

## **MIASA Conference: Transitions – Past, present and future of sustainable Governance in Africa, 9-11 June 2026, ISSER, University of Ghana, Legon-Accra**

### **THEME**

During the main funding period (2020–2026), fellows and participants in a variety of MIASA activities generated valuable insights into the interplay between sustainable governance and societies, cultures and politics in Africa and beyond. Scholars from various disciplines collaborated to address contemporary and historical issues, providing compelling analyses within the framework of MIASA's 'Sustainable Governance' research programme.

The conference, which marks the end of the main funding phase by the German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMBF), provides a valuable opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved so far. MIASA's starting point was to promote research perspectives and voices from the African continent and the Global South on sustainable governance within a global academic landscape that is still dominated by the Global North. Therefore, taking stock of the scientific results of the main funding phase begins with the question of whether this has been achieved, and if so, how. Has MIASA contributed to challenging dominant theories and concepts related to sustainable governance that originated in the Global North? What lessons can be learned to further develop MIASA?

The discussion on the findings of former MIASA fellows will be enriched by several keynote speakers, roundtable participants, discussants, and chairs. All of these individuals are highly esteemed and recognised scholars in their respective fields of research. Their contributions will be particularly important for the further development of MIASA. Finally, one roundtable will feature participants from the other four Merian Centres, providing an opportunity to strengthen cooperation within the Merian family further.

The conference also aligns closely with the University of Ghana's 2026 Day of Scientific Renaissance of Africa, which has the theme of "Equitable Development: Research, Collaborate, Empower". MIASA's commitment to promoting African and Global South perspectives on sustainable governance highlights the significance of inclusive knowledge production, interdisciplinary collaboration and empowering scholars and institutions to influence globally significant research agendas. Therefore, the conference not only reviews past achievements, but also contributes to ongoing efforts to promote more equitable and transformative futures through research and intellectual exchange.

### **PROGRAMME**

**Time is scheduled in UTC (Time in Accra/Ghana)**

#### **Tuesday, 9 June 2026**

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| 8.30-9.00  | Registration (Venue: ISSER, University of Ghana, UG)  |
| 9.00-10.00 | <b>Opening Ceremony, Moderator:</b> Agnes Schneider-Musah (MIASA, University of Freiburg)<br>Welcome remarks and brief introduction on MIASA by the directors Prof Grace Diabah and PD Dr Stefan Rother<br>Welcome remarks by Provost, College for Humanities, UG,<br>Prof Joseph A. Yaro<br>Welcome remarks by Pro Vice-Chancellor UG, Prof Gordon A. Awandare |

- Welcome remarks by Guest of Honour German Deputy Ambassador Sivine Jansen
- 10.00-10.30 Cocoa Break (Venue: Pagoda, ISSER, UG)
- 10.30-12.00 **Roundtable: The usefulness of the concept of sustainable governance in research and policy in Africa, Chair:** Stefan Rother (MIASA)  
**Speakers:** Emma Birikorang (Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre), Mamadou Diawara (Point Sud), Rosina Foli (UG), Khaoula Matri (University of Sousse), Andreas Mehler (University of Freiburg)
- 12.00-12.45 **Keynote Address: Beyond firefighting: Towards a sustainable peace framework for Africa, Speaker:** Thomas Kwasi Tiekou (Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy, UG), **Chair:** Juliana Appiah (UG)
- 12.45-13.45 Lunch Break (Venue: Pagoda, ISSER, UG)
- 13.45-15.45 **Panel 1: Perspectives on Sustainable Peace, findings from MIASA fellows**  
**Conveners:** Afua Boatemaa Yakohene (UG) & Chido Mutangadura (Africa Innovation and Research Centre)  
**Speakers:**  
Linda Darkwa (UG): Why sustainable regional peacebuilding must move beyond security responses  
Teddy Atim (Feinstein International Center at Tufts University): *Resource and power in peace and conflict studies*  
Afua Boatemaa Yakohene (UG): *Security by proxy: Comparing legitimacy and the politics of self-defense groups in West Africa*  
Chido Mutangadura-Yeswa (Africa Innovation and Research Centre): *Towards a nexus approach for peacebuilding sustainability*  
**Discussant:** Joyce De-Graft Acquah (University of Cape Coast)
- 15.45-16.15 Cocoa Break (Venue: Pagoda, ISSER, UG)
- 16.15-17.00 **Plenary Discussion Day 1, Moderator:** Stefan Rother (MIASA)
- 17.30-18.00 **Performance:** *Kor yɛ* by MIASA Artist in Residence Natasa Chanta-Martin in collaboration with the Department of Dance, School of Performing Arts, UG
- 18.00 MIASA Reception

### Wednesday, 10 June 2026

- 8.45-9.15 Registration (Venue: ISSER, University of Ghana, UG)
- 9.15-10.00 **Keynote Address: Democracy in Africa: What the people are telling us – and what we must do about it, Speaker:** Joseph Asunka (Afrobarometer), **Chair:** Nene-Lomotey Kuditchar (UG)
- 10.00-10.30 Cocoa Break (Venue: Pagoda, ISSER, UG)
- 10.30-12.30 **Panel 2: Perspectives on Sustainable Democracy, findings from MIASA fellows and associates**  
**Conveners:** Anja Osei (FU Berlin) & Akosua K. Darkwah (UG)

**Speakers:**

Christian Wali Wali (University Omar Bongo): *A Comparative Study of the Functioning of the National Assembly in Gabon between 2019 and 2024 (in French)*

Gretchen Bauer (University of Delaware): *Sustainable Democracy and Women in Politics in Africa*

George Bob-Milliar (KNUST): *Political party activism without dividends: How parties' incentives structure threatens Ghana's democracy*

Sa'eed Husaini (Centre for Democracy and Development): *Programmatic Convergence and Democratic Crisis in Nigeria*

**Discussant:** Mireille Manga Edimo (University of Yaoundé II)

12.30-13.30 Lunch (Venue: Pagoda, ISSER, UG)

13.30-14.15 **Keynote Address: War, refugees, and Sahelian gardens. How can long-term experiences of war and crisis (in Chad) help us to think through 'sustainability transformation'?**, **Speaker:** Andrea Behrends (University of Leipzig), **Chair:** Samuel Aniegye Ntewusu (UG)

14.15-16.15 **Panel 3: Perspectives on Sustainability Transformation, findings from MIASA fellows**

**Conveners:** Peter Narh (UG) & Lamine Doumbia (Humboldt University)

**Speakers:**

Mahamadou Bassirou Tangara (USSGB): *The redevelopment of urban markets and sustainable transformation in Bamako. Tensions between public policy and traders' experiences (in French)*

Diana Ayeh (Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research): *A just transition for whom? How the race for "critical minerals" reshapes resource sovereignty and environmental justice in West Africa*

Tongnoma Zongo (INSS-CNRST): *Gold mining in Burkina Faso: a driver of sustainable development or merely an illusion? (in French)*

Henriette Gunkel (Ruhr University Bochum): *Extractive Continuities: Colonial Remains, Green Futures, and the Limits of Sustainability in Namibia*

**Discussant:** Kojo Amanor (UG)

16.15-16.45 Cocoa Break (Venue: Pagoda, ISSER, UG)

16.45-17.30 **Plenary discussion Day 2; Moderator:** Mary Boateema Setrana (UG)

19.00 Conference dinner (by invitation only)

**Thursday, 11 June 2026**

8.30-9.00 Registration (Venue: ISSER, University of Ghana, UG)

9.00-9.45 **Keynote Address: Transitions toward convivial scholarship and sustainable governance in African research, Speaker:** Francis Nyamnjoh (University of Cape Town), **Chair:** Mamadou Diawara (Point Sud)

9.45-10.15 Cocoa Break (Venue: Pagoda, ISSER, UG)

- 10.15-11.45      **Round Table: The Africa Charter, the way forward to transform North-South collaborations?**  
**Speakers:** Isabella Aboderin (University of Bristol), Ernest Aryeetey (UG), Susann Baller (Centre Marc Bloch), Hans Peter Hahn (Goethe University), Patricio Langa (University of the Western Cape), Nadine Machikou (University Yaoundé II), **Chair:** Bernd Kortmann (University of Freiburg)
- 11.45-12.45      Lunch (Venue: Pagoda, ISSER, UG)
- 12.45-14.15      **Roundtable: The Africa Charter, a model for the Global South?**  
**Speakers:** Sergio Costa (FU Berlin/MECILA), Grace Diabah (UG/MIASA), Julius Distelhoff (University of Marburg/ MECAM), Silvia Grinberg (CONICET & UNSAM / CALAS), Awadhendra Sharan (Centre for the Studies of Developing Societies/ ICAS:MP), **Chair:** Marko Scholze
- 14.15-14.45      Wrap up, key take-aways and closing ceremony, **Moderators:** Abena Oduro (UG) & Charlotte Asante Wrigley (UG)
- 15.00              Farewell reception

**List of Participants (in alphabetical order):**

No	Name	Institution
1	Prof Isabella Aboderin	University of Bristol, UK
2	Dr Juliana Abena Appiah	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
3	Dr Joyce De-Graft Acquah	University of Cape Coast, Ghana
4	Prof Kojo Amanor	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
5	Prof Ernest Aryeetey	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
6	Prof Charlotte Wrigley Asante	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
7	Dr Joseph Asunka	Afrobarometer
8	Dr Teddy Atim	Feinstein International Center at Tufts University, Boston, USA
9	Dr Diana Hohner Ayeh	Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, Germany
10	Dr Susann Baller	Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin, Germany
11	Prof Gretchen Bauer	University of Delaware, USA
12	Prof Andrea Behrends	University of Leipzig, Germany
13	Dr Emma Birikorang	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, Ghana
14	Mrs Natasa Chanta-Martin	MIASA Artist in Residence
15	Prof George Bob-Milliar	KNUST Kumasi, Ghana
16	Prof Sergio Costa	Free University Berlin, Germany / MECILA, Sao Paulo, Brazil
17	Dr Linda Darkwa	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
18	Prof Akosua Keseboa Darkwah	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
19	Prof Grace Diabah	MIASA, University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
20	Prof Mamadou Diawara	Point Sud, Bamako, Mali
21	Dr Julius Distelhoff	University of Marburg, Germany & MECAM, Tunis, Tunisia
22	Dr Lamine Doumbia	Humboldt University Berlin, Germany
23	Prof Ruth Mireille Manga Edimo	University of Yaoundé II, Cameroon
24	Dr Rosina K. Foli	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
25	Prof Silvia Grinberg	CONICET & UNSAM / CALAS, Buenos Aires, Argentina
26	Prof Henriette Gunkel	Ruhr University Bochum, Germany
27	Prof Hans Peter Hahn	Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany
28	Dr Sa'eed Husaini	Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), Abuja, Nigeria
29	Prof Bernd Kortmann	University of Freiburg, Germany
30	Dr Nene-Lomotey Kuditchar	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
31	Prof Patricio Langa	University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa
32	Prof Nadine Machikou	University Yaoundé II, Cameroon
33	Dr Khaoula Matri	University of Sousse, Tunisia
34	Prof Andreas Mehler	University of Freiburg, Germany
35	Dr Chido Mutangadura-Yeswa	Africa Innovation and Research Centre, Nairobi, Kenya
36	Dr Peter Narh	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
37	Prof Francis Beng Nyamnjoh	University of Cape Town, South Africa
38	Prof Samuel Aniegye Ntewusu	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
39	Prof Abena Oduro	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
40	Prof Anja Osei	Free University Berlin, Germany
41	PD Dr Stefan Rother	MIASA & University of Freiburg, Germany
42	Dr Marko Scholze	Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany
43	Prof Mary Boateema Setrana	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
44	Prof Awadhendra Sharan	Centre for the Studies of Developing Societies / ICAS:MP, India
45	Dr Mahamadou Bassirou Tangara	USSGB, Bamako, Mali
46	Prof Thomas Tieku	Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy, Ghana
47	Prof Christian Wali Wali	Université Omar Bongo, Libreville, Gabon
48	Dr Afua Boatemaa Yakohene	University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
49	Dr Tongnoma Zongo	INSS-CNRST, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso