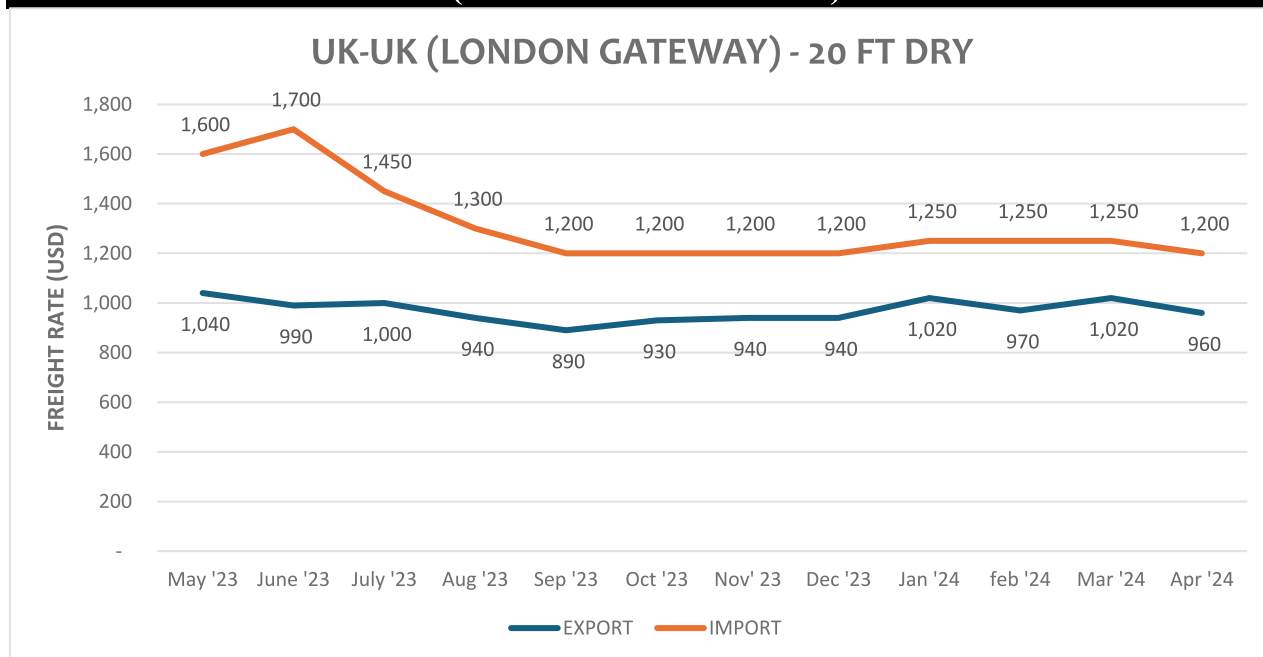
Also, given the vulnerability of trade to currency fluctuations, continuous monitoring should include an assessment of how exchange rate variations affect trade values. For example, if the Ghana Cedi experiences fluctuations against major currencies, decision-makers can evaluate the impact on export and import values. The information provides guidelines for the formulation of policies or interventions to address currency-related challenges, ensuring a stable and conducive trade environment.

By implementing these recommendations, Ghana could harness the opportunities presented by the evolving international trade landscape, foster economic resilience, and contribute to sustainable development as outlined in the African Statistics Day 2023 theme.

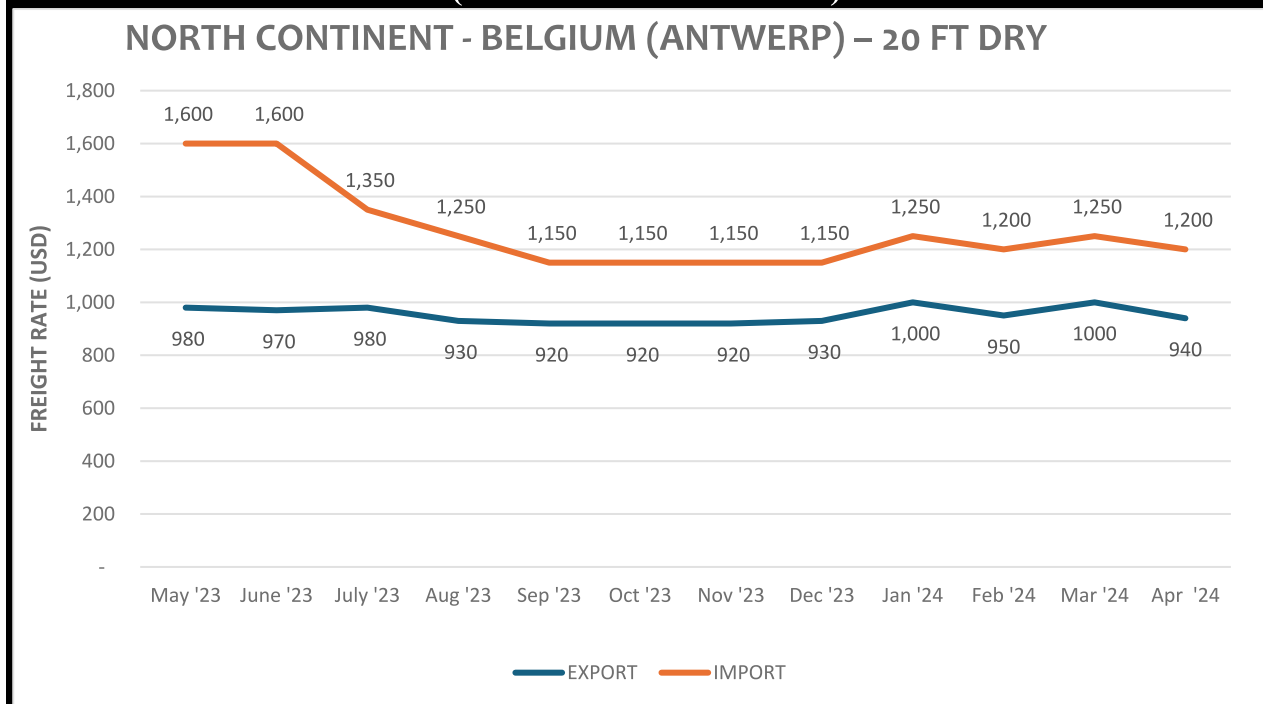




## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)



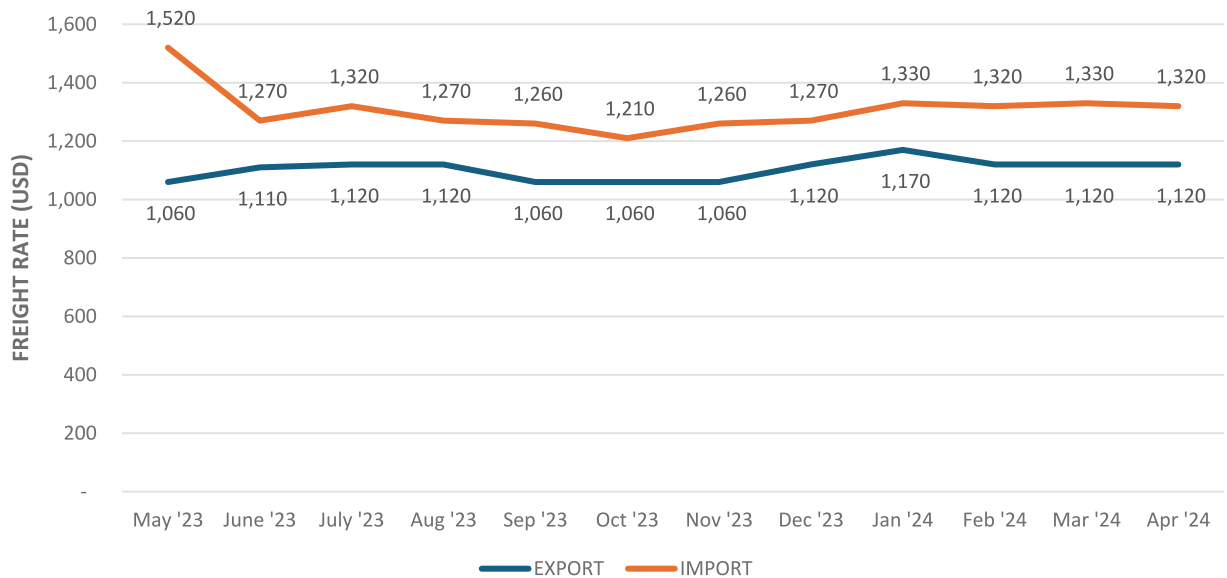
## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)





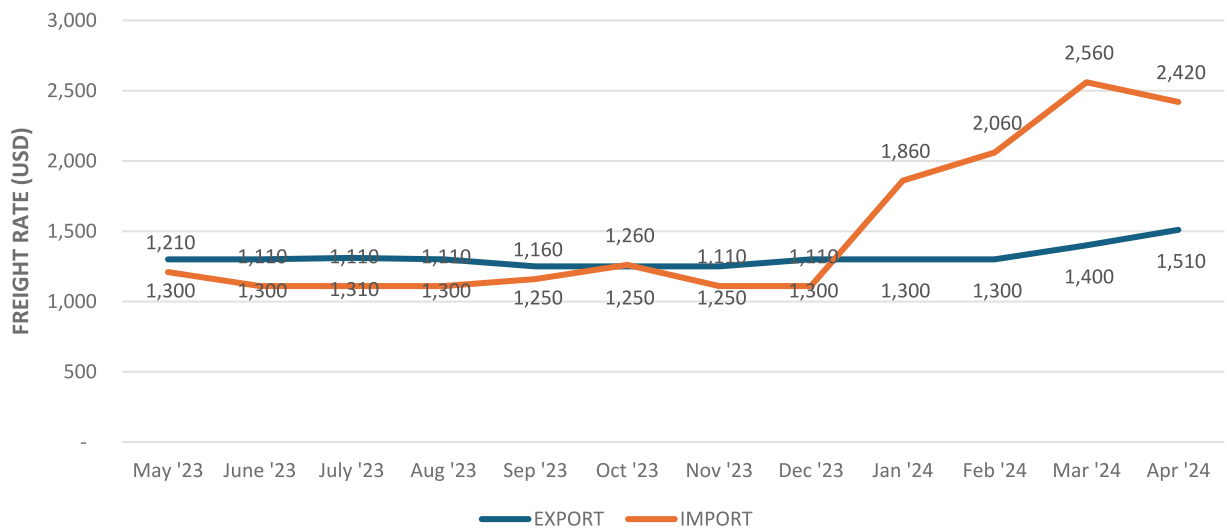
## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)

### MEDITERRANEAN EUROPE - SPAIN (VALENCIA) – 20 FT DRY



## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)

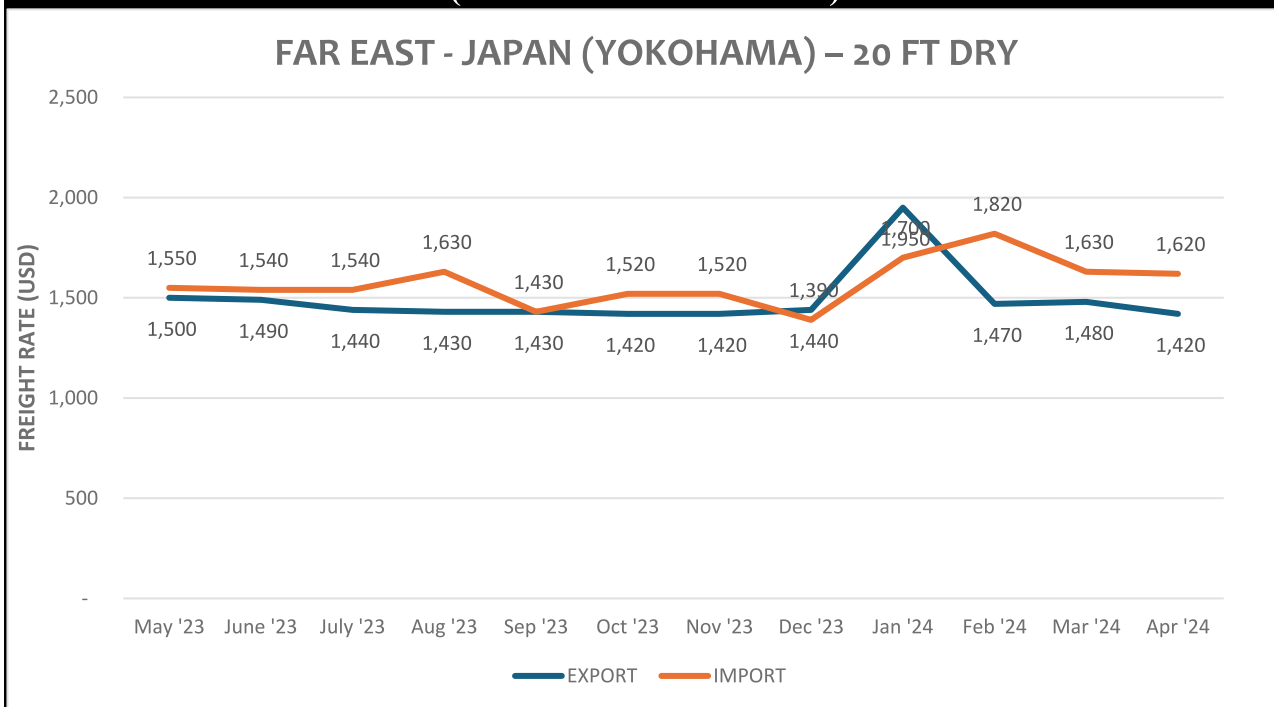
### FAR EAST - INDIA (NHAVA SHEVA) – 20 FT DRY



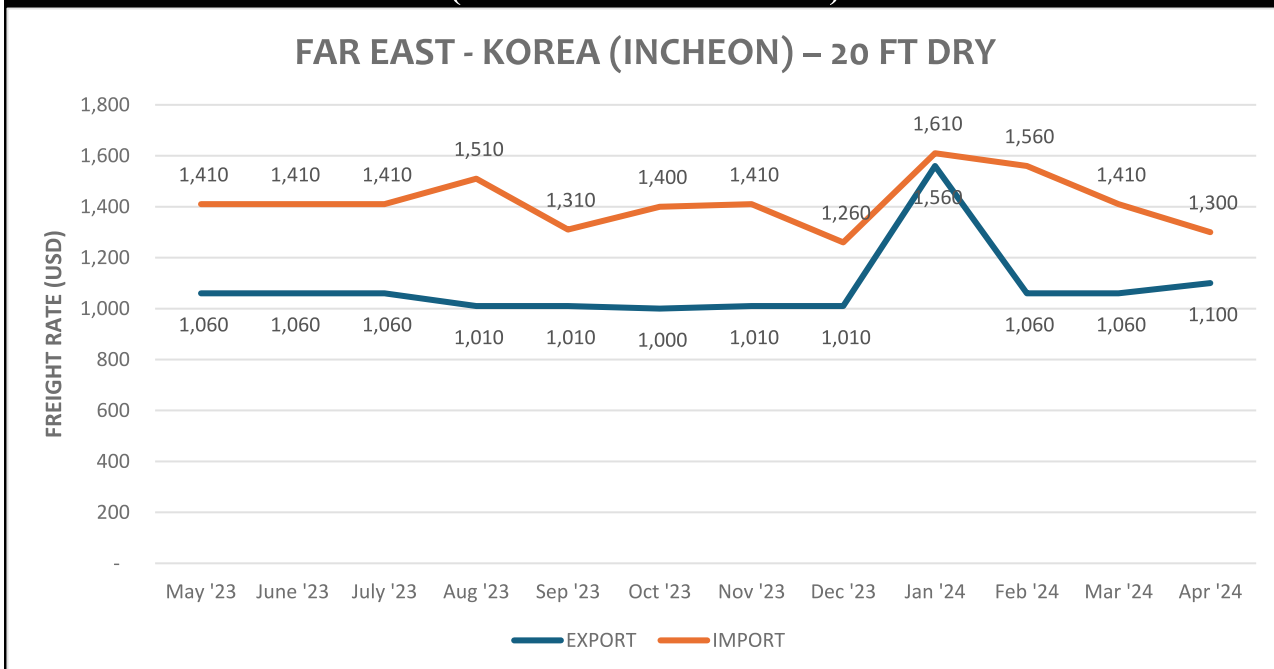




## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)



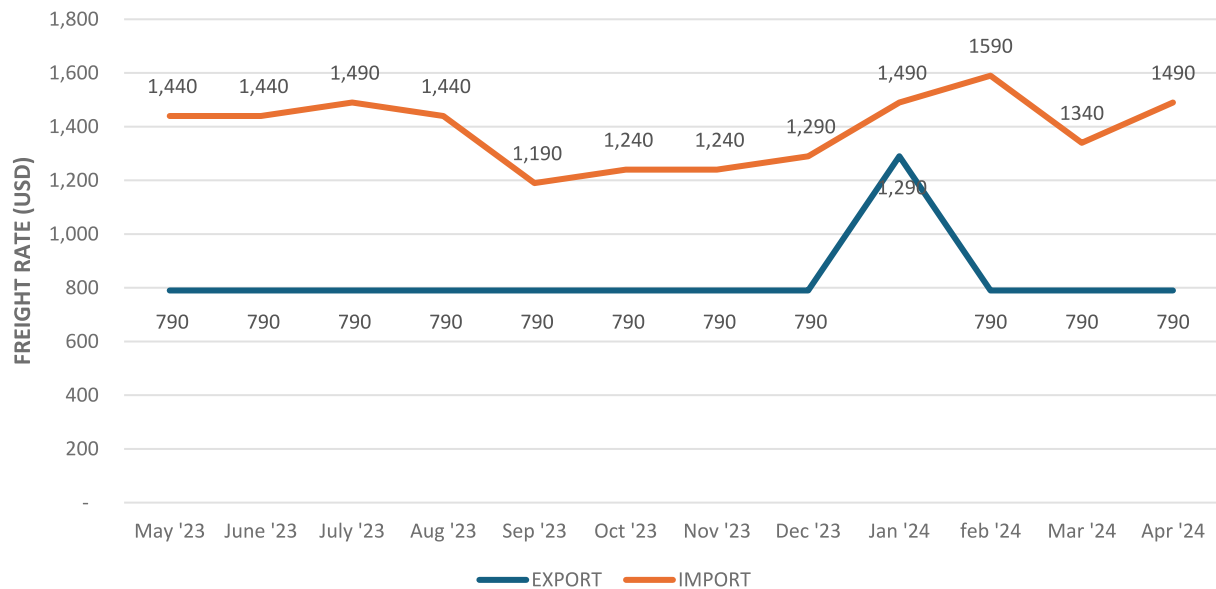
## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)





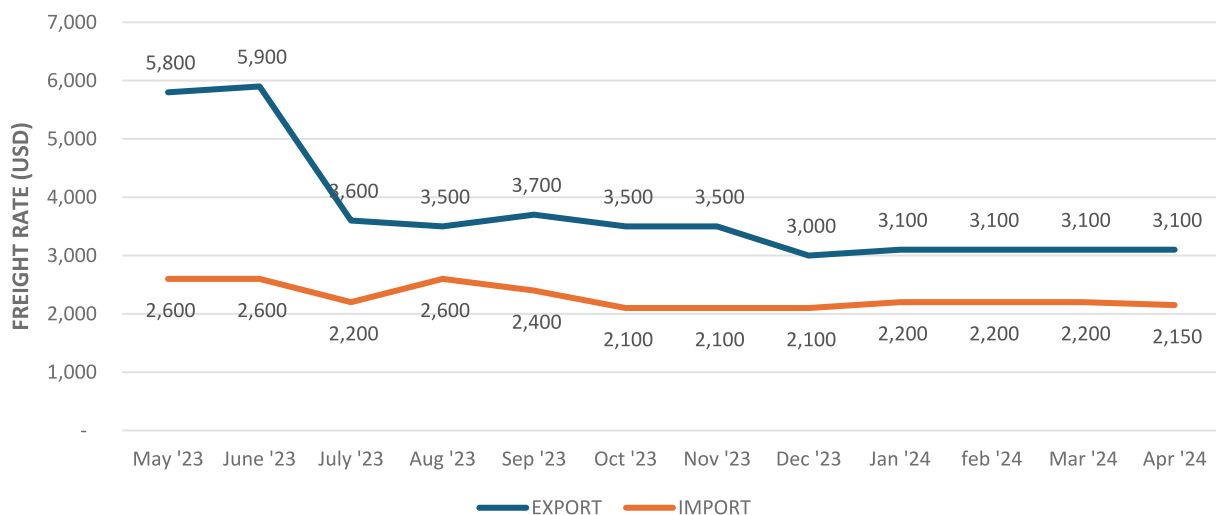
## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)

### FAR EAST - CHINA (NANSHA) – 20 FT DRY



## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)

### NORTH AMERICA - US EAST COAST (NEW YORK) – 20 FT DRY

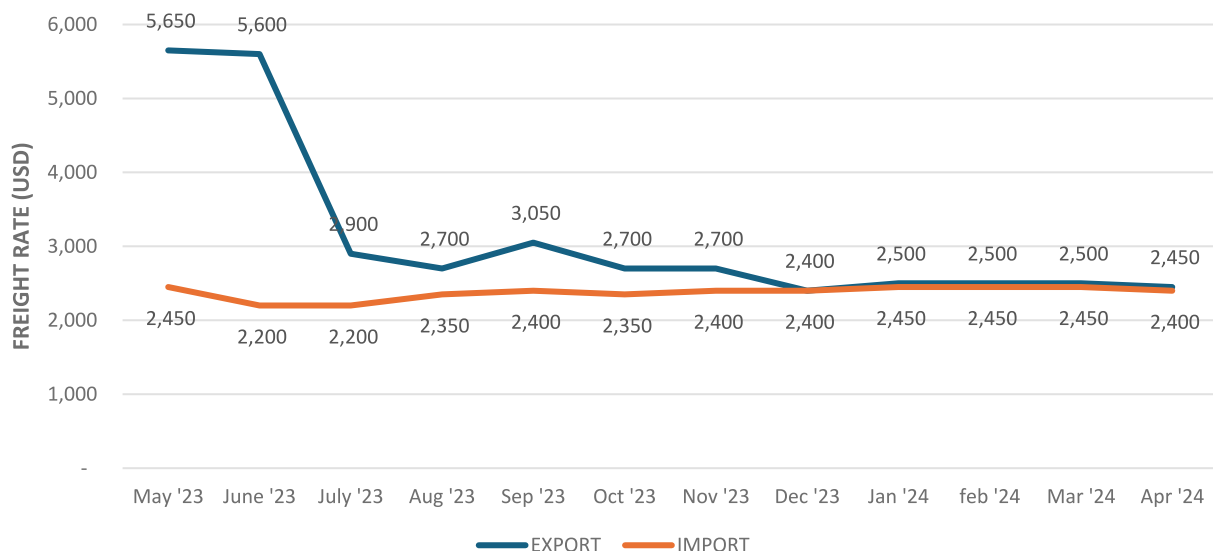






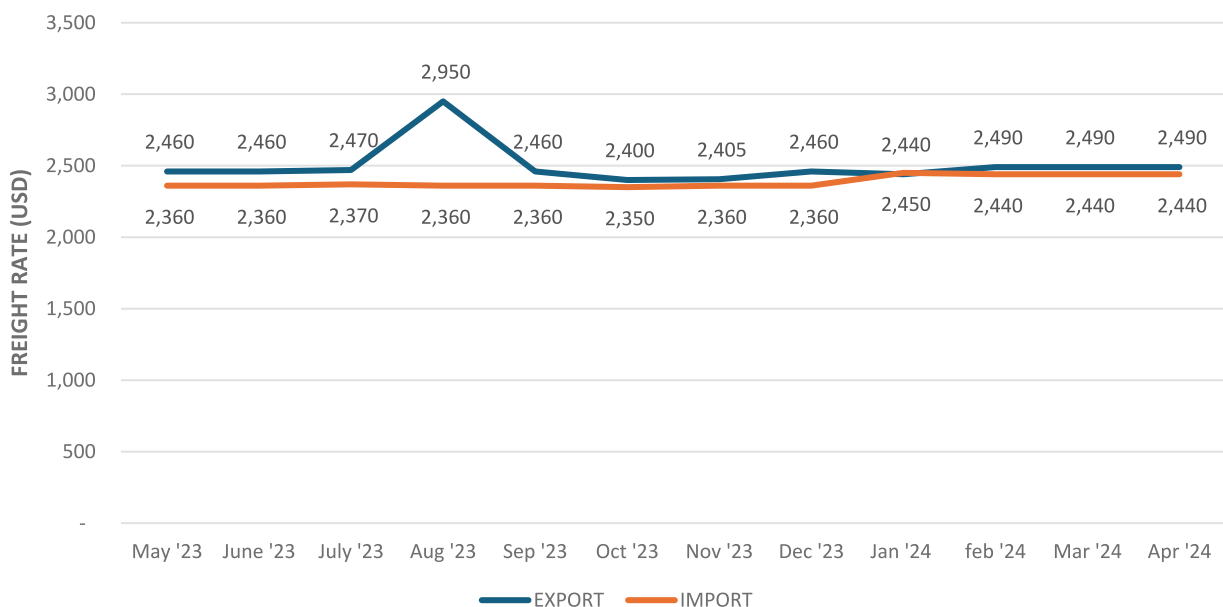
## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)

### NORTH AMERICA - CANADA EAST COAST (MONTREAL) – 20 FT DRY



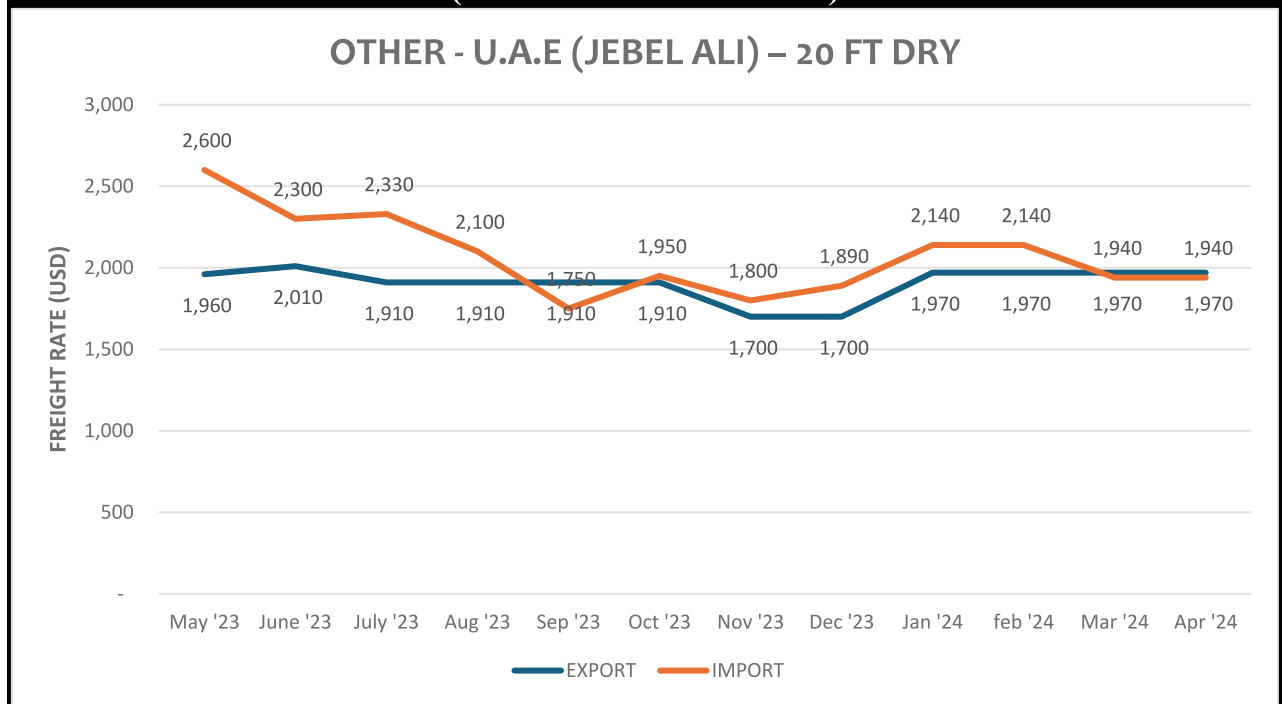
## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)

### OTHER - BRAZIL (SANTOS) – 20 FT DRY





## INDICATIVE FREIGHT RATES (in USD) FOR SHIPMENTS TO/FROM GHANA (PORT OF TEMA) (MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024)







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## DIVERSIFYING OUR GENERATION PORTFOLIO FOR SUSTAINABLE POWER SUPPLY

The Volta River Authority (VRA) has since 1961, harnessed the resources of the Volta River to provide electrical energy for industrial, commercial and domestic use in Ghana as well as transportation, fishery and recreation.

Starting with a generation capacity of 588MW, the VRA now operates 2547MW from its hydro, thermal and solar plants.

VRA continues to diversify its generation portfolio by exploring cleaner, cheaper and renewable sources of power generation such as wind and solar energy to sustain power supply.



**VOLTA  
RIVER  
AUTHORITY**

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