

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Electrochem Ghana Responds to Allegations Raised in "DEATH AND BRUTALITY – THE BATTLE FOR WEST AFRICA'S LARGEST SALT DEPOSIT" Documentary by The Fourth Estate

On November 18, 2024, The Fourth Estate published a documentary titled "*Death and Brutality – The Battle for West Africa's Largest Salt Deposit*". This production contains several allegations and claims that are deeply disturbing and contrary to the truth. These narratives appear designed to create tension and hostility toward the good work Electrochem Ghana has undertaken in the Ada Traditional Area. We, therefore, feel compelled to set the records straight on key points raised in the documentary.

1. Electrochem Monopoly: Ratification of 39,000 Acres vs. 41,000 Acres Claim

It is imperative to clarify that Electrochem Ghana's concession spans **41,000 acres**, covering parts of both the Ada West and Ada East Districts within the Ada Traditional Area. This concession was legally granted and ratified by the Parliament of Ghana. The allegations of a discrepancy in the acreage are unfounded. Electrochem operates within this legally defined space, which is well-documented and in compliance with Ghanaian law.

2. The Master Plan: Compliance with Directives and Regulations

Electrochem Ghana's operations are governed by the leases granted by the government for approximately 41,000 acres of the Songor Lagoon concession. Contrary to claims in the documentary, there is no reference to or requirement for a "Master Plan" in the agreements or regulations governing our work. We adhere strictly to all **directives, rules, and standards of operation**, making us a law-abiding and responsible corporate citizen.

3. Fishing: Accessibility and Livelihood Restoration

The claim that fishermen are losing access to the lagoon is not only false but also ignores the significant impact of our restoration efforts. **Before Electrochem's intervention, the Songor Lagoon was desolate and dried up.** Our work has reintroduced seawater (brine) to the lagoon, creating opportunities for over **400 fishermen** who now earn an average daily income of **GHC 100 each**.

The lagoon is thriving, providing livelihood and sustenance to surrounding communities. Electrochem is committed to ensuring that local fishermen and other stakeholders benefit from the lagoon's rejuvenation.

4. Allegations by Madam Janet Narh

Madam Janet Narh alleged that:

“Nobody knew the Songor was given to McDan, and they started beating us in our villages. We are afraid; if you talk about it, you will be sleeping at dawn, and they will come and arrest you.”

These claims are baseless. From the onset of our operations, **Electrochem implemented a robust community engagement strategy**, engaging:

- **The Ada Traditional Council,**
- **Clan heads and allodial landowners,**
- **30 project-affected communities,**
- **Regulatory authorities and other stakeholders.**

We left no stone unturned in informing and educating the communities about our work. Further, we operate a **grievance redress mechanism** to address concerns promptly. No individual has ever been unlawfully arrested for discussing our project.

Our **Sustainability Programs Department**, staffed by a dedicated team of people from the Ada community, ensures transparency and continuous engagement. We remain open to dialogue and committed to building trust within the community.

5. Allegations by Madam Christiana Modzifa Anim

Madam Christiana Modzifa Anim claimed she was dragged half-naked while bathing and photographed during an incident involving land guards.

Here are the facts:

In 2021, following a press conference by the Third World Network, some agitators from Bonikope, Salom, and Toflokpo mobilized to Matsekope, creating a scene and clashing with Electrochem workers. Madam Modzifa, who was **part of this mob**, was already half-naked, swearing, and cursing at Electrochem to have no peace.

When the police arrived to restore order, she was apprehended. The claim that she was dragged from her home while bathing is false. Electrochem remains committed to truth and fairness in addressing community issues.

6. Allegations of Brutality and the Death of Journalist Noah Dameh

We deeply sympathize with the family of the late Noah Dameh, but the documentary's narrative misrepresents the facts.

In 2021, a conflict between Peter Anim and Benjamin Anim at an **Atsiakpo mining site** led to police intervention. Images posted by Mr. Dameh claimed abuse by the police at the alleged instance of Dr. Daniel McKorley. This was false and defamatory, leading to a lawsuit against Mr. Dameh. Efforts to have him retract the post were unsuccessful before his untimely death.

We categorically reject the claim that Electrochem was involved in or responsible for any harm to Mr. Dameh.

7. Human Rights Abuses

Electrochem Ghana unequivocally condemns all forms of human rights abuses. As a **responsible corporate organization**, we uphold the human rights enshrined in Ghana's 1992 Constitution. We fully cooperate with law enforcement and stakeholders to address any allegations. We extend our condolences to the family of the late Korletey Agormeda and sympathize with all parties affected by misunderstandings or conflicts.

8. Burning of Electrochem Machinery

In November 2023, at Toflokpo, an incident involving harassment of Electrochem workers led to the burning of our equipment. This resulted in significant losses and halted operations. Such acts of violence undermine development and progress in the Ada Traditional Area.

9. Livelihood Support: Creating Opportunities, Not Taking Them

Contrary to claims of lost of livelihoods, Electrochem Ghana remains unwavering in its dedication to fostering sustainable livelihoods for the Ada communities. **2,000 acres of land** from the total concession have been allocated specifically to support **community pans and the Tributer (Outgrower) Scheme**.

1. Community Pan Initiative:

The Land Allocation to this schme is 1,000 acres. These pans are managed by community members, with proceeds directly funding local development projects, such as streetlights, renovation for schools, and other essential infrastructure. The **Impact of** Community pans ensure equitable access to the lagoon's resources while generating significant income for communal benefit.

2. Tributer (Outgrower) Scheme:

The Land Allocation to this scheme is 1,000 acres. The scheme is designed for individuals, cooperatives, and small businesses interested in salt production. The initiative supports local entrepreneurship by providing opportunities for direct participation in the salt value chain. The **Impact of the** scheme has so far empowered **17 registered groups and businesses**, enabling broader economic participation and ensuring that the benefits of the Songor Lagoon's revitalization are shared widely.

Together, these initiatives yield is projected at **110,000 metric tons of raw salt annually**, translating into significant revenue opportunities for local communities, estimated at **GH₵ 137,500,000.00 yearly**

Commitment to Livelihood Support:

Electrochem's commitment to improving lives and ensuring inclusive growth remains central to its operations. These initiatives not only preserve traditional livelihoods but also provide new avenues for sustainable development and wealth creation within the Ada Traditional Area.

Our initiatives are fostering economic growth and empowering local stakeholders to actively participate in the salt value chain.

10. Civil Responsibility: Payment of Ground Rent and Royalties

As part of our commitment to fulfilling our civic duties and contributing to national development, Electrochem Ghana consistently pays **Minerals Royalties** and **Ground Rent**. From **2021 to 2024**, the company has made the following payments:

Minerals Royalties:

- 2021: GHC 1,150,000.00
- 2022: GHC 1,150,000.00
- 2024: GHC 1,176,258.28
- **Total: GHC 3,476,258.28**

Ground Rent:

- 2021: GHC 586,830.00
- 2022: GHC 586,890.00
- 2024: GHC 1,527,138.00
- **Total: GHC 2,700,858.00**

These payments demonstrate our commitment to financial accountability and our contributions toward the development of the Ada Traditional Area and the nation as a whole. As a responsible corporate organization, we believe in upholding our obligations to both the state and the communities where we operate.

Commitment to Community Development

Electrochem Ghana remains steadfast in its mission to transform the Songor Lagoon into a sustainable economic hub while supporting the livelihoods and well-being of the Ada communities. We are committed to transparency, dialogue, and building a better future for all.

Our doors remain open, and we welcome any constructive engagement to ensure the truth prevails and development thrives.

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