

## Effective Implementation of Access and Benefit Sharing of the Nagoya Protocol and Integration into Planned co-management Arrangements in the Nyambai Forest Park of The Gambia

### Part I: Project Information

**GEF ID**

10677

**Project Type**

FSP

**Type of Trust Fund**

GET

**CBIT/NGI**

CBIT

NGI

**Project Title**

Effective Implementation of Access and Benefit Sharing of the Nagoya Protocol and Integration into Planned co-management Arrangements in the Nyambai Forest Park of The Gambia

**Countries**

Gambia

**Agency(ies)**

UNEP

**Other Executing Partner(s)**

**Executing Partner Type**

**GEF Focal Area**

Biodiversity

**Taxonomy**

Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Sustainable Forest, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Ecosystem Approach, Focal Areas, Chemicals and Waste, Best Available Technology / Best Environmental Practices, Biomes, International Waters, Climate Change, Climate Change Mitigation, Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use, Forest, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Productive Landscapes, Biodiversity, Wetlands, Lakes, Rivers, Tropical Rain Forests, Coral Reefs, Grasslands, Mangroves, Sea Grasses, Tropical Dry Forests, Demonstrate innovative approach, Influencing models, Communications, Stakeholders, Strategic Communications, Education, Behavior change, Public Campaigns, Awareness Raising, Type of Engagement, Participation, Information Dissemination, Partnership, Consultation, Local Communities, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organization, Community Based Organization, Academia, Indigenous Peoples, Beneficiaries, Gender results areas, Capacity Development, Gender Equality, Access and control over natural resources, Participation and leadership, Access to benefits and services, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Women groups, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender-sensitive indicators, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Private Sector, Capital providers, Species, Plant Genetic Resources, Animal Genetic Resources, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, SMEs, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Knowledge Generation, Training, Learning

**Rio Markers**

**Climate Change Mitigation**

Climate Change Mitigation 0

**Climate Change Adaptation**

Climate Change Adaptation 0

**Duration**

48 In Months

**Agency Fee(\$)**

292,114.00

**Submission Date**

9/23/2020

A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
BD-3-9	GET	3,074,886.00	10,500,000.00
	<b>Total Project Cost (\$)</b>	<b>3,074,886.00</b>	<b>10,500,000.00</b>

## B. Indicative Project description summary

### Project Objective

To create the enabling environment for the implementation of the Access and Benefit Sharing of the Nagoya Protocol in The Gambia and pilot testing of some promising genetic resources in Nyambai Forest Park.

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
1. Enhancing The Gambian national policy, regulatory framework, institutional capacity and knowledge base needed to implement the Nagoya Protocol	Technical Assistance	<p>1.1 The Government of Gambia adopts an updated National ABS policy and regulatory framework</p> <p>1.2 Relevant actors from public, private, academic, scientific, technical, society, and indigenous people take measures to strengthen implementation and enforcement of the National ABC policy and regulatory framework.</p>	<p>1.1.1. Programming and institutional alignment established of selected line government agencies on policy application of ABS</p> <p>1.1.2. Policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks governing ABS drafted and approved by the legislature, including the appointment of a National Focal Point and ABS Competent National Authority</p> <p>1.1.3 Developed and adopted the national guidelines on ABS, reflecting intellectual property rights, traditional knowledge, gender, and benefit-sharing contracts, to complement the ABS framework and facilitate implementation by all relevant actors</p> <p>1.2.1. Awareness-raising activities (using existing informative materials, and new ones when needed) on the Nagoya Protocol directed towards government officials,</p>	GET	800,000.00	3,000,000.00

academics, researchers, society, communicators, and the general public.

1.2.2. Interactive training modules, including negotiation skills designed and directed for specific target groups to facilitate access to genetic resources, based on the national law and the Nagoya Protocol. *Special attention will be put on strengthening of indigenous research and development capabilities.*

1.2.3 Online information system on ABS developed (including information on species) and operational in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders

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2. Supporting research for valorization, value addition and commercialisation of selected genetic resources in Nyambai Forest Park	Technical Assistance	2.1 Valorisation of biodiversity improves conservation and sustainable use of selected genetic resources in Nyambai Forest Park	2.1.1 Valorisation of biodiversity of native genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge in Nyambai Forest Park, supported by the project to comply with The Gambian ABS national legislation and Nagoya Protocol throughout the value chain.	GET	1,628,463.00	4,500,000.00
			2.1.2 Benefits derived from the use of genetic resources and traditional knowledge in the Nyambai Forest Park, are identified, classified, and assessed to strengthen the expertise and capacity of national authorities, including setting the basis for future negotiations.			
			2.1.3 Commercial and non-commercial utilization of native genetic resources and benefit-sharing of selected genetic resources are researched, legislated, and included in the test for The Gambian national ABS monitoring system.			

3. Enhancing partnerships among relevant actors to improve equitable access and use of genetic resources and traditional knowledge	Technical Assistance	3.1 Partnerships for commercial and non-commercial bioprospecting opportunities strengthened by stakeholders and actions taken to establish ABS contracts at the community-level (FPIC, MAT)	<p>3.1.1. Partnership management mechanisms established and piloted in Nyambai Forest Park to support and regulate commercial and non-commercial bioprospecting opportunities through a national partnership platform</p> <p>3.1.2. National inventory and pre-feasibility for bioprospecting projects established, leading to a new collaboration and ABS contracts (PIC, MAT) in Nyambai Forest Park</p> <p>3.1.3. Developed a provider-user model agreement mechanism in high biodiversity Nyambai Forest Park to test proposed national ABS co-management regulations of biodiversity resources</p>	GET	500,000.00	2,500,000.00
<b>Sub Total (\$)</b>					<b>2,928,463.00</b>	<b>10,000,000.00</b>
<b>Project Management Cost (PMC)</b>						
GET					146,423.00	500,000.00
<b>Sub Total(\$)</b>					<b>146,423.00</b>	<b>500,000.00</b>
<b>Total Project Cost(\$)</b>					<b>3,074,886.00</b>	<b>10,500,000.00</b>

**C. Indicative sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type**

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Recipient Country Government	National Environment Authority (NEA)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	National Department of Parks and Wildlife	Grant	Investment mobilized	500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	National Department of Parks and Wildlife	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000.00
Donor Agency	IFAD - Livestock and Horticultural Development project (LHDP)	Grant	Investment mobilized	5,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	National Environment Agency – Environment Fund	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Department of Forestry, National Forestry Fund (NFF)	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,500,000.00
			<b>Total Project Cost(\$)</b>	<b>10,500,000.00</b>

**Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified**

Investments mobilized were identified through consultations with GEF Agencies and Government agencies' projects and initiatives where the costs were budgeted for (other than recurrent costs). In-kind contributions were calculated based on the estimated level of financial compensation that would be offered based on the amount of time that these organizations will spend to offer technical and expert support to the project.

D. Indicative Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Gambia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	3,074,886	292,114	3,367,000.00
<b>Total GEF Resources(\$)</b>					<b>3,074,886.00</b>	<b>292,114.00</b>	<b>3,367,000.00</b>

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required



PPG Amount (\$)

136,986

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

13,014

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Gambia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	136,986	13,014	<b>150,000.00</b>
<b>Total Project Costs(\$)</b>					<b>136,986.00</b>	<b>13,014.00</b>	<b>150,000.00</b>

## Core Indicators

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
92549.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
92,549.00			

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes that meets national or international third party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations (hectares)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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Documents (Please upload document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Submitted

Indicator 11 Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	60,000			
Male	50,000			
<b>Total</b>	110000	0	0	0

Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used, and other focal area specifics (i.e., Aichi targets in BD) including justification where core indicator targets are not provided

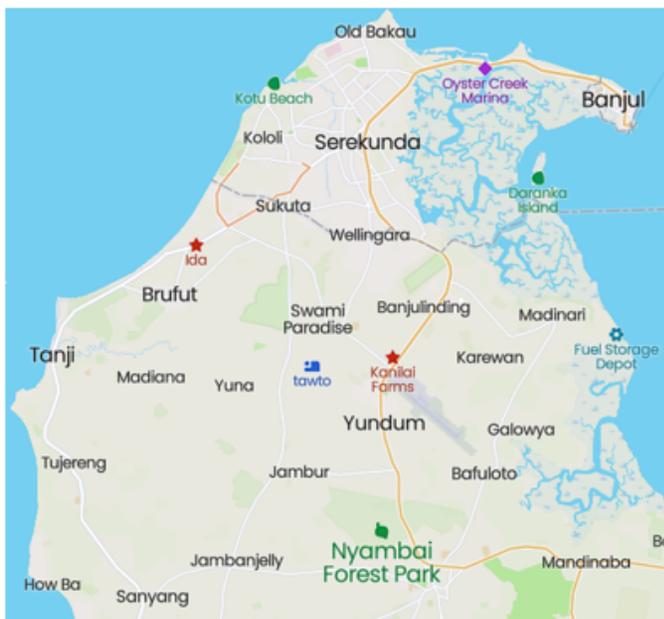
Overall, the project is consistent with: • Aichi Strategic Goal C: To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity, and Target 13 that indicates: ‘By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity’; and • Aichi Strategic Goal D: Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services, and Target 16 that indicates: “By 2015, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation” and Target 18 that indicates: ‘ By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.’

## Part II. Project Justification

### 1a. Project Description

#### 1) The global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)

The Gambia is endowed with a rich genetic resource base. The country has a rich heritage of biodiversity and biological resources. The coastal and marine ecosystem, and more importantly the riverine ecosystem, harbor a highly diversified flora and fauna and support considerable agricultural, forestry and fishing activities. In rural production for food and nutrition about 80% of the rural populations are engaged in biodiversity-driven activities on which their livelihoods depend. The medicinal properties of diverse plant and animal species provide enormous health benefits. It is estimated that 80% of the rural population in The Gambia depend on traditional medicine, their livelihoods are tied to the integrity and functioning of biodiversity, both at the floral and faunal levels.[1]



Map showing the location of the Nyambai Forest Park

The Gambian genetic resource integrity has faced a serious case of biopiracy. In the 1970s, rapamycin, an immunosuppressive drug that is used in medicine (for, example, to prevent rejection of organ transplant) was discovered from a *Streptomyces* sample collected on the Easter Island.[2] It has been reported that Glaxo SmithKline company has claimed ownership of a compound from a *Streptomyces* strain that, according to its patent, was isolated from a termite hill at Abukey, Gambia. The strain produces a rapamycin-related compound called 29-desmethylrapamycin and, according to the patent, it is useful both as an anti-fungal and as an immunosuppressant. It is unclear what research and development has been conducted by Glaxo on 29-desmethylrapamycin. The 2001

patent application indicates recent interest in the candidate drug. Generally, rapamycin and related compounds remain a subject of considerable scientific interest. However, there is no documented information about any benefit sharing arrangements between SmithKline Beecham and Gambia as a nation or local communities in Abuke.[3] [more information at PPG].

The Gambian forest contributes immensely to the country's economy and the social well being of its population and provides several environmental services. In addition to maintaining the micro-climatic balance, the stabilisation of the river banks and providing life support systems to many other plants, animals and aquatic life, forests are important to the local communities who depend on them for food, medicines, wood products for construction and energy (particularly to women who rely on the forests for their subsistence). Forest products are particularly important for the wellbeing of women.[4]

The Gambian government ratified the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) in July 2014. However, The Gambia has limited capacity and lacks effective enforcement and follow up mechanisms for the implementation of the ABS. The government recognises the need to develop a legal framework to facilitate the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS.[5] Consequently, the country's biodiversity endowment that underpins livelihoods of rural populations, but also helps to maintain the resilience of the ecosystems, is under constant threats. These threats are principally linked to invasive alien species, unsustainable agricultural practices, increasing pressure on coastal and marine areas, overgrazing, ecosystem degradation and conversion, and bush burning. Coupled with these factors is forest loss and degradation from land conversion – shifting cultivation, clearance for agriculture due to high population pressure, bushfires, and illegal exploitation. All these compounded factors threaten the integrity of The Gambian biodiversity, including the associated genetic diversity of both flora and fauna. Generally, there is a high growth of human and livestock populations. Additionally, there is no appropriate forest management system in place. Hence bushfires, the cutting of fuelwood, overgrazing and encroachments on the forest resource by shifting cultivation and human settlements are relatively uncontrolled.

*Invasive alien species hybridising with genetically close species and legal gaps:* The Gambia experiences the appearance of invasive and alien species that have significantly impacted particularly the horticultural productions. In The Gambia, the invasive alien species have a range of impacts on native biodiversity including competition with the native taxa of flora and fauna, hybridisation with genetically close species, alteration of the physical and chemical characteristics of soil, modification of natural and semi-natural habitats and propagation of pests and diseases.

Additionally, the biodiversity of domesticated fruit trees is under huge threat due to the invasion of fruit flies and mealy bugs and the introduction of other species that hybridize with tree species of value to local communities. Forest ecosystems support a broad array of insects, bacteria, viruses, fungi and oomycetes which may be mutualistic, symbiotic or parasitic in their interactions with the fruit trees and other plants present. However, when the impacts of these organisms are perceived to reduce the value of trees to people, they are usually termed 'pests and pathogens'. [6] The introduction, though poorly understood, of pests and pathogens in the country have exposed domesticated fruit trees of value to communities, including vegetables, to diseases that have led to poor yields and quality of mangoes, guavas, sour and sweet sops and citrus fruits. The vegetables, on the other hand, are equally affected by several invasive and alien pests which are causing huge negative impact to vegetable production. Many vegetable crops such as the solanaceous crops (tomato, bitter tomato and eggplant), cabbage and other vegetables have significantly suffered from the red spider mites. Due to lack of co-evolution between the pests and pathogens and host species of both fruit trees and vegetables, there is no effective resistance mechanism, and this weakened ecosystem resilience with concomitant threats to biodiversity of affected plant species. Pathogenic species cause huge problems to indigenous and local communities, with particularly significant negative effects on their local and national economies. Species that are invasive in certain parts of the country have caused severe negative impacts on such areas. The entry into The Gambia of invasive and alien species is attributed to Natural and or trans-boundary movement of the species; farming (with introduction of new plant species) by people; landscaping (with introduction of some undesirable plant species like water hyacinth as ornamental, or use of non-native genotypes) by people; discarding of infested materials (rubbish, or accidentally spreading seeds and plant fragments);

movement of infested commodities/goods, or their containers, or conveyors; movement of people (by air, road, rail and sea transport); and direct intentional or unintentional introduction of crops and livestock infested with pests and diseases by agriculture and forestry; Infrastructure development, pump and tidal irrigations through canals, runoffs of rain water.

*Forest and agricultural farming:* The vast majority of Gambians are involved in agriculture. Globally, agriculture stands out as the largest driver of biodiversity loss, although the ways in which it affects species are complex. These include: 1. conversion of natural ecosystems into farms and ranches 2. intensification of management in long-established cultural landscapes 3. release of pollutants, including greenhouse gases 4. associated value chain impacts, including energy and transport use and food waste.[7] In The Gambia, agricultural production systems employed in crop farming consist of intensive land used types, characterized by low level of input. Shifting cultivation is still widely practiced in The Gambia, even though fallow periods have considerably reduced as land becomes scarce in most farming communities. The compounding effect of high population pressure and the scarcity of land have forced farmers to intensively cultivate a piece of land year after year. Combined with population pressure and the production systems used, natural regeneration of cleared parcels of land for agriculture is virtually impossible. This means that plant and animal species that are lost are lost for good, leading to loss of biodiversity. Additionally, intensive production systems lead to land degradation which contributes to loss of habitats and, consequently, biodiversity loss, including the loss of genetic resources of lost species.

*Fuel Wood Extraction:* The cutting of trees for fuel wood is among the leading causes of deforestation in the Gambia. It is reported that forest in The Gambia provides 85% of the country's domestic energy needs in the form of fuel wood for over 90% of the population.[8] Currently, many parts of the country are facing shortage as the population of preferred fuel wood species decline. The market demand for certain species of fuel wood compelled wood vendors to harvest green wood. The high demand for domestic energy has resulted in indiscriminate tree felling without regard to their slow replacement. Species like *Combretum* and *Terminalia* are particularly threatened by cutting, burning, poisoning or lopping for branch wood in order to ensure a regular fuelwood supply to households and urban markets. Extraction of targeted species is therefore, leading to the loss of biodiversity and narrowing of the genetic diversity of the ecosystem.

As the Gambian population rises and so is the demand for timber and non-timber products from both within and adjacent protected areas. This is leading to increasing levels of land degradation and habitat loss. This is exacerbated by the fact that there are no alternative sources of fuelwood, timber and other non-timber products for communities that directly depend on land-based resources within or forest adjacent areas. There is no end in sight to the trend that has been witnessed between 1946 and 1998 where woodland cover in the country decreased from 81% to 42%. During this period, closed woodland disappeared almost entirely and tree density in open woodlands decreased, while the area of tree and shrub savannah increased as a result of the extensive conversion and degradation of the other forest classes. Forest cover decreased from 505,300 ha (44% of the country's surface area) in 1981/82 to 423,000 ha (37%) by 2009/2010. During the same period, mangrove forests alone declined from 67,000 ha to 35,700 ha.[9] Under business-as-usual, rates of deforestation (estimated at 5-7%)[10], more than half of the remaining forest/woodland cover in The Gambia will be lost in the next ten years, critically threatening biodiversity and genetic diversity of the Gambian flora.

*Ecosystem degradation and conversion:* Habitat conversion is one of the major factors of biodiversity loss in The Gambia. The loss of biodiversity also leads to the narrowing and or complete loss of genetic resource base of important species. Rising demand for food and other agricultural products, among others, has resulted in clearing of natural habitats to make space for agricultural land; and economic, demographic and social pressures are likely to put further pressure on habitats. Wetland ecosystems are increasingly being used for rice cultivation and for dry season vegetable gardening as well as grazing for livestock. The focus on certain rice varieties is leading to the erosion of genetic base of other equally important varieties of rice and other food crops. Road construction and other infrastructure development have caused major disruptions in the processes and functions of key ecosystems such as wetlands. Harvesting of mangroves for fuel wood and other domestic uses has greatly reduced the area of mangrove forests.

In addition, a large proportion of the country's population resides in coastal areas and depends upon coastal resources for their livelihoods, but large-scale migration into coastal zones as a result of land degradation and disrupted rainfall patterns in the hinterland is exerting tremendous pressure on coastal and marine resources. Infrastructure development, settlements, agricultural cultivation and sand mining, compounded by sea-level rise, have degraded much of the coastal habitat important for marine and coastal biodiversity. Further biodiversity and genetic resource loss are being experienced in The Gambia where nests of migratory birds and eggs of marine turtles are frequently collected; sharks harvested for their fins; and manatees hunted for meat. Finally, oil exploration is an emerging threat in the coastal and marine environment, including sensitive areas such as deep-sea canyons that will significantly impact on biodiversity and genetic resources of fragile marine ecosystems.

*Bush Burning:* During the long dry season, bush fires are a common feature of the rural landscape; according to some estimates at least 80% of the standing biomass is consumed by fire in a given year (Forster, 1983), which constitutes a significant threat to habitat and species diversity in the country. One of the results of constant fires in forest ecosystems is a change in tree species composition to assemblages which are more fire tolerant. This change in tree species is changing the habitat and driving dependent wild animals to almost extinction.[11]

These factors above are a real threat to the genetic resources of 22 wildlife Protected Areas (8 PAs and 14 community based conservation areas under the mandate of the Department of Parks and Wildlife). The factors are also a threat to the genetic resource base of 66 forest reserves covering a total of 34,029 hectares managed by the Department of Forestry. Thirty four forest parks totaling 22,239 hectares or 65% were designated as protected forest. Several local community forests also exist covering 18,000 hectares.[12] The environmental threats described above continue to deplete the Gambian biodiversity, as well as its genetic resource base. One of the important National Parks is the Nyambai Forest Park that will be a specific focus for this proposed project.

*Climate change:* The effects of climate change are already palpable in the Gambia as evidenced through changes in annual mean temperature, and changes in annual total precipitation. Since 1960, the Gambia has experienced increasingly erratic rainfall patterns, higher intensity storms, intra-seasonal drought, and increasing average air temperatures, accompanied by periodic cold spells and heat waves. Available literature points to an increased average temperature between 3 and 4.5 °C, bringing with it an increase in potential evapotranspiration by 2075. Concerning projected rainfall, GCM model outcomes vary widely between -59% and +29% of the 1951- 1990 average of 850 mm per annum. It is also reported that the low-lying topography of the country coupled with a 1 m rise in sea level could potentially inundate over 8% of the country's land area. This includes over 61% of current mangroves, 33% of swamps, and over 20% of current lowland rice growing areas.

An additional feature of the rainfall records is the extreme variability of low rainfall amounts around the long-term average over the last forty years. The size of the area with average summer rainfall - cumulative July-August-September (JAS) - of less than 800 mm has increased from 36% in 1965 to 93% of the country (GoTG, 2007). In addition, the linear trends indicate that wet season (JAS) rainfall in The Gambia has decreased significantly between 1960 and 2006, at an average rate of 8.8 mm per month per decade. The decline in rainfall is spatially variable across the country, with greater changes in the western half of the country (GoTG, 2007). It is predicted with a high degree of certainty that the Gambia will experience an increase in temperatures of ranging between 1.1°C and 3.9°C during the period 2030 – 2100.

Holdridge Life Zone Classification (HLZC) model suggest that The Gambia's forest cover will fit less into a tropical dry forest categorisation and more into a dry forest and tropical very dry forest categories. As the temperature becomes warmer, rainfall decreases and potential evapotranspiration increases, forest cover will be approximately sub-divide into tropical very dry forest (35 - 40%) and tropical dry forest (45 - 60%), the warmest climate scenario giving rise to the highest percentage of tropical very dry forest. It is also projected that lower average soil moisture will affect the nitrogen up-take of plants and their palatability to grazing animals, but of significantly greater importance is the sharp drop in biomass production under projected natural growing conditions. Long-term loss of ecosystem productivity is likely to adversely affect biodiversity in rangelands, even though soil carbon stocks look likely to increase as a consequence of biomass production failures.

*Private sector in the country as it relates to Natural Resources Management (NRM)* - The Government of The Gambia endorsed a policy to encourage the private sector to invest in National Parks, Nature Reserves, Forest Parks and other Private Wildlife Estates in June, 2009, through a Cabinet Paper by the Secretary of State for Forestry and the Environment on the involvement of the Private Sector in management of Protected Areas (PAs) and natural resources. It should be noted however that the invitation of the Private Sector to be involved in natural resources management was a major policy shift from the existing one which did not allow the Private Sector to participate in conservation programmes in the country. Emerging Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) markets in The Gambia include (i) sustainable forestry; (ii) ecotourism; (iii) carbon sequestration through forestry, agricultural projects and REDD (Reducing Emissions through Deforestation and Forest Degradation); (iv) watershed management; and (v) nature conservation and restoration such as wetland banking and biodiversity offset programmes.

Corruption challenges in The Gambia : While still far below the global average of 43 out of 100, with a score of 37 out of 100 on the latest Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) The Gambia has gained seven points since 2017. Although in general one should not read too much into a single year-on-year change, even of this magnitude, the increase reflects significant changes in the way the country is tackling corruption and strengthening democracy. From 1996 to 2017, The Gambia suffered under the violent and repressive regime of its president, Yahya Jammeh. Systemic corruption and kleptocracy crippled private enterprise and robbed the Gambian people of vast sums, undermining an already fragile and shock-prone economy. In 2017, the year Jammeh finally left office after losing an election which he then declared void, the country scored just 30 out of 100 on the Corruption Perceptions Index and ranked 130 out of 180 countries. A year later, The Gambia is inside the top 100 countries for the first time.

So, what has made the difference? : In the short time since Jammeh has been ousted from office, The Gambia has shown progress in many of the areas identified as critical. There are encouraging signs that the opacity, repression and violation of basic rights that marked Jammeh's time in office are slowly being changed by a commitment to democratic norms, good governance and the rule of law. The Supreme Court, for instance, has declared several pieces of repressive legislation to be unconstitutional, including the 2013 Information and Communication Act, which punished the "spreading of false news" via the internet. The new administration under President Adama Barrow has also established a commission to determine how the constitution – consistently weakened and undermined under Jammeh – can be reformed to better protect citizens' rights. Ministers have begun to declare their assets to an ombudsman. The new government has also launched processes to reform the security sector and civil service, including giving a new name and mandate to the domestic spy agency, previously known to Gambians as the "house of terror". In 2017, a Commission of Inquiry was established to investigate Jammeh's financial misdeeds, which include an estimated US\$50 million stolen from the State Treasury.

Current efforts: Newfound democratic freedoms are contributing to a sense of optimism within the country and are reflected in improvements to the country's performance in international democracy ratings. In 2019, Freedom House awarded The Gambia an aggregate score of 45/100, pushing the country further into the "partly free" category it entered in 2018. The government appears committed to making anti-corruption a key part of democratic reforms. Research has shown this to be critical to sustained progress in both democratic development and reducing corruption. It is still early days. Shortcomings in the constitution did not disappear overnight after Jammeh was ousted from power. A promised anti-corruption commission has not yet been established. Moreover, recent allegations of corruption involving a foundation belonging to President Barrow's wife have raised serious concerns. A Chinese company deposited more than three quarters of a million dollars into the foundation's accounts, most of which was soon transferred to a Portuguese charter airline, ostensibly for a flight to China. Barrow's government has also insisted on upholding a controversial contract with a Belgian firm, Semlex Europe SA, to manage its citizens' identity documents. The agreement does not allow any government oversight over Semlex's work, despite the fact that the company has previously been investigated by Belgian police for suspected money laundering and corruption.

Land Conflicts in the Gambia: Land and other natural resources such as forest, water and fisheries are the pillars of The Gambian economy, and are directly linked to the livelihoods of more than 3 in 4 people in the country. However, over 50 hotspots of land conflicts have been identified across the country. Sadly, some of the clashes have resulted in the death of at least four people between 2018 and 2019 and have also caused the destruction of properties and livelihoods. Findings of the “2018 Gambia Conflict and Development Analysis”, have identified land and natural resources conflicts as a priority area that needs to be addressed urgently to preserve social cohesion and peace . Effective land management is predicated on proper ownership. It is those with legitimate documentation for the land they claim to own who can confidently make decisions on what to do with their parcels and maximise the potential. Ownership is essentially determined by title deeds. Unfortunately, there is increasing conflicts involving land conflicts in the country that need urgent address. Conflicts over land are common and becoming a major problem in The Gambia and in some cases resort to violent confrontation. The growing nature of land scarcity in the communal areas does not, however, mean that conflicts over land are always economically motivated. It is high time government put in place firm measures involving land cases to avoid further calamities. Land issues, particularly its access, ownership and use, are often central to understanding the dynamics of conflict and post-conflict settings. Claims to land ownership without title deed cannot be sustained when there is a contest over property rights. This explains the prevalent vice of land grabbing. Even estate land developers are facing similar constraints, as property registration in ensuring that the property one buys is genuine. Government needs to take a firm stance or even reactivate land commission to deal with some of this very many land conflicts in the country. Government should view communal land conflicts a top priority to avoid further tensions. Sometimes, delays in issuance of land documents are the major obstacles further compounding some of these conflicts. It is important for landowners to expedite land registration and issuance of title deeds to give citizens legitimate ownership of their parcels so that they can put into proper economic use . The Gambian Government, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have joined hands in an effort to address, in a sustainable way, the conflicts and violence that erupt over land and natural resources, as well as the challenges these generate in The Gambia. The eighteen-month project is funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF) and has a budget of the US\$1.4 million. Its main goal is to reduce the violence that occurs in the communities in relation to land and natural resources. This will be achieved by strengthening resource management and the capacity of dispute resolution systems, and also by restoring the citizen’s trust in the systems established to solve land disputes.

A District Authority exists in each district; a regional administrator oversees the regions; and a “Seyfo”, or Chief, who is appointed to oversee traditional administration and judicial functions also heads the districts. The Gambian village is headed by an Alkalo, or a traditional leader whom visitors should greet with a bag of kola nuts when first entering a Gambian village. Alkalos work with Area Councils to process land transaction documentation. In each province there is a district authority, which manages and regulates the use of land, and these elected Area Councils “charge land rates collection, refuse collection, provide municipal maintenance while the physical planning unit issues clearances for plots of land purchase as well as building permits and occupation clearance.” After the land is allocated by the Alkalo to tenants, it is registered with the Area Council. Tenants of Customary Land pay rent to the Area council yearly. A local transfer document is obtained from the relevant municipality. When ownership of land is confirmed, a certificate of ownership is issued by the Area Council and Alkalo of the village. The registration fee for land transactions are used to maintain roads, markets, cemeteries, and provide waste collection and water.

The Nyambai Forest Park (NFP), located about 35 km (13°16′29.26″N, 16°38′27.31″W) from the national’s capital, Banjul is among the first forest reserves established in The Gambia. Established on January 1, 1954 on >202 hectares, NFP is dominated by *Gmelina arborea* and *Phyllostachys edullus* species. Natural products for which there is a well-established local demand and familiarity include products such as foods (*Baobab*, *Kabba*, *Netto*, *Ziziphus* as well as products such as honey), medicines (numerous species), building materials (Rhun palm as well as semi-valuable and valuable timbers) and handicrafts (particularly furniture constructed from Rhun palm).

In terms of forest resources, NFP is one of the protected forest areas rich in birdlife, and offers excellent opportunities for bird watching in The Gambia. Over 165 bird species have been recorded with various hornbills, pheasants, cuckoos, sunbirds, starlings, weavers, waxbills, eagles and hawks, etc.

Some of the recorded species are the Black-necked Weaver, Red-billed Hornbill, Greater Honeyguide, Green-backed Eremomela, Grey-backed Camaroptera, Bearded Barbet, Oriole Warbler, Lizard Buzzard, Variable Sunbird, Western Grey Plantain Eater, Blue Breasted and Woodland Kingfisher, Yellow Crowned Gonolek, Paradise Flycatcher, Senegal Coucal, African Grey Hornbill, Tawny-flanked Prinia, Red-necked Falcon, Black-billed Wood-dove, Reinward's Babbler, Hooded Vulture, Snowy-crowned Robin-chat, Violet Turaco, Fanti Saw-wing, Laughing Dove, Little Bee-eater, Ahanta Francolin, White-throated Bee-eater, Stone Partridge, Palm-nut Vulture, Peregrine Falcon, Long-tailed Nightjar and many other avians. The areas under study are home to various invertebrates, reptiles and mammalian species. Among the primates are troops of Green Vervet Monkeys, Western Red Colobus Monkeys, Senegal Bushbabies (Gulagos), Callithrix Monkey, Campbell's Mona Monkey and Patas. Other mammal species includes the Sun Squirrel, African Civet, Genets, Mongoose, Brush Tailed Porcupine, some bushbucks and some rodents. Among the reptiles here are Agama, Rainbow and Monitor Lizards and you can also see fire ants, dragonflies, termites, butterflies, and the Golden Silk Orb-weaver among the numerous of insects and spiders.

However, the environmental integrity of NFP is being disturbed owing to littering by holiday makers. There is generally the problem of pollution from community dumping as well as industry such as from the Chinese Infinity New Energy Enterprise (INEE) company. The company was able to operate under the radar and without specific knowledge by the government of its alleged polluting activities, suggesting a particular type of national and local authority support or permission. Man-made pollution is compromising the natural resource base in NFP, where it is reported that corrupt practices by owners and local political actors have led to both legal violations and health risk exposure, or invoking fears around detriment to the tourism economy. Furthermore, there are many cases related to land conflicts in Brikama area where NFP is situated. Land related conflicts account for up to 90% of the court cases. [13] Pollution, corruption and land conflicts are among the factors that threaten conservation but also equitable and sustainable use of biodiversity in NFP. These threats are compounded by lack of science-based evidence of the faunal and floral biodiversity potential in NFP that can be derived through value addition, and the possible benefit sharing mechanisms that can incentivize more effective pathways for conservation and utilization of biodiversity components in the Park. In addition to the rich faunal species mentioned above, the table below details some of the most important floral species in the 202 hectares NFP.

Table 1 Some important plants of Nyambai

No.	Local name	Scientific Name	Family Name	Uses
1.	Malino	<i>Gmelina arborea</i>	Lamiaceae.	Construction,timber
2.	Bongo	<i>Phyllostachys nuda</i>	Poaceae	Construction,fence
3.	Folewo	<i>Landolphia hedeleti</i>	Apocynaceae	Medicinal,food
4.	Kaaba	<i>Saba senegalensis</i>	Apocynaceae	Food

*Strategic long term response to the threats:* Addressing threats to the integrity of biodiversity and genetic resources in The Gambia in an integrated and sustainable manner requires an appropriate institutional and policy environment that is backed up with capacity development of relevant stakeholders and information. Therefore, an enabling environment for the implementation of the Access and Benefit Sharing of the Nagoya Protocol embedded in national institutions of The Gambia is part of the long term strategic equation to respond to the threats. The creation and strengthening of the enabling environment builds on the country's pursuit of natural resource management strategies towards NBSAP national goals to address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss. This will be achieved by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and societal development aspirations, improving the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity, reducing the direct pressures on biodiversity and promoting sustainable use, and enhancing the

benefits to all users from biodiversity and ecosystem services. This needs to be complemented by enhancing an implementation approach that is based on participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building.[14] The threats to biodiversity in The Gambia has already been alluded to, are multifaceted and multidimensional. They are of environmental nature, but also a rural development issue. They are related to lack of stakeholder/community awareness, limited alternative resources and abject poverty. Co-management of natural resources that improves people's sense of ownership and their ability (right-based approach) to derive benefits to meet their needs is strategically powerful in responding to the threats. Property rights and ownership issues need to be addressed, particularly in indigenous and community conserved areas where questions abound regarding the ownership of genetic resources. The co-management mechanisms are therefore important, and Nyambai National Park management plans should include issues of ABS and related processes to encourage sustainable and equitable prospecting actions. However, these have to be rooted in persistent institutions at different appropriate administrative tiers to ensure that the impacts of interventions are sustained. Therefore, the long term response to the threats relevant to this proposed project is the establishment of an enduring ABS mechanism within appropriate institutions, promotion of co-management mechanisms between users and providers and other relevant stakeholders through institutions, policies and capacity development, including indigenous research of species that matter the most to the livelihoods of local communities.

However, for the country to achieve this level of coordinated responses, it needs to first address the barriers outlined below. It should be noted that by addressing the barriers related to inadequate legal and institutional framework, lack of awareness and lack of science-based valorization and value-addition of biodiversity components, it offers the country the opportunity to strengthen its own course to implement the Vision 2020.

In the next section, ABS related barriers are detailed. These are related to inadequate legal and institutional frameworks; inadequate land use and land right policies and lack of institutional capacity for land use planning; absence of planning processes and local capacities / support to enable integrated application of SLM measures; lack of land use planning; and inadequate protection of marine and coastal ecosystems and lack of experience and capacity for MPA management. These are barriers that need to be surmounted in order to reduce and halt environmental challenges that are reducing biodiversity and the genetic resource base in the Gambia.

## **Barriers**

*Lack of national policy and regulatory ABS-relevant frameworks:* The Gambia has been a Party to the CBD since 8 September 1994. It also acceded to the Nagoya Protocol on ABS in July 2014, which entered into force for The Gambia in October 2014. However the implementation of ABS in the country has been hampered by lack of a legal framework to ensure its transposition into the Gambian legal order and facilitate its implementation.[15] Adequate legal and institutional frameworks promote the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge while strengthening the opportunities for fair and equitable sharing of benefits from their use. Adequate legal and institutional frameworks also ensure legal certainty and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources. The Gambian Biodiversity and Environment Act 2003 provides for the improvement of the peoples' quality of life and promote the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources; strengthening the institutional capacity of the State and developing control mechanisms for an integrated and efficient management of genetic resources; the education and training of human resources for the management of the conservation of biodiversity and wildlife, in particular for biotechnology and the management of genetic resources; and the development of technologies aimed at increasing the productivity of genetic resources. However, the country does not have any coordinated institutional and policy response or policy guidelines for a coherent policy direction that holistically accounts for genetic resources in their diversity and dimensions in the context of ABS as provided for in the Nagoya Protocol.[16]

Intellectual property administration in The Gambia is under the purview of two institutions namely; the Industrial Property Office, Attorney General's Chambers, Ministry of Justice which administers Industrial Property Rights while Copyright and related rights are administered by National Centre for Arts and Culture. [17] It is noted here that The Gambia is a member of the World Trade Organizations since 23 October 1996. However, the country is not a party to any of the

WTO plurilateral agreements and has not been involved in any WTO dispute settlement procedures (as of July 2017). The Gambia deposited its instrument of acceptance of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) on 11 July 2017. As at the end of September 2017, The Gambia has not yet submitted its Category A notification.[18] Additionally, The Gambia has not yet deposited its instrument of acceptance of the Protocol amending the TRIPS Agreement.[19]

Additionally, due to legal and institutional inadequacies here is lack of clarity regarding operational and functional spaces of different institutions. There are cases of institutional overlaps in the implementation of mandates. However, there are also cases of 'this is somebody else's job' situations where institutions think other institutions will step up to respond to environmental challenges. Owing to this legal and institutional inadequacy characterized by lack of clarity in some cases and gaps in others, The Gambia has not successfully managed the perennial fires which, as has already been alluded to above, are one of the threats to biodiversity in the country. The poor management of wild fire scenario is compounded by by out-of-date policies that lack clear-cut measures and enforcement mechanisms. There is an urgent need for a new policy that recognizes and adapts to current thinking and practices related to the impacts of early-dry-season controlled burning on biodiversity conservation and plant regeneration, both of which have an impact on genetic resource diversity.

*Weak institutional capacities and lack of pro-ABS platforms and partnerships at national level.* After acceding to the Nagoya Protocol in 2014, the furthest that The Gambia has gone in addressing ABS implementation is the drafting of the roadmap. The roadmap recognises that the country needs to address policy and legal arrangement, sensitization of policy makers, resource inventories, institutional arrangement and institutional capacity building. The government of The Gambia recognises that the country's efforts to ensure effective conservation of biodiversity is short on the incorporation of the best practice models and cost-effective approaches and forged partnerships in action to maximize the comparative advantages of various actors in managing genetic diversity in the country. Partnerships among various actors in biodiversity conservation are significantly limited partly due to lack of mechanisms to promote them, but also the institutional capacities are too weak to establish and manage them. This is despite the realization that platforms and partnerships are critical in catalyzing and leveraging comparative advantages of both providers and users of genetic resources.

*Lack of awareness:* Given that there is no legal framework to support the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, there is a general lack of awareness of the genetic diversity and the Nagoya Protocol and its implications. There are hardly any scientific studies that have been conducted within the recommendation of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS. Consequently, there is lack of information on genetic biodiversity, including information on important indigenous genetic resources that underpin rural livelihoods. However, equitable access and sharing of genetic resources from their use requires awareness regarding not only the rights of use and benefit, but also awareness regarding the equitable management of the resources. The capacity of community to participate in planning, implementation, and monitoring related to the use of biodiversity and genetic resources are extremely limited, owing to low literacy rates and resource constraints. There is also the absence of basic communication tools to improve awareness-raising campaigns among providers and users of genetic resources. Lack of awareness limits the level to which providers can benefit from genetic resources because this lack of awareness limits their negotiation positions vis-à-vis other stakeholders, particularly users of genetic resources. The problem of access to basic ecological and socio-economic information and models for innovative practices is a constraint to adopting biodiversity conservation strategies, but also the ability to access and use genetic resources equitably. Finally, biodiversity conservation strategies and the ability to access and use genetic resources and compliance with environmental laws and regulations will greatly depend on the awareness of the public of their environmental rights and responsibilities. At present, a large majority of The Gambian public is unaware of most environmental laws and regulations, and rural communities still generally perceive activities that improve the environment (biodiversity conservation interventions) as beneficial only to outsiders, and for this reason do not support many environmental initiatives.

*Lack of science-based valorization of biodiversity components in National Parks:* Economic valuation of natural capital such as biodiversity components (flora and fauna) is an important step towards improving conservation. It aims at unfolding the manifold benefit dimensions of biological diversity as well as its monetary values and then integrating them in social and policy decision-making processes.[20] In The Gambia, despite the identification and recognition of the richness of key floral and faunal biodiversity in National Parks, there is lack of science-based valorization of biodiversity. Consequently, there is lack of

comprehensive understanding of the monetary and non-monetary value of biodiversity at species or genetic level to inform tailored policy approaches to improve biodiversity conservation in the National Parks. By the same token, the government of The Gambia has limited institutional and regulatory frameworks and capacity to legislate policy instruments for capturing the value of biodiversity. Overcoming this barrier will be complementary to addressing the two afore-mentioned barriers linked to lack of awareness and inadequate legal and institutional frameworks in the country. This is because ensuring science-based valorization of biodiversity components requires capacity development, and once science-evidence is generated, it forms the basis for awareness-raising among stakeholders. Finally, the establishment of either incentive-based or market-based instruments to improve biodiversity conservation will draw on existing institutional capacities and frameworks and access to appropriate information that reflects the value of biodiversity components.

## **2) The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects**

The Gambia is committed to responding to the challenges of biodiversity loss attributed to threats already described above, to economic policy distortions and the resultant poverty that encourage rapid over exploitation of biological resources. Given the proximate and underlying drivers of biodiversity loss in the country, the government continues to pursue development paths to assuage the impacts on biodiversity loss in production landscapes. In the CBD Strategy and Action Plan (2015 -2020) document, the government has been explicit about responding to challenges of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming and integration, institutional effectiveness, cooperative governance and partnerships. The document indicates 'slowing down the rate of biodiversity loss will require policy and institutional reform as well as institutional strengthening for effective action in all the areas (p2)'[21] - to decrease and gradually cease expansion into forest and other ecosystems. Despite profiling biodiversity loss on the national policy map as a challenge, habitat conversion still remains one of the major factors of biodiversity loss in The Gambia. The demand for food and other agricultural products, among others is on the rise, resulting in clearing of natural habitats to make space for agricultural land. Economic, demographic and social pressures are likely to put further pressure on habitats, leading to further loss of genetic resources in particular, and biodiversity in general.

The Gambia is rich in genetic, species and ecosystem variety. In fact, many different species of animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms inhabit this world, this biological diversity is critical to our survival. It provides a wide variety of nutrients in people's diets, resilience to unexpected crop failings, food and income for those who might otherwise go without, ingredients for medications, clean water, flood control, fertile soils, pollination and much more. The Gambia's biodiversity and wildlife products as well as wildlife based industries contribute significantly to both national and household food security either directly or through the generation of financial resources which can be used to purchase food or to develop and improve food production systems. The main contribution of biodiversity to the Gambian micro-economies comes from wildlife based tourism, recreation and associated industries. Although agriculture contributes for 44% of employment against 12% of GDP by the tourism sector (PAGE, 2012-15), the greater proportion of the country's income comes from tourism. However, it is also obvious that the tourist industry offers employment to a significant number of local people, thereby contributing to household income and access to food.

According to FAO, 2010, The National Forest Assessment (NFA) of 2009/10 process has set up a monitoring system for future assessments of the forest and tree resources. A network of permanent sample plots has been established on the ground and well referenced in the records of the Department of Forestry (DoF) for easy relocation in future therefore providing a foundation for long term natural resource monitoring. The NFA has followed a harmonized approach to forestry resources monitoring and assessment [...] thereby, putting the Gambia at the same level in scope, quality and format of information with other countries collaborating with FAO [...]. With repeated assessment in the permanent plots, the NFA will capture information related to the change in the extent, the state and use of forest and trees outside forests. Additional parameters can be included in future measurements if deemed relevant to capture other information on the state of biodiversity for food and agriculture in all the production systems in the country.

The concepts of Community Forest Management (CFM) have been introduced and implemented in The Gambia since the early 1990s by the DoF through donor supported forestry projects notably from the Federal Republic of Germany. These Community Forestry concepts evolved as a response to the failures of conventional forest management approaches which excluded local communities from playing an active role in managing forest resources. Since 1990, when Community Forestry was first piloted in WCR, it has gradually spread to all parts of the country. Currently, 458 communities country-wide are now participating in Community Forestry management in different phases or stages of the process, managing a total area of 31,682.32 hectares (ha.) of natural forestland (Jaiteh, 2014).

According to the Nation Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) of The Gambia, The Gambian CFM approaches attempt to fully involve the local population in the sustainable management and utilization of surrounding forest resources by vesting in them legal ownership of both land and trees. Gambia's CFM concept stipulates that, in the future, most of the country's natural forests should be owned and managed by the local population in the form of Community Forests (CF), affording local communities a greater share of the benefits coming from forests and giving them an increased stake in the management of that natural resource. This approach creates incentives for communities to protect the forests around them from destruction and to utilize them sustainably.

The series of national reports to the secretariat of the CBD and other Biodiversity related convention are used as a monitoring framework in comparing the trends on the status of the biodiversity at the national level. The CBD national report, the Biosafety national report, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) report, the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) and Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) reports are all providing necessary information on the status and trend of biodiversity in the country. The recent review and update of the NBSAP also has served as a monitoring tool to ascertain progress and to devise new approaches for better management of the country Biological resources.

At local level, the Department of Parks through its numerous projects, is implementing periodic monitoring exercises on targeted species (fauna and flora) for informed decision making on the conservation of the species involved. The development and frequent review and update of the protected areas management plans is another tool for monitoring success.

The country has ratified the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing in 2014 and is looking forward to implementing the road map. This entails the elaboration and establishment of the legal framework, establish legal authorities to management ABS in the country. The recent establishment of an association of traditional healers is a giant step towards the management of the traditional knowledge in the country. The Gambia's environmental policy measures are supported by various biodiversity-related sectoral laws; for example, the National Environment Management Act (NEMA) 1994 ensures the integration of environmental considerations in all development strategies and related activities. The Biodiversity and Wildlife Act 2003 under the purview of the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management is currently being revised to further enhance the implementation of the NBSAP, other conventions and protocols. The Forest Act, 1998 and Regulations involve the communities in forest management. The NBSAP is being implemented in collaboration with other natural resource sectors (Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Livestock, Water Resources and the National Environment Agency among others). The Fisheries Act 2007 and its attendant Regulations (2008) have provisions covering efficient management of the artisanal and industrial fisheries as well as the development

of aquaculture;. Together, these different stakeholders interact to address the issue(s) at the level of Agriculture and Natural Resources working group (ANRWG). In this regard, and to address conflicts and inter sectoral policy inconsistencies the Agriculture and Natural Resources Working Group serves as the clearing house mechanism and a policy conflict resolution forum.

Current efforts by the government and partners to reduce biodiversity loss in the country have focused on broadening livelihood bases of local communities (diversifying their incomes to reduce land-based resource exploitation), improving agroecologies in production systems, forest and biodiversity management. There is little attention that has been paid to genetic resources, benefit sharing mechanisms, co-management of genetic resources and comprehensive understanding of the genetic resource diversity in the country – all of which should form a consolidated response to the threats of biodiversity in the country. At the institutional level, there is no policy guidance yet on mechanisms to guide the implementation of ABS in The Gambia despite the country's signing of the Nagoya Protocol in 2014.

ABS implementation motoring mechanism: The Gambia has ratified the protocol in July 2014 and has designed a roadmap for its successful implementation. The roadmap entails issues that need to be addressed such as policy and legal arrangement, sensitization of policy makers, resource inventories, institutional arrangement and capacity building. The outcome of the road is the present development of the project on ABS. During the preparation of the NBSAP in 2015, the country proposed the following in order to implement the national target 16 and inline of the Aichi Biodiversity Target: to develop a legal norm by mainstreaming ABS into the existing Biodiversity Laws supported by a separate regulation. An institutional arrangement for the implementation of ABS will be defined by the regulation. Resource inventory and capacity building will be conducted to determine the current status. All these initiatives will culminate into awareness creation of policy makers and the general public. Milestones were set achieve the set targets. Recently the DPWM has embark in the review and update of the Biodiversity and Wildlife Act of 2003. In this exercise, ABS issues are mainstreamed into the reviewed bill and submitted to the Ministry of Environment for enactment. This GEF initiative will support the country to complete the remaining steps of the road map (develop an ABS regulation, establish institutional arrangements, Conduct a baseline study on GR and ATK and assess capacity gaps, organize capacity development on ABS, and documentation of TKs). The implementation of the said road map is the milestone for the Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the target. A monitoring plan of the NBSAP 2015 was developed as annex to the national report and the ABS issue was adequately addressed in the said M&E plan but lack of finances hindered its implementation

Climate change impacts and mitigation measures: Some of the natural resource management techniques that increase land vulnerability to climate change events are: deforestation and slash and burn agriculture; tree cutting that results in land erosion and even depletion of water resources; and the unsustainable exploitation of mangroves that contributes to coastal erosion and agricultural land salinization. Others include reduced fallow periods, combined with inadequate replenishment of soil nutrients through a judicious combination of organic and mineral fertilizers; and the lack of access to information, knowledge and material on the use of SLM, INRM, and climate resilient technologies such as drought resistant and early maturing seed varieties that complete the sensitive phase of their growth cycle during the increasingly shorter rainfall period. There is also the limited use of innovative water harvesting technologies that increase available soil moisture for plant use long after the rains have stopped or when interspersed with drought periods.

In its strive to address the above mentioned impacts, the country has developed and is implementing several projects and programs such as the Ecosystem Adaptation to Climate Change (EbA), the second phase of the Gambia Climate Change Adaption (GCCA+) project, The ROOTS project and several sub-regional initiatives such as the Sustainable wetlands management for food security in west Africa, the Grand Saloum mangrove project, the sustainable management of the pelagic fisheries in west Africa and many others. Mangrove restoration programs are implemented by government institutions (NEA, DPWM, DoF) and several NGOs and CBOs in the country.

Therefore, GEF incremental investment will build on the level of investments in the country linked to biodiversity conservation to create the enabling environment for the implementation of the Access and Benefit Sharing of the Nagoya Protocol in the Gambia and pilot testing of some promising genetic

resources in Nyambai Forest Park. The proposed project will particularly draw on lessons from biodiversity considerations in the following projects [list of projects to be improved at PPG]:

- The GEF/UNEP project GEF ID 9772 “Land/Seascape planning and restoration to improve ecosystem services, and livelihoods, expand and effectively manage protected areas” focusing on improved planning and enforcement system to identify and address causes of land degradation and biodiversity loss. Lessons from this project will inform the development of capacities to improve the legal and institutional frameworks to create an enabling environment for the development and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol and its provisions.
- The GEF/UNDP project GEF ID 5529 “Gambia Protected Areas Network and Community Livelihood project”. The project is intervening in the Baobolon wetlands reserve, the Jokadu national park to pilot SLM around these PA. It is also assisting the expansion of the Kian West National Park. The lessons learnt in the implementation of the UNDP GEF Project are a precursor for awareness raising for this proposed project, particularly for communities. Lessons will be used to raise the awareness regarding the inter-dependability between livelihoods and biodiversity conservation and access to genetic resources that flow from forest biodiversity when well managed and conserved.
- The GEF/WB project GEF ID 3961 “The Gambia Biodiversity Management and Institutional Strengthening project – GBMISP”: the project assisted the country in (i) restructuring of the Department of Parks and Wildlife into a vibrant national capacitated institution, (ii) the establishment of Biodiversity Trust Funds hosted the Ministry of Finance as the sustainable financing mechanism for PAs to support community projects in support of conservation and to improve livelihood in peripheral villages of the parks. Designed as a national mechanism, the trust fund will support the current project by providing opportunities to raise awareness and empower communities in the targeted areas. The preparation of guidelines for the private sector involvement the biodiversity conservation and the management of genetic resources will also be informed by the current project.
- The GEF/FAO GEF ID 5406 Community Based Sustainable Drylands Forest Management will support Community Forestry, Forest Management Plans and transformation of the status of some forest estates toward communities or Communities Joint forest managed states. All these processes will be relevant for the current project in terms of communities’ involvement and enabling them to participate in equitable access, use but also management of biodiversity and genetic resources for their livelihoods and generation of global environmental benefits.
- The GEF/World Bank GEF ID 1067 Integrated coastal and marine biodiversity project (ICAM). The project ended in 2008 and mainly intervened in Baobolon Wetland reserves and Tanbi Wetlands National Park. The ICAM project piloted the first community owned wildlife reserve in the country, the establishment of site management committees to support PA management and promoted entrepreneurship programmes in local communities to reduce the impacts of logging and poaching in the parks. Lessons from the level of community involvement will inform community engagement for the proposed projects.
- Other donor-funded project: The IFAD-funded Livestock and Horticultural Development project (LHDP) is a US\$15.94 million project designed to “reduce rural poverty by raising the incomes of rural producers”, and includes components to improve the returns to kafo-run horticulture and livestock production and to build up capacities at the grassroots level. Lessons on access to genetic bases of vegetables grown and animal breeding will inform mechanisms for involving communities, a better understanding of gene provenances and markets to ensure producers have fair compensation for the use of genetic resources for vegetable and animal production.
- GCF/UNEP funded Large-scale Ecosystem-based Adaptation in The Gambia: developing a climate-resilient, natural resource-based economy project. This is six year funded project (2017-2023) with GCF resources in the tune of \$20.5 million to build the climate-resilience of rural Gambian communities and facilitate the development of a sustainable natural resource-based (green) economy by implementing large-scale EbA within and adjacent to agricultural areas,

community-managed forest reserves and wildlife conservation areas. The project focuses on: a) restoring degraded forests and agricultural landscapes with climate-resilient plant species that provide goods for consumption or sale; and b) facilitating the establishment of commercially viable natural resource-based businesses to be managed by community-based organizations.

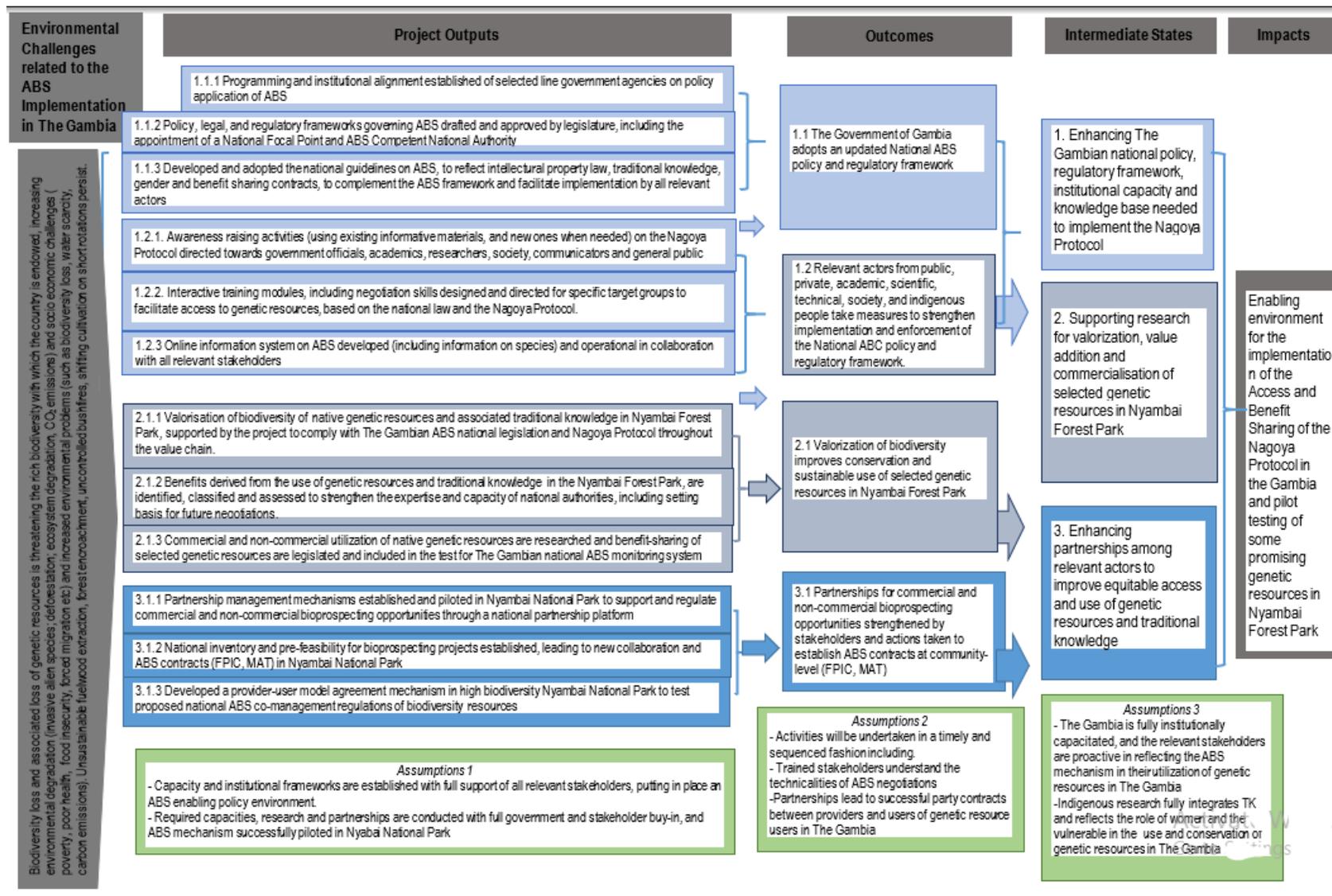
· **National Forestry Fund:** in application of the Forestry legislation the fund has been created and it allows retention and revenue sharing of funds realized from community-managed forests. Although in its early days, implementation experience to date has been successful, with participating communities retaining 60% of revenue realized from the sale of forest products, of which 20% is reinvested in the development of their forests and the rest in other community development activities. The remaining 40% of the revenue is paid into the National Forestry Fund from which Government allocates resources for both activities in Community Management Forests and broader national forestry development.

· **The Environment Fund,** which is disbursed to NEA yearly upon request, supports sustainable development projects, research and environmental education, site rehabilitation, environmental audits, adoption of clean technologies, etc., and supports authorized associations engaged in the protection of the environment such as the Agriculture and Natural Resources Working Group (ANR-WG). The fund is estimated to have around \$500,000 per year for investment and is an expected source of co-financing to invest in biodiversity genetic resources conservation activities at the local level.

### **3) The proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project**

The government of The Gambia has made an important step in acceding to the Nagoya Protocol, and has set in motion the process of implementing the Nagoya Protocol on ABS by drawing a roadmap for its implementation. This proposed project is conceived to build on this national momentum. To do so, the project will seek to create the enabling environment for the implementation of the Access and Benefit Sharing of the Nagoya Protocol in the Gambia and pilot testing of some promising genetic resources in Nyambai Forest Park. To achieve this, the project will focus on enhancing national policy and regulatory frameworks; supporting value addition and commercialisation of genetic resources; and building capacities and partnerships. Therefore, the project will go beyond the baseline by being explicit about putting in place mechanisms that will primarily target establishing functional mechanisms to support the implementation of ABS of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS and pilot it in a specific case of the Nyambai Forest Park.

Below is the proposed theory of change of the project at PIF stage that underpins the afore-described logic.



## Component 1: Enhancing The Gambian national policy, regulatory framework, institutional capacity and and knowledge base needed to implement the Nagoya Protocol

The policy and legislation governing the conservation and use of biological diversity in the Gambia is sector based in nature, most of which are obsolete, too rigid and/or formulated in a top bottom in approach. Although National Environment Management Act (NEMA), seeks to put in place a general framework for the conservation of biodiversity, its provisions are too general to serve that purpose. Provisions for public participation is virtually absent in the sector

legislation. The regulatory regime is also riddled with gaps and serious legal conflicts. The situation is exacerbated by poor enforcement due to lack of trained staff, logistics, funds and other resources. The apparent gaps in the legislation include lack of explicit provisions for: ex-situ conservation, control of alien species and risks from genetically modified organisms, protection of threatened species and populations, regulation of access to genetic resources, protection of indigenous knowledge and intellectual property rights of local people and joint development and transfer of relevant technologies that use genetic resources. By and large, the existing sector legislation for biodiversity are not effective to assure successful conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity under the prevailing socioeconomic circumstances. There is need to overhaul the present sector legislation. Two options exist. One is to review the various sector legislations and replace them with new ones: the second option is to develop new framework of legislation on biodiversity, which are currently being pursued by the National Environmental Acts and other National protocols such as the NAP, NAMA, GAMSIF, NBSAP etc.

There is need to develop a legal norm by mainstreaming ABS into the existing Biodiversity Laws supported by a separate regulation. An institutional arrangement for the implementation of ABS will be defined by the regulation. Resource inventory and capacity building will be conducted to determine the current status. All these initiatives will culminate into awareness creation of policy makers and the general public. The following activities are proposed in the NBSAP 2015

- Mainstream ABS issues into the existing revised Biodiversity/Wildlife Act
- develop an ABS regulation
- establish an institutional arrangements
- Conduct a baseline study on GR and ATK and assess capacity gaps
- organize capacity development on ABS
- Documentation of TKs
- Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation status.

Invasive species ranging from native to alien (such as water hyacinth, *Lantana camara*, *Phragmites australis*, *Typha australis*) are identified in different areas in The Gambia. It is necessary to prioritize control and eradication efforts to those species and pathways which will have the greatest impact on biodiversity. Therefore, it is important to search for most effective ways that would address invasive species related constraints specific to the country. It is also crucial to put systems in place to monitor invasiveness of newly introduced species. The development and implementation of invasive species action plan as part of the policy framework for ABS implementation will be important. To accomplish this initiative, the following activities are proposed:

1. Invasive species action plan reviewed and implemented to consider mitigating its negative impacts of native species
2. Monitoring of implementation status
3. Encourage and support the use of invasive species as biomass energy and organic manure

The government of The Gambia recognises its need to domesticate and implement the Aichi Targets in support of genetic resource conservation, particularly Target 16. To do so, it acknowledges the need to develop a legal norm by mainstreaming ABS into the existing Biodiversity Laws supported by a separate regulation, that is, an institutional arrangement for the implementation of ABS needs to be defined by another regulation. This component responds to this government's call for the establishment of a policy environment to permit the implementation of ABS in the country. Under this component, the project intends to comprehensively address the national policy and regulatory framework requirements for ABS implementation. Thus, the component will first, focus on

establishing and strengthening a national ABS policy and regulatory framework. It will do so by programming and institutional aligning of selected line government agencies on policy application of ABS. This will therefore respond to the lack of national policy and regulatory ABS-relevant frameworks and weak institutional capacities and lack of pro-ABS platforms and partnerships at national level, which are important barriers in The Gambia (output 1.1.1); drafting and adopting the policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks governing ABS, including the appointment of a National Focal Point and Competent National Authority (output 1.1.2); and developing and adopting national guidelines on ABS, to reflect intellectual property law, traditional knowledge, gender and benefit sharing contracts, to complement the revised ABS framework and facilitate implementation by all relevant actors (output 1.1.3). Second, the project under component 1 will focus ensuring that relevant actors from public, private, academic, scientific, technical, society, and indigenous people take measures to strengthen implementation and enforcement of the National ABC policy and regulatory framework. This will in part, involve awareness-raising and equipping relevant actors from public, private, academic, scientific, technical, society, and indigenous people with knowledge base and training on access to genetic resources and benefit sharing. In this way, this component will contribute to addressing the barrier of lack of awareness in The Gambia (outcome 1.2.1). The project will also conduct interactive training modules, including negotiation skills (between providers and users of genetic resources) designed and directed for specific target groups to facilitate access to genetic resources, based on the national law and the Nagoya Protocol (output 1.2.1). Also, it will seek to develop an online information system on ABS developed (including information on species) and operational in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders (output 1.2.3).

The capacity building activities will take into account the Strategic Framework of building and development of capacities, adopted in the last COP MOP 1 for Nagoya Protocol (Decision NP-1/8, 2014). Special attention will be put on strengthening of indigenous research and development of capabilities. Besides, the outputs of this component include information materials tailored for different stakeholders.

To build capacity for indigenous communities, current organizational structure will be considered, such as community forest management; and activities will be undertaken in consultation and collaboration with civil society organisations representing the interests of rural communities who primarily depend of biodiversity for their livelihoods. Particularly, in the case of local rural communities, three modules will be developed for intercultural capacity building focused on access and fair and equitable benefit-sharing for the use of associated traditional knowledge. It will also include training on in-situ genetic protection and conservation regime of traditional knowledge, as an alternative to the system of protection of intellectual property. The design of these modules will be done, mainly, in coordination with the University of the Gambia and aligned sectors, principally agriculture, forest, environment and health. The intercultural teaching material on Nagoya Protocol for the benefit of rural communities will be prepared to enhance ABS for traditional knowledge.

In the case of public sector and national authorities, capacity building will be focused on increasing understanding of the Nagoya Protocol and adequate application of national regulations. In the case of users and providers, capacity building will be focused on understanding of procedures required for access to genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, be it for non-commercial research, bioprospecting, industry or marketing.

Among the capacity-building and environmental improvement activities, a specific teaching module for researchers and innovators will be designed and presented in at least two Regions of high biodiversity value in the Gambia. The module will include the use of existing guidelines on ABS and the elaboration of a model (guideline) about the relation between ABS and biotrade. The purpose is that researchers and innovators develop their capacities through the trainings to guarantee that the results of their research and innovative products comply with the ABS regulation. During the life time of this project, this activity should also include other more fragile local groups, but who are more linked to biological resources (non-wood forest concessions, local rural communities etc.) and to genetic resources in itself (primary transformers of native plants and/or enterprise users). These kind of groups will receive a special didactic technical advisory training focused on the scope or effects of the ABS, the limits of the innovation process and the real expectations of benefit-sharing.

## **Component 2: Supporting research for valorization, value addition and commercialisation of selected genetic resources in Nyambai Forest Park**

Component 2 consistently follows from component 1 which has a focus on institutional and policy frameworks to support the implementation of ABS in The Gambia. Component 2 makes a concrete pilot case regarding the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS. The Nyambai Forest Park (NFP) is a peri-urban biodiversity hotspot in The Gambia. The park presents a pool of rich diversity at genes, species and ecosystem levels. Biodiversity valorization reveals multiple benefit dimensions of biological diversity in a given landscape. It also sheds light on the monetary and non-monetary values on biodiversity components in a way that enables their integration in social and policy decision-making processes. Knowing the value of biodiversity components in a given landscape forms a benchmark on which relevant stakeholders can draw not only knowledge for prioritizing the equitable utilization of resources, but also their management of the same resources - that is, establishing an informed consensus on the value of biodiversity to sustainably manage competing biodiversity use but also managing trade-offs among different stakeholders. Additionally, valorizing biodiversity forms a basis for establishing equitable benefit sharing mechanisms as well as knowing value addition processes, including marketing of resources that have been considered – these are effective pathways to foster conservation and utilization of biodiversity and genetic resources. Therefore, this component will encourage indigenous research and innovation initiatives based on native genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge in NFP, to comply with the ABS national access and benefit-sharing legislation and Nagoya Protocol through research and development. This is consistent with the government of The Gambia's call for genetic resource inventory and capacity building which will be conducted to determine the current status. All these initiatives will culminate into awareness creation of policy makers and the general public.

Component 2 will support research; exploring different value addition pathways of biodiversity products and identify sharing of benefits in each value addition process. The research into selected genetic resources in NFP will highlight processes of biodiversity prospecting, clarify requirements of establishing relevant national legislation on biodiversity prospecting, value addition and benefit sharing, and development of procedures and institutional capacities to implement such legislations. The component is conceived to address lack of science-based valorization of biodiversity components in Parks in The Gambia. Thus, the component will seek to valorize biodiversity research of native genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge (output 2.1.1), build relevant capacity and expertise to enhance understanding of benefits derived from genetic resources (2.1.2); and legislate the inclusion of selected genetic resources in The Gambian national ABS monitoring system (2.1.3). The selection of genetic resources will be strategic to ensure that the selected species demonstrate important socioeconomic commercial and non-commercial values to relevant stakeholders, and that the species play an important ecological role to support the integrity of ecosystem functioning in NFP. The component will support efforts to equitably regularize gender-based differential access and use of genetic resources in NFP – with potential for scaling up lessons at national level.

Value addition increases the value of a raw product any time between the harvesting and sale of the final product. Value added products not only offer a higher return, but also open new markets, create brand recognition and add variety to biodiversity resources. Value addition to biodiversity products can be rewarding and benefits accrue from matching under-utilised resources with potential markets that eventually rationalises improved biodiversity conservation. Component 2 is anchored in the understanding that to reach the optimum benefit of value addition and benefit sharing, it is essential to establish research-based evidence of the value of biodiversity products of selected genetic resources in Nyambai Forest Park, drawing on traditional knowledge that underpins both the community access, utilization and management of biodiversity in the park.

Finally, systematization of information on species (to be selected during PPG phase) containing genetic resources with potential for research and development activities, including their distribution and conservation status; and the identification, classification and assessment of benefits derived from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge in on-going research and development projects in the Gambia, strengthening the expertise of national authorities in this respect, and setting basis for future negotiations, will be undertaken in this component. The purpose is to obtain

reliable, timely and relevant information for benefit-sharing negotiation strategies (monetary and non-monetary), and safeguarding risks of genetic erosion. Particularly, the systematization of information will be done in agreement with research institutions and the University of the Gambia that generate scientific knowledge about national flora, fauna and microorganisms, and will be carried out through a selection and analysis of existing catalogue and databases.

### **Component 3: Enhancing partnerships among relevant actors to improve equitable access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge [in Nyambai Forest Park]**

Joint Forest co-management has been used in twenty two forest parks in Central River Region (CRR), one in Upper River Region (URR) and another in Lower River Region (LRR) in the Gambia. Community forestry was introduced and piloted in the Fonis (Brefet) to have more areas under management with a view to control wildfires and illicit felling of trees and conversion of forest to other unsustainable land uses. Through this component, this project will seek to support the establishment of partnerships among genetic resource providers and users and other stakeholders for commercial and non-commercial bioprospecting opportunities. Through this component, the project will therefore address weak institutional capacities and lack of pro-ABS platforms and partnerships at national level, which is one of the important barriers in The Gambia. At the core of this technical support is the establishment of mechanisms to support sustainable management of genetic resources for the benefit of both providers and users. At this level, the project through this component will focus on establishing partnerships for commercial and non-commercial bioprospecting opportunities strengthened by stakeholders and actions taken to establish ABS contracts at community-level (FPIC, MAT). Under this component, the project will thus offer technical support to establish and strengthen partnership management mechanisms to regulate commercial and non-commercial bioprospecting and trial the mechanism in Nyambai Forest Park (output 3.1.1); establish a national inventory and pre-feasibility for bioprospecting projects established, leading to new collaboration and ABS contracts (FPIC, MAT) in Nyambai Forest Park (output 3.1.2); and develop a provider-user model agreement mechanism in high biodiversity Nyambai Forest Park to test proposed national ABS co-management regulations of biodiversity resources (output 3.1.3).

Prospecting for useful products using biological and genetic resources (bioprospecting) in PAs has yielded valuable commercial products leading to the perception that genetic resources found in PAs are reservoirs of genetic material with commercial benefits. Such resources range from non-timber forest produce to medicinal plants to high value enzymes and genes with potential for further biotechnological applications. Though such potential has been well documented and assessed, there has been limited attempt to link activities to sustainably manage PAs with issues of access and benefit sharing. Little attention has been paid on tapping the potential of genetic resources present in PAs for prospecting, except in a few countries, using ABS frameworks. A large part of this could be generally attributed to the fact that PA managers in many parts of the world still consider PAs as in-violate areas preventing access to any material from these areas.

Finally, it is important to highlight that the three project components are not independent; they will reinforce each other, and together will contribute to an operational and more complete national ABS system for genetic resources in the Gambia. Component 1 focuses on creating an ABS enabling institutional and policy environment; component 2 focuses on supporting valorization and indigenous research and value addition of both commercial and non-commercial genetic resources to be conducted with the institutional and policy environment (component 1). Finally, component 3 builds on components 1 and 2 to build partnerships as mechanisms to improve the management of genetic resources [in Nyambai Forest Park] for demonstration purposes.

#### **4) Alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies**

Biodiversity (BD) Strategy: The proposed project is consistent with the GEF priority of supporting capacity building of governments for meeting their obligations under Article 15 of the CBD, as well as building capacity within key stakeholder groups, including indigenous and local communities, and the scientific community. The project includes support for the establishment of measures that promote concrete access and benefit-sharing agreements that recognize the core ABS principles of Prior Informed Consent (PIC) and Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT), including the fair and equitable sharing of benefits. The project aims to build capacities among stakeholders and development and implementation of a strategy and action plan for the implementation of ABS measures, including the identification of beneficiaries and their user rights. The project is therefore consistent with the GEF's prescribed areas of support to promote the implementation of the of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing.

#### **5) Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing**

The Gambia needs to address institutional capacity among different stakeholders to facilitate access and benefit sharing as provided for in the Nagoya Protocol. To achieve this goal, incremental financial support from GEF is necessary to effect changes in the proposed baseline. More critically, The Gambia needs a deliberate policy to inform the implementation mechanisms of ABS measures in their totality in the country. In the baseline scenario, aspects of ABS are accounted for in isolation in past and on-going initiatives. Current efforts done by the national Government and institutions require additional technical support to establish a functioning but also strengthened national ABS policy and regulatory framework; to enhance institutional capacity and knowledge base enabling relevant stakeholders to make informed decisions; to valorize biodiversity of selected genetic resources to improve their conservation; to create and strengthen partnerships among relevant stakeholders to champion community-level ABS contracts between providers and users of genetic resources that reflect FPIC and MAT principles; and raise awareness among indirect and direct providers and users of genetic resources. To achieve this level of focused and coordinated management but also to overcome barriers for effective response to threats leading to biodiversity loss and erosion of genetic resources, the GEF financing is critical.

The GEF support will complement efforts underway that are related to biodiversity conservation that also support genetic biodiversity conservation. The GEF support will enable the country to effectively increase the capacity and raise awareness among stakeholders in alignment to the Nagoya Protocol. Thus, the GEF financial support will lead to the establishment of an enabling environment setting up legal and institutional frameworks within which the Nagoya Protocol (ABS) provisions will be implemented in the country. These have not thus far been possible in the Gambia. Without the GEF support, the ability of the local authorities to effectively address concerns related to access to genetic resources and fair and equitable distribution of its derived benefits, will remain compromised. The current project has been designed in a way that GEF resources will complement existing efforts, ensuring a cost-effective approach and a coherent intervention strategy to maximize the possibilities of outcomes accomplishment.

This change on baseline in The Gambia starting with the GEF support, will have an effective and positive spill-over effect on implementation of ABS principles (stemming from CBD and Nagoya Protocol) in the region. This can occur in the ECOWAS region, where neighboring countries share similar difficulties and challenges as The Gambia.

In the absence of legal frameworks, and without the GEF resources, the Gambia will not be able to support itself in ensuring an effective functioning of national ABS system within the provisions of the Nagoya Protocol, and build the much needed capacity of relevant actors in relation to Access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge. In addition, without the GEF resources, the country will not build on on-going and previous interventions to consolidate their contributions to address the biodiversity challenges and the threats on the genetic resource base that the country is facing.

## 6) Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits

Invasive and alien species hybridising with genetically close species is one of the biodiversity and genetic diversity-related environmental challenges that the Gambia is facing. Creating an enabling environment will halt or reduce factors that are introducing invasive and alien species in the Gambian biosphere. This will then lead to maintaining and improving the genetic resource base that underpin rural livelihoods but also contribute to biodiversity.

With a focus on national enabling environment for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol; capacity building of relevant actors in relation to access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge, this project is consistent to deliver GEBs under the following ABS priorities i) support Parties in reviewing their own capacities and needs on ABS with a focus on the provisions of existing national policies, laws, and regulations and to strengthen the enabling environment at national level through the development of appropriate policy and institutional measures to promote the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources; ii) support Parties to implement national and regional projects to promote technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, private sector engagement, and projects targeting investments in the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources in-situ to accelerate the implementation of the Protocol; iii) support Parties to undertake activities to increase public awareness regarding the implications of the Nagoya Protocol; and iv) Support Parties to further the knowledge and scientific-base for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. The implementation of this project will therefore provide a legal framework in the Gambia for the effective implementation of the third objective of the Convention on Biodiversity.

The GEF funding will support the successful implementation of ABS at the national level, and pilot the ABS mechanism in the Nyambai Forest Park – testing ABS policy guidelines, partnerships, bioprospecting and equitable and robust contractual arrangements between providers and users of genetic resources in the Gambia, in contributions to biodiversity genetic resource conservation in the country.

Overall, the proposed project will contribute to global environmental benefits through the creation of incentives to sustainably use the natural genetic resources affected by the Nagoya Protocol on ABS. Implementation of the ABS mechanism will contribute to conservation of genetic resources, most of which have not received the necessary scientific, management and governance attention. Through improved access rights to these resources, the project will contribute to numerous efforts underway in the country to prevent the extinction of important ecosystems and their species. Enhancing awareness and capacity at the local level as well as including multi-sectoral partners in project implementation, will ensure a coordinated approach and include expertise on species conservation as well as human livelihoods. The project will contribute to the management of biodiversity in Nyambai Forest Park with a specific focus on the ABS measures. ABS regime will leverage the role of indigenous research and the contribution of traditional knowledge in genetic resource conservation and broadly, the governance of natural resources at local level - to ensure that The Gambia's valuable natural resources are conserved for both current and future generations. The use of Nymbai Forest Park as site for piloting ABS measures of 92,549 ha, will help to generate also GEB related to adoption of good practices in landscape management.

## 7) Innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up

**Innovation:**The innovation of this project lies in the fact the project is charting a new legal institutional path that brings together different stakeholders to create the enabling environment for the implementation of the Access and Benefit Sharing of the Nagoya Protocol in the Gambia. The project will embrace a holistic and integrated approach that will accommodate communities, primary users of genetic users based on their dependence on natural resources for their livelihoods. It will equally bring together policy makers, private sector, civil society organisations and researchers to build partnership around a national ABS system; creating capacity for a smooth and realistic applications of the ABS provisions according to the national and international regulations and treaties.

**Sustainability:** Sustainability will be addressed through project design itself. The project will lead to a platform where different stakeholders (communities, policy makers, private sector, civil society organisations and researchers) will work together in a national ABS system. These stakeholders will build an enduring network of collaboration that will ensure the sustainability of the project. Institutionally, the project will lead to the establishment of the Political Focal Point, Competent National Authority, institutional agreements, administrative procedures for Prior Informed Consent and Mutually Agreed Terms, monitoring of use of genetic resources, compliance with legislation. Anchoring the ABS in this level of institutional arrangement supported by various state and non-state actors will ensure the sustainability of project outcomes in the Gambia beyond the life of this project.

**Scaling Up:** The potential for scaling up from this project is at two levels: First, the Nyambai Forest Park will provide a concrete pilot case for some aspects of components 2 and 3. Lessons will be drawn from the Park that will be scaled up to inform the management of other forest and national parks as well as protected areas. Second, this project is generally national in scope, and the legal and institutional framework will be applied at national level to create the enabling environment for the implementation of the Access and Benefit Sharing of the Nagoya Protocol that will be binding in the whole country, the Gambia. The involvement of stakeholders (communities, policy makers, private sector, civil society organisations and researchers) at different policy, administration and decision points playing different roles is strategically powerful in ensuring the scaling up but also dissemination of the ABS system in the country. Beside the project being national in scope, having the functioning ABS system with a national legal status will enable the Gambia to participate in ABS regional initiatives related to intellectual property rights, monitoring of the use of genetic resources, compliance with legislation and cooperation on transboundary issues.





Map of the Gambia showing national districts and the river system.

Source: created with data from <http://www.diva-gis.org/gdata>

[Nyambai Forest Park from https://mapcarta.com/17170364/Map](https://mapcarta.com/17170364/Map)

## 2. Stakeholders

Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase:

**Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities** Yes

**Civil Society Organizations** Yes

**Private Sector Entities** Yes

**If none of the above, please explain why:**

The Gambia has an established committee which decide and oversee GEF resources allocation through projects approved by the committee. The committee, which has representation from all stakeholders involved in environment management including CSOs, has been consulted twice on this project. The committee has given its go ahead and more, it has agreed to use part of the country Climate Change resources through Marginal Adjustment to support the project development and implementation. Furthermore, a functional platform exist which constitutes the representation of all the interest groups to discuss, and agree, on all matters related to Biodiversity and Genetic Resources including the identification of activities, planning, implementation and monitoring. Such a functional platform is the Agriculture and Natural Resources Working Group. National institutions in the natural resources sector are all present; notable NGOs in Natural Resources Management with presence in the area include a newly registered association of traditional healers and the forest/farmers association. While these institutions have cross-cutting programs and projects, covering the interest of other institutions, the ANRWG Platform is a unified mechanism where these cross-cutting matters are jointly addressed. The role of research and development has also emerged to be very critical not to mention the important role of the farmers. Given this situation the project will bring together the national institutions and community representatives as well civil society organizations (SCOs) and NGOs to establish a functional 'Agriculture and Natural Resources Working Group' with Scientific background that would support and 'oversee' the implementation of the project. The table below indicates key stakeholders and their respective role.

Stakeholder	Role in the project
National Environment Agency (NEA)	NEA coordinates all environmental issues in the country. It will play the role of monitoring the smooth implementation of the Project through GEF recommended guidelines.
Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Water, Wildlife and Fisheries.	The Permanent Secretary of The Ministry, which is responsible for forestry and wildlife management and includes departments of Forestry and Parks and Wildlife. It will be an executing partner and Chair the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
Department of Forestry	The department, which is responsible for forest policy, legislation, etc. at national and local levels, will provide guidance on all issues related to forest management, advise on biodiversity conservation and genetic resource base of the Gambian Flora Act. It will collaborate with NEA and Parks and Wildlife Department for the rehabilitation of Nymbai Forest Park. It will be Member of PSC.
Department of Parks and Wildlife Management	The Department which is responsible for the implementation of the Biodiversity Act (2002) and CBD targets, will take the lead in all the activities related to conservation of key biodiversity, provide policy guidance on Protected Areas, advise on biodiversity conservation and genetic

nt	provide policy guidance on Protected Areas, advise on biodiversity conservation and genetic resource base of the Gambian wildlife fauna. The department, the Executing Agency, coordinates all environmental issues in the country, and will act as project Executing Partner and will be responsible for project coordination and facilitating stakeholder participation. Member of PSC.
Department of Fisheries	The department, which is mandated to plan, manage and develop the fisheries sector in the country, will provide policy guidance on fisheries, advise on biodiversity conservation and genetic resource base of the Gambian marine. Member of PSC
Ministry of Agriculture	The Ministry, which is responsible for agricultural development and promoting production technologies that reduce land degradation, and together with the Ministry of Higher Education, support R&D focusing on conservation of food crops and animal genetic resources. Member of PSC.
Ministry of Health and Social Welfare	To support the systematization of information about the potential value of medicinal plants and biosafety on plant and animal genetic resources.
Ministry of Justice	To support the legislation of genetic resources and biosafety laws in line with the provisions of the Nagoya Protocol and the Cartagena Protocol, respectively, including trade in genetic resources within and beyond the Gambian borders.
Ministry of Higher Education	To support and promote research, science & technology (R&D) related to conservation of genetic resources for both flora and fauna.
Local Government Authorities	Under Local Government Act 2002, these authorities have been given responsibility for the management of natural resources and of waste collection systems in their respective areas
Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and the Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO)	CBOs and TANGO will be the local executing partners and will be actively involved in the consultation process to develop awareness programs and traditional ecological knowledge. They will play an important role in awareness raising for behavioural changes in support of implementation of measures to protect the environment and adoption of sustainability principles by local actors.
National Agricultural Research Institute	NARI, which is mandated to conduct adaptive research in agriculture and natural resources, will participate as a member of the PSC and will be actively involved in the consultation process and work closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Higher Education on conservation of genetic resources for both flora and fauna.

Traditional Healers Association	With mandates related to : Local actions on access, PIC, MAT, and benefit sharing; support for biodiscovery. Genetic resources and traditional knowledge (TK) associated with genetic resources; Social and local community mobilization; and Support of biodiscovery. In the context of the project, they will support the implementation of activities related to finalization of ABS policy, implementation of PIC, MAT, and contracts, capacity-building, and awareness raising and Support local level implementation of the ABS framework, including sectoral guidelines. The association will participate in providing input into the legal frameworks and preparing community protocols as part of capacity-building activities. The experience of this Association could also help to develop the sui generis TK registers working with IPR authorities. Project implementation, monitoring issues and ABS contract development.
UN System and other bilateral / multilateral donors	UN System agencies, such as UNEP, FAO, UNDP, and WB, and other bilateral/multilateral donors, such as the EU, AfDB, BADEA, Islamic Development Fund, Kuwait and Saudi Funds, will primarily provide assistance for social and infrastructural sectors and otherwise provide co-financing and direct investment of environment activities under the project framework.

**In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.**

### 3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

**Briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis).**

Building capacity among stakeholders of local communities, especially women to negotiate between providers and users of genetic resources is one of the core areas to ensure a sound implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. This is particularly relevant for the Gambia where women constitute the majority of the economically active population working in agriculture but also using forest related resources for their livelihoods. Women farmers are engaged primarily in food and horticultural production and raising small ruminants and poultry; in the fisheries sector women are fish off-loaders and fish processors, while in forestry women are engaged in planting seedlings and managing woodlots. However, the significant contribution of women to agriculture does not translate into improved social status, in part because their productive activities are mainly subsistence-based and for home consumption. For this project, the training program on the access to genetic resources and benefit sharing will benefit the same number of women as men, ensuring that women are equally capacitated to negotiate between providers and users of genetic resources. In addition, the involvement of women will also ensure that research and development to add value to genetic resources taps into the traditional knowledge and human-environment nexus based on women's experience and knowledge.

The project will take advantage of the provisions of the National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy 2010-2020 that encourage the participation of women in the management of environmental resources. This represents a shift as a result of the introduction of environment management strategies that recognize the role of women in sustainable management of natural resources. There is also increased recognition of the value of indigenous knowledge in The Gambia, as well as the roles of women and men as innovators regarding biodiversity conservation and farming techniques. Therefore, involving rural communities, especially the "voiceless," in biodiversity conservation, resource management and in decisions regarding environmentally sound practices is a powerful way to mitigate the conditions and the impacts of unsustainable resource uses. Gender mainstreaming in this genetic resource project will bring the diverse roles, needs and knowledge of women to bear on the enabling environment for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in the Gambia. Biodiversity is important as it is relevant for the socio- economic development, and women's role as primary land resource managers is crucial for the attainment of the targets established in the NBSAP.

**Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment? Yes**

**closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; Yes**

**improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or Yes**

**generating socio-economic benefits or services for women. Yes**

**Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?**

Yes

#### 4. Private sector engagement

**Will there be private sector engagement in the project?**

Yes

**Please briefly explain the rationale behind your answer.**

In the project pilot site, natural products for which there is a well-established local demand and familiarity include products such as foods (*Baobab, Kabba, Netto, Ziziphus* as well as products such as honey), medicines (numerous species), building materials (Rhun palm as well as semi-valuable and valuable timbers) and handicrafts (particularly furniture constructed from Rhun palm). The Gmelina pole harvesting for the construction industry has been very much encouraged by the department of forestry and this is another means of revenue collection in the forest parks.

Component 3 of this project will focus on partnerships to improve the management of genetic resources in The Gambia. Through this component, the project will seek to strengthen partnerships for commercial and non-commercial bioprospecting opportunities. Therefore, the project will actively seek to involve the private sector as active players in the systematization of information about the potential value of useful native flora and fauna species, and as providers and users of native genetic resources, to be encouraged to obtain legal certainty and benefit-sharing mechanisms. Some of the genetic resources are of transboundary nature where the private sector is heavily involved and have an edge in terms of competence and networks. The private sector are development partners in activities related to supervising and monitoring of research authorized projects. Finally, they will be engaged as users of genetic resources, be it fauna or flora or both, and therefore, have to work with and within the legal systems to ensure they operate by the ABS national system and Nagoya Protocol through all the chain of research and development.

The private sector involvement in the Gambia is not forthcoming. Even though, a guideline for private sector involvement is already produced since 2015 there is yet none recorded. There are numerous demands from Research Institutions and Academia, and with the lack of legal framework these demands were not addressed by the Department of Parks and Wildlife. Modality of involvement of the Private Sector will include

- ☒ Contribution in the development of the architecture of the legal and administrative ABS frameworks
- ☒ Contributing to awareness-raising within the private sector, identifying suitable genetic resources, resource providers and value chains.
- ☒ Provide opportunities for the Private Sector investment in bio discovery and access to genetic resources.
- ☒ Benefiting from training, capacity-building, awareness-raising, and information exchange activities.

## 5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the Project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the Project design (table format acceptable)

*COVID 19 and Climate Resilience:* The current socioeconomic context due to the influence by the COVID 19 outbreak is an important risk to be considered for this project due to the poverty situation in the country affected till recently by a long term hostile regime. According to the Secretary-General António Guterres, 31 March 2020: "Everything we do during and after this crisis must be with a strong focus on building more equal, inclusive and sustainable economies and societies that are more resilient in the face of pandemics, climate change, and the many other global challenges we face". Like the vast majority of countries in the world, The Gambia is still experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic. The possible consequences on fragile economy and the precarious livelihoods of populations require anticipation in the choice of resilience strategies and measures to face this new global threat. Even if it disappears, the consequences of this pandemic will have a lasting impact on communities and the various production systems. The potential for future outbreaks cannot also be ruled out. In this context, the project will identify relevant support to enable the country to cope with the consequences of this pandemic, in particular its implications on food security, transhumant livestock farming, pressure on natural resources and different value chains. The project will therefore promote the adoption of an approach where communities in general, and women and youth (who are the majority in rural areas and who are essential in the production and processing of agricultural, forestry and pastoral products) in particular, will be central to the process of creating goods and services and generating wealth. This will ensure the improvement of the access to benefit from genetic resources, the possibility of creating jobs and wealth around specific genetic resources value chains without forgetting the plants used by rural populations to fight against diseases (e.g malaria, ), through the promotion of the local pharmacopoeia, particularly the cultivation of appropriate medicinal plants which is common in The Gambia. UNEP, as the Implementing Agency of this project, will consider the project in the current dynamic of "Rebuilding the post-pandemic world, better". This will be through the Re-examining, retool, accelerating UNEP work on: i) Green Jobs: Towards decent work in a sustainable, low - carbon world (UNEP, ILO, IOE, ITUC, 2008); ii) Global Green New Deal (2009); iii) Green Economy and iv) Sustainable Consumption and Production.

Risk	Level	Risk mitigation measure
Delays of implementation due to different interests of stakeholders.	Medium	This risk will be minimized by strongly anchoring all activities in a multi-stakeholder process and by organizing high level briefings of political decision makers on the proposed ABS system during early stages of the discussions.
Uncertainty due to government shifts in priorities and policy changes.	Medium	The project will strengthen the political commitment by raising awareness of the decision makers, institutions, and communities on ABS prospects of generating resources, strengthening conservation and contributing to science and to national research capacity generally.
Limited institutional and community interest in ABS.	Medium	The project will strengthen capacity of the decision makers, institutions, and communities on ABS prospects through targeted training modules and access to best practice tools on ABS.
Weak capacity to develop an ABS	Low	As alluded to above, this project is strategically designed to develop the required capacity as well as establish the appropriate legal and institutional

op an ABS		equired capacity as well as establish the appropriate legal and institutional framework for a successful ABS system
Lack of political interest in ABS	Low	The Gambia is a signatory but also has ratified the Nagoya Protocol, and this project is consistent with the country's Nagoya Protocol aspirations.
Climate change impacts on biodiversity	Medium	Efforts have continued to invest in biodiversity conservation, including Protected Areas. This Project is a contribution to improving sustainable consumption but also sustainable conservation of genetic resources in the country, and will be coordinated with other projects having a focus on biodiversity and ecosystem conservation in the Gambia. The legal and policy framework on ABS will be developed with due consideration to climate change possible impact and vulnerability of people and ecosystems. Furthermore, this project is a pilot site to test the ABS measures through activities in line with adaptation need of local communities. The project will therefore strengthen the resilience of population as they relate to genetic resources.
Power struggles among national partners lead to delays in decision-making	Low	In The Gambia, the role of different institutions has been established by law, and in the environment sector various committees under the presidency are established; this framework contributes to mitigating the conflicts among institutions. In addition, the project steering committee will provide a forum to discuss and agree on different stakeholders' responsibilities.
Resistance and/or conflicts between community members related to resource access	Low	The project, in collaboration with local Community Based Organizations, will extensively consult and engage with community members and be informed by their traditional knowledge. The project will develop clear guidelines for natural resource management at the local level under the framework of local land use plans, and the process of developing the land use plans will provide an opportunity for communal leadership and participation in natural resource management.
Corruption	M	The government appears committed to making anti-corruption a key part of democratic reforms. Research has shown this to be critical to sustained progress in both democratic development and reducing corruption. The project will use the established institutions and will work with judiciary to handle any potential corruption in the implementation of ABS in the country.
Land Conflicts	M	Land and other natural resources such as forest, water and fisheries are the pillars of The Gambian economy, and are directly linked to the livelihoods

		ods of more than 3 in 4 people in the country. However, over 50 hotspots of land conflicts have been identified across the country. In each province there is a district authority, which manages and regulates the use of land, and these elected Area Councils “charge land rates collection, refuse collection, provide municipal maintenance while the physical planning unit issues clearances for plots of land purchase as well as building permits and occupation clearance.” After the land is allocated by the Alkalo to tenants, it is registered with the Area Council. Tenants of Customary Land pay rent to the Area council yearly. A local transfer document is obtained from the relevant municipality. When ownership of land is confirmed, a certificate of ownership is issued by the Area Council and Alkalo of the village. The registration fee for land transactions are used to maintain roads, markets, cemeteries, and provide waste collection and water. The project will use this established mechanism as necessary to couple it with awareness raising to resolve any potential conflicts that will arrive from ABS implementation.
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COVID 19 related risks		
Availability of Technical Expertise and Capacity and Changes in Timelines	M	The Gambia has a long history of pandemic disease management. The country is regularly affected by Malaria and Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI). The country was able to establish a strong disease control mechanism and with COVID 19 that mechanism has been strengthened with the support of partners. The project will take advantage of the existing country medical infrastructure to incorporate the population resilience.
Stakeholder Engagement Process	Low	The stakeholders engagement is at the heart of ABS regime. The project will ensure that this engagement gives due consideration to women and marginalised group in the context of COVID 19
Enabling Environment	Low	The role of decentralised administration and non-state partners (NGO, etc.) is very strong in the country. The project will ensure that the ABS framework development support a more enabling environment for the project development and implementation in the context of COVID 19.
Financing	M	The ABS framework to be established will serve as a mechanism for resources mobilisation for sustainable and resilient investment
Future Risks of Similar	Low	ABS framework developed in the context of COVID 19 will provide opportunity

Crises

unities for establishment of long term mechanism for pandemic management.

## 6. Coordination

**Outline the institutional structure of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. Describe possible coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.**

The National Executing Agency of the Project is the Office of the National ABS Focal Point. The Department of Parks & Wildlife Management (DPWM) has jurisdiction over wildlife in or outside wildlife protected areas and employ personnel/officers to carry out its mandate all over the country. The DPWM is the only government agency responsible for the protection and the management of the nation's wildlife resources. Wildlife being a national asset, Departmental staff are likewise deployed in all regions of the country. The Department has operational links with other Government Departments, Units, and NGOs in both the natural resources and agricultural sectors. As the national focal point on Biodiversity conservation including ABS Focal Point, the department has recorded a certain level of knowledge on issues related to the conservation of natural resources and the management of the genetic resources available in the country.

For more than a decade, the DPWM has developed partnerships with research institutions such as the National Agriculture Research Institution (NARI). NARI was created in 1993 to take over the activities of the former Department of Agricultural Research and Agricultural Engineering Unit. The institution is presently responsible for research on agriculture and natural resources which include livestock, forestry, fisheries, and wildlife etc. The broad mandate requires the reorganizing of the existing research program to incorporate the other components. There are other institutions such as the Medical Research Council (MRC), the University of the Gambia (UTG) that is recorded as a crucial partner in nature conservation initiatives.

The Director of the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management who is the National Focal Point of UNCBD is designated as the project Director and thereby hosting the project at Abuko Headquarters' premises. Furthermore, the National Focal Point of Nagoya Protocol on ABS should be automatically designated as the Project Coordinator by virtue of his/her role as lead negotiator of the country in relation to the said Protocol.

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment Climate Change and Natural Resources will play the overall supervisory functions of the Project by leading the Project Steering Committee

The National Environment Agency, who is the GEF Focal Point, will play the role of monitoring the smooth implementation of the Project through GEF recommended guidelines.

The Department of Forestry will be a very important implementation partner as some of the Project pilot sites are directly under its mandate

This project will be implemented in coordination with other on-going GEF funded projects in the country. The project will have a special Advisor within the project's follow-up Steering Committee who will be integrated by key actors for ABS in the country and a representative from UNEP; with the goal of providing support and orientation to the national executing agency, the Department of State for Forestry & the Environment, on project implementation. It is proposed that a body such as an ABS Research/Review Committee be constituted under prospective National Competent Authority and these bodies would take up permanent sustainable coordinative functions. Additional project partners from the private sector, local government, civil society organizations and local community representatives for project information sharing and review purposes can be enjoined on an as-needed basis.

Projects that this project will coordinate with in the country include:

- The GEF/UNEP project GEF ID 9772 “Land/Seascape planning and restoration to improve ecosystem services, and livelihoods, expand and effectively manage protected areas.” The project focuses on improved planning and enforcement system to identify and address causes of land degradation and biodiversity loss, and creating enabling frameworks in districts within Kuntaur LGA to implement SLM practices across landscapes. The proposed project which seeks to improve legal and institutional frameworks for ABS in the Gambia will coordinate with project ID 9772 which also seeks to arrest biodiversity loss in the country.

- The FAO/GEF project Community-Based Sustainable Dryland Forest Management is designed to improve community based management of Dryland Forests in Gambia to reduce forest degradation and improve local livelihoods; the proposed project will seek to use lessons learned in the dryland forest project, particularly on establishing regional forums and community task forces for resource management. This project serves as a precursor for community awareness raising that the current proposed project is seeking to ensure biodiversity conservation and equitable access and share of genetic resources.

- The UNDP/GEF Gambia Protected Areas Network and Community Livelihood Project is designed to expand and strengthen the management of priority protected areas in The Gambia, including through enhanced community-based natural resource management; the proposed project expects to share information and strategies regarding community engagement, community awareness programs and capacity development of local institutions to empower them for improved access benefit sharing mechanisms with other stakeholders.

The coordination with GEF and non- GEF initiative included in this section will be further discussed during the PPG and the project coordination and steering bodies will be design to ensure complementarity, synergy and to avoid duplication.

## 7. Consistency with National Priorities

### Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions

Yes

**If yes, which ones and how: NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc**

The following strategies and plans or reports are specifically relevant biodiversity conservation and have implications therefore on genetic resources in the country. The proposed project is aligned to each of them as briefly described below.

**National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP):** The Action Plan recognises insufficient financing, human resources, intellectual capacity, demotivating staff remuneration, insufficient park facilities and infrastructure and non-decentralised system as challenges of wildlife and biodiversity conservation in the Gambia. Consistently, this project seeks to build institutional capacities and establish legal and institutional frameworks to enable the implementation of ABS. The project therefore is designed to address some of these challenges raised in the NBSAP of the Gambia.

**CBD National Report:** This proposed project contributes to achieving five of the 20 biodiversity targets that the Gambia has set for itself. These targets are 1, 13, 16, 18 and 18 -By 2020, 50% of Gambia's population are aware of the values of biodiversity; By 2020, 35% of the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives is maintained; By 2020, the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefits Sharing is in force and operational; By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities and their customary use, are respected; By 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the understanding of consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied, respectively. Therefore, this ABS proposed project is in tune with the Gambia's biodiversity priorities and targets to improve biodiversity conservation in the country.

**Nagoya Protocol National Report:** The Gambia reports that institutional arrangement and systems and capacity building are priority areas for the implementation of the Protocol. This project contributes to the country's priority points for the implementation of the Protocol by building capacities and institutional frameworks.

**The Gambian Biodiversity and Wildlife Act 2003:** The project is in line with the Act's provisions for a biodiversity and wildlife policy environment to ensure their conservation and protection for environmental benefits but also for national economy and future generation. Thus, the Act recognises that biodiversity conservation and genetic resources improve the people's quality of life and promote the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. The Act proposes institutional strengthening and capacity development, the Biodiversity and Wildlife Committee that will ensure policy directions aimed at saving and revitalizing traditional knowledge related to the use and management of biological and natural resources. The Act proposes concrete aspects related to genetic resource and biodiversity conservation. These include: strengthening the institutional capacity of the State and developing control mechanisms for an integrated and efficient management of genetic resources; incorporating principles and objective of the conservation of biodiversity and wildlife in the planning of environmental policies and in development, at local, Department and national levels; implementing measures to conserve species within and outside in-situ conditions, such as protected natural areas, thought ex-situ conservation measures such as gene banks, managed areas, zoos and botanical gardens; technical and scientific capacity-building and the training of specialist human resources; raising people's awareness and

appreciation of nature; and structuring a policy for the signing, ratification and implements of international instruments a bilateral, multilateral or global nature, relating to the conservation of biodiversity and wildlife.

Other relevant policies include:

The Gambia Environment Action Plan Phase 2 (GEAP II 2009-2018):The Plan provided for farmer engagement in strengthened regulatory framework and enforcement of the regulatory codes, and environmental regulations fully enforceable and respected by all sectors; functioning institutional and legal framework in place for sustainable management and protection of the coastal zone and its resources; strengthened advocacy and sensitization for sustainable development; and private sector and parastatals engaged in dialogue for sustainable resource use. Engaging farmers in these levels of offers them the opportunity not only to participate in conservation, but it also raises awareness among them, thus contributing to the provisions of the Nagoya Protocol of raising awareness among resource users, particularly communities.

The National Climate Change Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA, 2007):The Plan recognises the need to promote and strengthen integrated management of the coastal and terrestrial zones and to preserve biological diversity and ecological assets. Other policies relevant to combating land degradation include the ANR Policy, NEMA, National Forest Policy, Water Policy, Fisheries Policy, Biodiversity Policy and NDM Policy, while relevant laws include the Forest Act, NEMA, Biodiversity Act, Fisheries Act, Water Resources Act, NDMA, The Local Government Act and Land Use Regulation.

## 8. Knowledge Management

**Outline the Knowledge management approach for the Project, including, if any, plans for the Project to learn from other relevant Projects and initiatives, to assess and document in a user-friendly form, and share these experiences and expertise with relevant stakeholders.**

During the first meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol (NP) that was held in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, 13–17 October 2014, NP parties adopted Decision NP 1/8 on measures to assist in Capacity building and capacity development in accordance with Art 22 of the NP. This decision includes strategic framework for capacity building and development to support the effective implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing, which comprises five key areas for capacity building and development including: (1) Capacity to implement, and to comply with the obligations of, the Protocol; (2) Capacity to develop, implement and enforce domestic legislative, administrative or policy measures on access and benefit-sharing; (3) Capacity to negotiate mutually agreed terms; (4) Capacity of indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders, including the business sector and the research community, in relation to the implementation of the Protocol; and (5) Capacity of countries to develop endogenous research capabilities to add value to their own genetic resources. The management and sharing of knowledge generated through experiences gathered in framework of the implementation endeavours of the Nagoya Protocol are considered in the strategic framework, especially in relation to key area 2 and key area 5 respectively. In particular, under key area 2, the strategic framework contemplates under 2.5 among others, facilitating sharing of knowledge and expertise on ABS measures through on-job-training and peer-to-peer exchange programmes, regional and subregional learning communities and networks; the provision of technical assistance for the development of administrative procedures for implementing the ABS measures, development of guidelines for differentiating requests for access to genetic resources for commercial and non-commercial use, development of guidelines for establishment of simplified measures on access to genetic resources for non-commercial research purposes. On its part under key area 5, the strategic framework contemplates several actions spread across 5.1 to 5.3 including but not limited to the development of methodologies for assessing the potential commercial value of specific genetic resources and TK building on good practices in the context of ABS, facilitation of the development of inter-linkages with other initiatives/methodologies/instruments for valorising genetic resources and TK, for example through knowledge exchange; documentation and dissemination of case studies on good practices and lessons learned to develop understanding of the value chain through analysing business model; provision of technical assistance to develop research capabilities of domestic institutions and universities to add value to genetic resources, supporting collaborative approaches to technical and scientific research and development programmes; providing technical assistance to support the development or strengthening of genetic resources databases, organization of trainings on bioprospecting and value-addition for genetic resources for IPLCs, small and medium enterprises and private sector, organization of trainings on research and taxonomic studies related to conservation of biological diversity and sustainable use of its components and building capacity to undertake research and development of genetic resources to the commercialization stage.

Related to the lessons learn for the ABS implementation, Natural Justice, indicated that “Ideally, a community protocol in an ABS context should be developed in response to a specific opportunity or identified challenge regarding the GR and/or aTK of the community. This could be a new application for access by a user, the desire to improve an existing ABS value chain, or the defence against a specific threat of misappropriation of the community’s TK. While there are advantages to have community protocols in place before a user applies for access, it is difficult to trigger and sustain a community-led process if there is no concrete aspiration or threat on the horizon”.

The project will support a situation analysis of current biodiversity and genetic resource use in a very systematic fashion in line with the provisions of the Nagoya Protocol. It will engage with the research community as well as the private sector to enhance an understanding of the Gambian genetic resource pool of the flora and fauna of local and global value, being informed by Traditional Knowledge (TK) from local communities who are the primary dependents of biodiversity and genetic resources bases in the country. This project is national in scope, and therefore, knowledge management as well as mechanisms for

engaging with stakeholders, including rural communities will be critical. Awareness raising is part of the proposed project design. Consultations will be undertaken to involve relevant stakeholders, without undermining the process of project implementation. Lessons learned will be disseminated through radio programs, TV and print media, including flyers to raise awareness about the value of biodiversity and genetic resources in the country.

The project includes knowledge management initiatives through networking with similar projects in the region, such as the ABS Capacity Development Initiative, and also by sharing important lessons generated by the project itself with the participating institutions and associated projects. Capacity development sessions, training and demonstration of practices in value addition will require significant attention to knowledge generation, documentation and dissemination. TK is embedded in this project, and therefore, knowledge management will be critical in ensuring that TK is appreciated and contributes to conserving genetic resources in particular, and biodiversity in general.

### 9. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

Provide information on the identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project/program based on your organization's ESS systems and procedures

#### Overall Project/Program Risk Classification\*

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Low			

#### Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Provide preliminary information on the types and levels of risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and describe measures to address these risks during the project design.

Risk	Level	Risk mitigation measure
Delays of implementation due to different interests of stakeholders.	Medium	This risk will be minimized by strongly anchoring all activities in a multi-stakeholder process and by organizing high level briefings of political decision makers on the proposed ABS system during early stages of the discussion.

		ssions.
Uncertainty due to government shifts in priorities and policy changes.	Medium	The project will strengthen the political commitment by raising awareness of the decision makers, institutions, and communities on ABS prospects of generating resources, strengthening conservation and contributing to science and to national research capacity generally.
Limited institutional and community interest in ABS.	Medium	The project will strengthen capacity of the decision makers, institutions, and communities on ABS prospects through targeted training modules and access to best practice tools on ABS.
Weak capacity to develop an ABS	Low	As alluded to above, this project is strategically designed to develop the required capacity as well as establish the appropriate legal and institutional framework for a successful ABS system
Lack of political interest in ABS	Low	The Gambia is a signatory but also has ratified the Nagoya Protocol, and this project is consistent with the country's Nagoya Protocol aspirations.
Climate change impacts on biodiversity	Medium	Efforts have continued to invest in biodiversity conservation, including Protected Areas. This Project is a contribution to improving sustainable consumption but also sustainable conservation of genetic resources in the country, and will be coordinated with other projects having a focus on biodiversity and ecosystem conservation in the Gambia. The legal and policy framework on ABS will be developed with due consideration to climate change possible impact and vulnerability of people and ecosystems. Furthermore, this project is a pilot site to test the ABS measures through activities in line with adaptation need of local communities. The project will therefore strengthen the resilience of population as they relate to genetic resources.
Power struggles among national partners lead to delays in decision-making	Low	In The Gambia, the role of different institutions has been established by law, and in the environment sector various committees under the presidency are established; this framework contributes to mitigating the conflicts among institutions. In addition, the project steering committee will provide a forum to discuss and agree on different stakeholders' responsibilities.
Resistance and/or conflicts between community members related to resource access	Low	The project, in collaboration with local Community Based Organizations, will extensively consult and engage with community members and be informed by their traditional knowledge. The project will develop clear guidelines for natural resource management at the local level under the framework of local land use plans. and the process of developing the land use

		plans will provide an opportunity for communal leadership and participation in natural resource management.
Corruption	M	The government appears committed to making anti-corruption a key part of democratic reforms. Research has shown this to be critical to sustained progress in both democratic development and reducing corruption. The project will use the established institutions and will work with judiciary to handle any potential corruption in the implementation of ABS in the country.
Land Conflicts	M	Land and other natural resources such as forest, water and fisheries are the pillars of The Gambian economy, and are directly linked to the livelihoods of more than 3 in 4 people in the country. However, over 50 hotspots of land conflicts have been identified across the country. In each province there is a district authority, which manages and regulates the use of land, and these elected Area Councils “charge land rates collection, refuse collection, provide municipal maintenance while the physical planning unit issues clearances for plots of land purchase as well as building permits and occupation clearance.” After the land is allocated by the Alkalo to tenants, it is registered with the Area Council. Tenants of Customary Land pay rent to the Area council yearly. A local transfer document is obtained from the relevant municipality. When ownership of land is confirmed, a certificate of ownership is issued by the Area Council and Alkalo of the village. The registration fee for land transactions are used to maintain roads, markets, cemeteries, and provide waste collection and water. The project will use this established mechanism as necessary to couple it with awareness raising to resolve any potential conflicts that will arrive from ABS implementation.
COVID 19 related risks		
Availability of Technical Expertise and Capacity and Changes in Timelines	M	The Gambia has a long history of pandemic disease management. The country is regularly affected by Malaria and Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI). The country was able to establish a strong disease control mechanism and with COVID 19 that mechanism has been strengthened with the support of partners. The project will take advantage of the existing country medical infrastructure to incorporate the population resilience.
Stakeholder Engagement	Low	The stakeholders engagement is at the heart of ABS regime. The project

nt Process		will ensure that this engagement gives due consideration to women and marginalised group in the context of COVID 19
Enabling Environment	Low	The role of decentralised administration and non-state partners (NGO, et c.) is very strong in the country. The project will ensure that the ABS framework development support a more enabling environment for the project development and implementation in the context of COVID 19.
Financing	M	The ABS framework to be establish will serve as a mechanism for resources mobilisation for sustainable and resilient investment
Future Risks of Similar Crises	Low	ABS framework developed in the context of COVID 19 will provide opportunities for establishment of long term mechanism for pandemic management.

#### Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

**Title**

**Submitted**

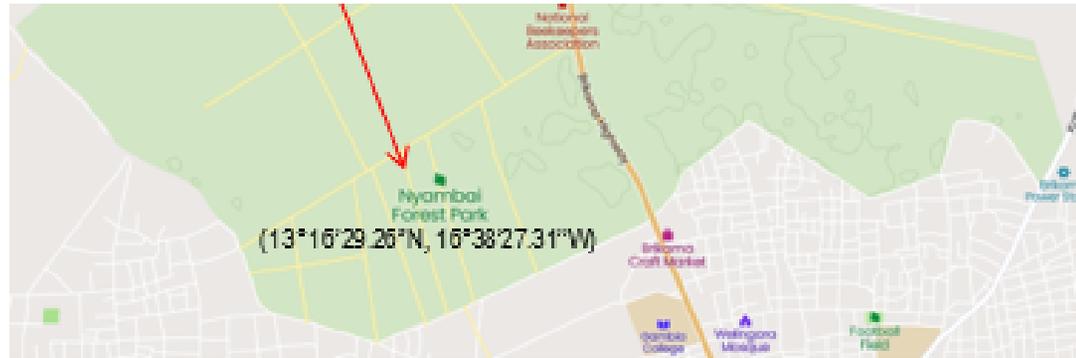
SRIF ABS - Gambia CRC

**Part III: Approval/Endorsement By GEF Operational Focal Point(S) And Gef Agency(ies)**

**A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S): (Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter with this template).**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Date</b>
Doudou Trawally	Executive Director, National Environment Agency, and GEF Operational Focal Point for The Gambia	Ministry of Environment Climate Change and Natural Resources	9/11/2020





Map of the Gambia showing national districts and the river system.

Source: created with data from <http://www.diva-gis.org/gdata>

[Nyambai Forest Park from https://mapcarta.com/17170364/Map](https://mapcarta.com/17170364/Map)