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Statistical Trends and Characterization of Atmospheric Pollutants Levels Using Low-Cost and Satellite Total Column Data in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Assembly (GAMA), Ghana

In this study, long-term trends over 5 Ghana EPA traffic stations on (25 x 25) km resolution satellite OMI instrument and (50 x 50) km resolution MODIS Terra AOD from 2012 to 2021 were assessed using Mann-Kendall test to ascertain the impact of population growth coupled with increasing sources for the past decade in the GAMA. Further, characterization of Clarity Node-S PM_{2.5}, AOD, NO₂, and O₃ levels in the GAMA was assessed while the Pearson coefficient was used to find correlations between the pollutants. Overall, there was an increasing trend in NO₂ ($p < 0.05$), no trend in O₃ ($p > 0.05$) and a decreasing trend in AOD ($p < 0.01$). Pearson coefficients between PM_{2.5} data and MODIS Terra AOD were ($R^2 = 0.72, 0.72, 0.67, 0.58$ and 0.57) respectively. Correlation coefficient between column NO₂ and O₃ was ($R^2 = -0.83 \pm 0.030, p < 0.01$), AOD and O₃ ($R^2 = -0.43 \pm 0.003, p < 0.01$), NO₂ and AOD ($R^2 = 0.21 \pm 0.010, p > 0.01$). PM_{2.5}, AOD and NO₂ levels were high generally during the dry season while high concentrations of O₃ were observed in the wet season across the stations. Again, an increasing and decreasing trends in NO₂ and AOD levels show that sources of poor air quality may be shifting from the usual biomass burning to traffic emissions. High population growth with increasing traffic in growing sub-Saharan African cities requires urgent policy measures and regulations as ground air quality monitoring sensors are limited.

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