



# PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

PROJECT TYPE: Medium-Sized Project

TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

## PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

<b>Project Title:</b>	Gambia Protected Areas Network and Community Livelihood Project		
Country:	Gambia	GEF Project ID:	5529
GEF Agency:	UNDP	GEF Agency Project ID:	5000
Other Executing Partner(s):	Ministry of Environment, Parks and Wildlife. Agriculture and Natural Resources Working Group.	Submission Date:	March 6, 2014
GEF Focal Areas:	Biodiversity	Project Duration (Months)	48
Name of parent program	N/A	Project Agency Fee (\$):	125,809

### A. INDICATIVE FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Focal Area Objectives	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount (\$)	Indicative Co-financing (\$)
BD-1: Improve sustainability of protected area systems	GEF	1,214,310	810,017
BD-2: Mainstream Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use into Production Landscapes, Seascapes and Sectors	GEF	110,000	4,009,983
<b>Total project cost</b>		<b>1,324,310</b>	<b>4,820,000</b>

### B. INDICATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Project Objective: To expand and strengthen the management of priority protected areas in The Gambia, including through enhanced community-based natural resource management						
Project Component	Grant Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount (\$)	Indicative Co-financing (\$)
1. Strengthen national PA network planning and PA management effectiveness in a cluster of priority PAs	TA	<p>In the targeted cluster of priority PAs – Jokadou National Park (JNP, 15,028 ha), Bao Bolong Wetland Reserve (BBWR, 22,000 ha), Kiang West National Park (KWNP, 11,526 ha):</p> <p>1.1 Gazettement of a c. 5,000 ha expansion of JNP to connect to BBWR, and of a c. 10,000 ha expansion of KWNP.</p> <p>1.2 Enhanced management effectiveness in both existing and added PA areas, demonstrated through: (a) increase in METT scores by 10% for BBWR and KWNP (2013 baselines 68% and 74%, respectively<sup>1</sup>) and 40% for JNP (baseline to be defined during PPG); (b) quantitative and qualitative reduction of threats (incidence of wood extraction, charcoal making, harvesting of mangroves, land conversion, wild fires, and wildlife poaching) - ensuring that the extent and quality of key habitats (incl. Guinean closed and savannah woodlands in KWNP;</p>	<p>1.1 <u>Revised PA Programme of Work and Action Plan</u>, with ecosystem coverage assessment of the current national PA network to determine relevant ecological/biodiversity gaps, and with assessment of the forest park estate to identify sites that merit inclusion in the PA system for biodiversity conservation purposes.</p> <p>1.2 <u>Gazettement of the two PA expansions</u> (JNP expansion to connect to BBWR and expansion of KWNP).</p> <p>1.3 <u>Strengthened institutional and technical capacities in the target PAs</u> to address existing and emerging threats: (a) Basic PA offices are established and equipped and staffed in JNP and BBWR; (b) boundaries of JNP, BBWR and newly added PA areas demarcated on the ground; (c) DPWM/PA staff trained on all aspects of PA operations ensuring that field staff meet necessary competencies for planning, administration, conflict resolution, monitoring, and enforcement; (d) multi-year PA management and business plans prepared/updated, providing for i) zonation and related regulations for strict protection and</p>	GEF	1,103,918	734,545

<sup>1</sup> These surprisingly high baseline values are taken from METT studies conducted in 2013 under the UNEP-WCMC/GEF PARCC project, and will be reassessed during PPG.

		Sudanese open savannah woodlands and mangrove stands and river-border marshes, lagoons mudflats in JNP and BBWR) and the populations of key species (incl. Dry Zone Mahogany VU, Muninga NT, Red Colobus EN, Guinea Baboon NT, African Slender-snouted Crocodile DD) increase by at least 5%; related baselines will be established during PPG.	sustainable use of natural resources by local communities; ii) PA governance, including co-management and conflict resolution mechanisms; iii) effective law enforcement governing natural resource exploitation and wildlife poaching; iv) basic ecological monitoring systems for targeted habitats and species.			
2. Improve land and natural resource management in and around the targeted cluster of priority PAs	TA	2.1 Improved forest cover, habitat integrity and connectivity across the targeted PA cluster and surrounding landscapes (c. 60,000 ha), through: (a) a reduction of unsustainable wood/ mangrove extraction by 20%; (b) a reduction of incidence and severity of wild and forest fires by 20%; (c) a reduction in the conversion of natural ecosystems for shifting cultivation by 40%; and establishment of sustainable land and natural resource management regimes on 5% of the targeted landscape. Related baselines will be established during PPG.  2.2. Enhanced diversity, sustainability and reliability of community livelihoods.	2.1 <u>Biodiversity and PA aspects as well as sustainable land and natural resource management effectively mainstreamed</u> into the large-scale National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project;  2.2 <u>Agreements with local communities secured for community-based sustainable land and natural resource management, and related plans developed defining:</u> (a) rights and responsibilities of both communities and project, and areas where community interventions will be implemented; (b) prescriptions for suitable biodiversity-friendly NRM and SLM practices; (c) resource-sharing mechanisms; (d) extension support; and (e) monitoring and compliance mechanisms;  2.3 <u>Recommended NRM and SLM practices implemented by local communities</u> under the community-based management agreements, with extension support provided.  2.4 <u>A monitoring system in place</u> in the target areas providing relevant and science-based information on the state of natural resources and socio-economic conditions.	GEF	100,000	3,636,364
Subtotal					1,203,918	4,370,909
Project Management Cost (PMC)					120,392	449,091
Total Project Cost					<b>1,324,310</b>	<b>4,820,000</b>

#### C. INDICATIVE CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY SOURCE AND BY NAME IF AVAILABLE (\$)

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Amount (\$)
National Government	Government of The Gambia through the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management and the National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project (NEMA supported by IFAD and Islamic Development Bank)	Cash	4,500,000
GEF Agency	UNDP	Cash	120,000
CSO	WWF Gambia	Cash	200,000
<b>Total Co-financing</b>			<b>4,820,000</b>

#### D. INDICATIVE TRUST FUND RESOURCES (\$) REQUESTED BY AGENCY, FOCAL AREA AND COUNTRY

GEF Agency	Type of Trust Fund	Focal Area	Country Name/ Global	Grant Amount (\$) (a)	Agency Fee (\$) (b)	Total (\$) c=a+b
UNDP	GEF-TF	Biodiversity	Gambia	1,324,310	125,809	1,450,119
<b>Total Grant Resources</b>				<b>1,324,310</b>	<b>125,809</b>	<b>1,450,119</b>

#### E. PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

PPG allowed by grant amount	Amount Requested (\$)	Agency Fee for PPG (\$)
(upto) \$100k for projects up to & including \$3 million	30,000	2,850

## PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

### A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

**A.1. Project Description. Briefly describe the project, including: 1) the global environmental problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed; 2) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects; 3) the proposed alternative scenario, with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project; 4) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF/SCCF and co-financing; 5) global environmental benefits (GEFTF, NPIF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF); 6) innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up.**

1. Context, global biodiversity significance and protected areas. The Gambia is a small, narrow country enclosed by the Atlantic Ocean in the west and Senegal on the three remaining sides. Its land area of 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> extends c. 330 km from the eastern border to the coast and between 20 and 48 km along its north-south axis. The country's terrain is flat, with the highest point at 53 m asl. The country can be divided into three major biological regions – the marine system and coastal zone on the Atlantic Ocean in the west, the east-to-west running Gambia River and related freshwater and estuary ecosystems, and the terrestrial ecosystems in the remaining stretches of land behind the coast and to the north and south of the river. Despite its small size, the Gambia harbours globally relevant biodiversity. The tidal estuary of the Gambia River extends to 150-200 km inland and is fringed with important mangrove stands as well as barren saline flats, mudflats, river banks with brackish and fresh water zones, lagoons, marshes, swamps, and other wetland habitats – 20% of the Gambia's total land area is covered by wetlands. The terrestrial vegetation consists of closed woodlands, open woodlands, gallery forests, and tree and shrub savannas, belonging to two major biomes/ecoregions: the relatively moist Guinean Savanna (Guinean Forest-Savanna Mosaic Ecoregion; approximately in the western third of the country) and the drier Sudanian Savanna (West Sudanian Savanna Ecoregion; approximately in the eastern two-thirds of the country). However, the status of both these terrestrial ecoregions is considered Critical/Endangered at the supra-national/regional level, and very few stretches remain in a natural state. More than 1000 plant and c. 124 tree species have been recorded from the Gambia including several globally threatened and near-threatened taxa, such as Dry Zone Mahogany *Khaya senegalensis* VU and Muninga *Pterocarpus erinaceus* NT. In terms of animal species, 125 mammals, 488 birds, 74 reptiles, 33 amphibians, 627 fishes, 78 dragonflies and 173 butterflies are recorded. Of the known bird species, 13 are near-threatened and 10 globally threatened; 25% are Palaearctic migrants, with the Gambia's wetlands being an important stepping stone of the East Atlantic Flyway and wintering ground. While most large game animals have long been hunted to local extinction (incl. elephants in 1903, lion, and even common species such as Buffon's Kob *Kobus kob* and Red River Hog *Potamochoerus porcus*), a number of species of global significance remain, including Leopard *Panthera pardus* NT, Red Colobus *Procolobus badius* EN, Guinea Baboon *Papio papio* NT and a population of reintroduced Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* EN. Many globally significant species are dependent on the Gambia River and associated wetlands, such as Atlantic Humpback Dolphin *Sousa teuszii* VU, and African Manatee *Trichechus senegalensis* VU. Mangrove and tidal influence areas serve as important spawning and nursery grounds for more than 114 species of fish.

2. There are nine legally established protected areas in the Gambia, including one community managed reserve, which together cover 64,276 ha – 6% of the national territory (see Annex 1). These PAs are managed by the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management (DPWM) under the Ministry of Environment, Parks and Wildlife (MEPW). The national PA system integrates the principal habitats and ecosystems found in the country, including mangrove ecosystems, gallery forests, off-shore islands, littoral forests, tidal zones, as well as open and dense savannah woodlands. Three wetland PAs are designated under the RAMSAR Convention. Six PAs are recognised as Important Bird Areas. In addition, there are 66 gazetted and demarcated national forest parks covering 51,000 ha and managed by the Department of Forestry; another c. 150,000 ha of forest reserves exist of which 18,000 ha are under community management. The national goal is to increase the PA area to 10 % by 2020. There are also plans to declare 131,000 ha in the country's north-west a UNESCO Man & Biosphere Reserve.

3. Threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services. The Gambia faces highly inter-related challenges and pressures with regard to biodiversity and ecosystem services. Firstly, deforestation throughout the country, including in coastal and river-border mangrove wetlands, is being fuelled by domestic biomass energy and housing/fencing needs. Forests/trees in the Gambia provide 85% of the energy needs in the form of fuel wood – with over 90% of the population dependent on biomass fuel. In 2010, 27% of the country's land cover was classified as forest (including mangroves) of which 87% were secondary forests (mostly fragmented and under severe over-exploitation and degradation). Only 3.5% of lands remained under primary forest cover. Secondly, poor/unsustainable agricultural practices are undermining ecosystem functions (rice

is the main crop, in addition to rainfed millet, maize and sorghum grown for subsistence and peanuts for cash; accompanied by some vegetable production); this includes high-input deep tillage agriculture that leaves top-soils exposed in the dry season, shifting cultivation (slash-and-burn) regimes that require the conversion and use of large areas, and the widespread use of fire for preparing ground in the planting season (at least 80% of the standing biomass is consumed by fires in any given year; 91% of the forest area is exposed to fire at least once every 2 years). Moreover, the introduction and promotion in pursuit of food self-sufficiency of newly developed dryland NERICA rice has compounded the pressure on natural ecosystems, by creating a new incentive for slash-and-burn land conversion. Thirdly, excessive populations of free-ranging livestock (cattle, sheep, and especially goats) are leading to significant overgrazing. These pressure factors are exacerbated by the still prevailing poverty and food insecurity and the rapid growth (2.3%) of the country's human population, which is amplifying demand for land and natural resources and shortening fallow periods in shifting cultivation regimes. The loss of natural ecosystems is particularly severe on the northern side of the Gambia River (North Bank Region) where many areas are already devoid of vital natural resources (livestock forage, firewood). A worsening of the situation on the southern side of the river is projected. In response to this degradation, the country's protected areas, which retain an important share of natural resources, are experiencing huge and increasing exploitation pressures from local populations (especially wood extraction, wildlife hunting, slash-and-burn farming and accidental wild fires); and the loss of mangroves poses a risk to freshwater and estuary species that depend on them.

4. *Baseline.* The Government of the Gambia (GOTG) is taking steps to address these threats, through (1) PA expansion and management strengthening, and (2) the gradual integration of sustainable land management considerations in various agricultural/ rural development schemes.

5. With regard to the former, the baseline investment over the 5-year project will amount to c. \$1,125,000. The Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPWM) will invest \$625,000 of national resources into PA management, research and development, environmental education and the promotion of ecotourism. WWF Gambia will invest \$400,000 in improving the governance of marine and coastal resource management, and continuing to support capacity strengthening of DPWM and community livelihoods around selected PAs. The National Environment Agency (NEA) and its Agricultural and Natural Resources Working Group (ANRWG) will continue to coordinate cross-sectoral integration – with an estimated baseline investment of \$100,000. However, under the baseline scenario, PA management would remain exceedingly weak in an important subset of the country's PA system, most notably on the northern side of the River Gambia, where pressures on terrestrial and wetland PA resources are becoming critical. This comprises a) the newly-designated Jokadou National Park (JNP), which would remain without demarcation on the ground, park infrastructure and management planning, and b) Bao Bolong Wildlife Reserve (BBWR), which is demarcated but would remain with inadequate staffing and infrastructure/equipment and planning. Also the two PAs, which are separated by a 10-km gap, would become disconnected due to advancing habitat loss between them. In addition, further loss of terrestrial and wetland ecosystem services on the north shore would lead to an increase of cross-river exploitation pressures in Kiang West NP (KWNP) on the opposite southern shore of the Gambia River. KWNP received relevant investment in the past through a series of projects and is arguably the best managed PAs in the Gambia<sup>2</sup>. But it is also the only PA in Gambia harbouring significant stretches of natural terrestrial habitats (including forests) and is therefore under mounting exploitation (logging) and conversion pressure that the current management capacity and infrastructure (39 ill-resourced local rangers) cannot wholly stem. Lastly, under the baseline scenario, the institutional capacity of the relevant ministerial departments will remain too limited to develop and implement viable alternatives to the continuing degradation of the natural resource base of PAs. The results of the ongoing DPWM/World Bank/GEF Gambia Biodiversity Management and Institutional Strengthening Project, which are relevant in this context, are summarised in the first row in the table in Section A.4. Coordination.

6. A number of regional initiatives also work towards enhancing the effectiveness of PA management including in The Gambia: the Regional Marine and Coastal Conservation Programme for West Africa (PRCM), initiated by IUCN, WWF, Wetlands International and the International Foundation for the Banc d'Arguin (FIBA) in partnership with the Sub-regional Fisheries Commission (CSRP). PRCM is active in seven West-African countries including Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania Senegal and Sierra Leone, and currently boasts a membership of more than 90 partner institutions including governmental departments, research centres, professional organisations, and NGOs. The PRCM provides a focused and integrated regional dynamic for environmental governance including a broad spectrum of stakeholders from across the ecoregions. PRCM in partnership with the MAVA Foundation supported Phase II of the Integrated Coastal and Marine Project (ICAM, 2009-2011), which supported oyster hunters in Tanbi Wetlands Complex and successfully implemented village banking and women gardening in Baobolong Wetland Reserve. PRCM in

<sup>2</sup> A notable success being that early dry season controlled burning implemented since 1997 (replacing ineffective fire breaks) has reduced the incidence of severe fires and led to a closing of the canopy in NP woodlands.

partnership with FIBA also supported park committee meetings as well as marine surveillance and patrolling within Niimi NP, Tanbi Wetlands NP and Tanji Bird Reserve. The Regional Network of Marine Protected Areas in West Africa (RAMPAO) supports effective management of coastal and marine PAs in PRCM countries, providing guidance, support and resources for PA management planning, PA business planning, ecological gap analyses and eco-regional planning. RAMPAO inter alia facilitated the preparation of a report on Sacred Natural Sites and Biodiversity Conservation in the Gambia.

7. With regard to sustainable land management, the baseline investment over the 5-year project is estimated at c. \$16-17 million. The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) receive about 2.7% (c. \$5.6m) and 0.1% (c. \$200,000), respectively, of the annual government budget, and it is estimated that some 5% of MOA and 20% of NARI budgets are linked to SLM. More importantly in terms of scale are a plethora of donor-funded rural/agricultural/livestock development projects implemented through the MOA<sup>3</sup>, which focus on productivity increases, agricultural technologies and processing, access roads to markets and rice fields, small livestock promotion, vegetable gardens, water management and irrigation. This includes most notably a project launched in early 2013, the *National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project* (NEMA, \$64.9m, 2013-2019), financed mainly by IFAD and the Islamic Development Bank and executed through the MOA Soil and Water Management Unit. The objective of NEMA is to increase rural incomes by improving the productivity of farming, to be achieved by purposeful investments in public economic infrastructure including water control structures, access roads and markets, developing vegetable gardens, adding new lowland rice production areas and facilitating controlled tidal irrigation, coupled with the capacity of farmers to manage productive assets within their watershed and achieve better agricultural commercialisation. An estimated 25% of NEMA's \$64m are earmarked for SLM. The *Forest & Farm Facility* (FFF, Phase 2 launched in 2012, an estimated \$700,000 for the Gambia) and hosted by NEA/ANRWG and involving FAO, the World Bank, IUCN and IIED will work on sustainable farm and forest management, mainly by supporting the Department of Forestry in the designation and setup of additional community forests, wood lots and orchards. However, past rural/agricultural/livestock development projects, including such that had SLM as part of their objectives, have eventually only very marginally delivered on environmental sustainability aspects – and have to date largely ignored biodiversity and protected area considerations.

8. Under the baseline scenario, on the north side of the river the land conversion frontier would move further southward to the BBWR's river-border woodlands, mangroves and wetlands and extend into the remaining natural ecosystems in JNP; and on the opposite southern shore KWNP and the surrounding areas of semi-natural ecosystems will suffer increased exploitation and conversion pressures. The protected areas in place would not be able to stem these pressures wherefore further habitat fragmentation and degradation can be expected. In parallel large-scale agricultural/rural development initiatives – most notably NEMA – would continue to advance productivity without duly considering environmental sustainability, biodiversity and protected area aspects. While this may lead to short-term gains in community livelihoods and food security, it would not respond adequately to the severe and ongoing deterioration of the natural resource base, and not help reduce the exploitation and development pressures that local communities exert on biodiversity and the integrity and connectivity of the protected area system.

9. The long-term solution will be to (a) establish effective PA management in the cluster of three PAs (JNP, BBWR, KWNP), for these to serve as a cornerstone for biodiversity conservation and safeguarding ecosystem services, integrity and resilience in the Gambia; and (b) in parallel reduce the pressures by applying community-based sustainable land and natural resource management in PA adjacent communities.

10. Barriers. The above long-term solution is impeded by the following barriers to effective PA management and sustainable land and natural resource management in the targeted areas:

- Insufficient financing to the national PA system. The financial resources available for PA management in the Gambia including in the targeted PAs, remains insufficient. However, the ongoing DPWM/World Bank/GEF *Gambia Biodiversity Management and Institutional Strengthening Project* is presently looking into potential financing options and financial mechanisms wherefore this barrier is not addressed in the here-proposed project.
- Inadequate PA operationalisation. Although the DPWM conducted consultations and the PA has been welcomed by local

<sup>3</sup> For example, a) *Food Security and Agricultural Development Project* (FASDEP, \$27.3m) of AfDB & Global Agriculture & Food Security Program, focused on enhancing productive capacity and competitiveness and strengthening the institutional capacity for economic management and public service delivery; b) *Gambia Lowland Development Project* (\$12m) of WB & Islamic Development Bank, focused on productivity increases and agricultural processing; c) *West Africa Agricultural Productivity Programme* (WAAPP, \$12m for Gambia) of WB, focused on increasing productivity through improved agricultural research and technologies; d) *Livestock and Horticulture Development Project* (LHDP, \$14m) of IFAD & AfDB focused on small livestock production and vegetable gardens.

communities, JNP is not yet fully gazetted, not demarcated, and not yet equipped with formally adopted management plans and management structures. BBWR has long been gazetted and a management plan has been developed, but the PA is not yet demarcated on the ground and provided with only very basic village-level PA headquarters and only 28 poorly trained and equipped local rangers. KWNP is arguably the best managed PA in the Gambia having received repeated project investment since its establishment in 1991, leading to full on-the-ground demarcation around its perimeter, the construction of PA headquarters and related facilities and housing, the development of a full management plan and business plan, and access points staffed with 39 local rangers; but as indicated above, this is still inadequate to stem increasing pressures.

– Small size of PA, edge effects and risk of fragmentation. The PAs in the Gambia are small, accessible from many sides and surrounded by numerous communities. Through the increasing degradation of ecosystems between PAs, these are also exposed to increasing habitat fragmentation. This calls for the inclusion of further PA areas and of corridors into the national PA network/system, including through an assessment of gaps, risks and opportunities, e.g. related to the national forest parks and community-based forest reserves.

– High resource exploitation and land conversion pressures from surrounding communities due to the perceived lack of alternatives, poor capacity and consequential poor land and natural resource management practices, which include the use of fire for land clearing and the traditional value of large livestock herds. These are key community-related barriers. Relations of DPWM with communities are excellent, however, and in PAs that are operational (such as KWNP), ecosystems are still in a much better condition than outside, reflecting the effectiveness of interventions even at prevailing relatively modest levels. It is important to note that poverty as such is not a key driver/barrier – in fact, biodiversity pressures are highest in those areas where rural populations have graduated to a more mechanised agriculture that provides them with better income, yet at the same time has led to severe resource depletion in the wider landscape with consequent pressures on PA resources.

– Limited integration of environmental sustainability (especially biodiversity, protected areas, sustainable natural resource use – but even sustainable land management practices) into the majority of rural/agricultural development programmes/projects; this is reflected in the type of investments commonly undertaken and largely linked to (a) the productivity and mechanised agriculture-focused training and focus of responsible professionals; (b) limited contribution of credible SLM and biodiversity specialists in agricultural programmes/projects and related planning; and (c) ineffective cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms. This has already in the past led to a misalignment of agricultural development actions with PA management concerns (such as the promotion of rice terraces in critical wetlands in PA core zones).

11. *The proposed alternative scenario, with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project.* To address the aforementioned barriers, the project will work to (a) expand and better connect the cluster of three target PAs (BBWR, JNP, KWNP) and emplace effective management to provide a refuge for national and globally relevant biodiversity and natural ecosystems; and (b) introduce biodiversity-friendly natural resource and land management practices in communities around the three target PAs, to begin restoring vital natural resources into productive landscapes and thereby reduce the pressures local communities exert on the PA system. This will be achieved through the following components:

12. Under **Component 1**, the project will strengthen the management effectiveness in the three largest PAs in the Gambia – JNP, BBWR and KWNP – to address existing and emerging threats. To that aim, two new areas to be added to the national PA estate will be delineated and subsequently legally gazetted: a c. 10,000 ha expansion to the east and west of KWNP, and a c. 5,000 ha expansion of JNP that will connect it to BBWR through a band along the River Gambia. Basic PA offices will be established and adequately equipped and staffed in JNP and BBWR (KWNP already has adequate PA offices) – with institutional and technical capacities being built through targeted training on all relevant aspects of PA operations to ensure that field staff meet necessary competencies (planning, administration, conflict resolution, monitoring, enforcement, etc.). Moreover the on-the-ground boundaries of JNP and BBWR – as well as of the newly added PA areas – will be demarcated on the ground, using a ring of recognisable and valuable/useful tree species forming a clear boundary that local communities respect and protect. Following in-depth community consultations, multi-year PA management and business plans will be prepared in BBWR and JNP and the management plan in KWNP updated; the management plans will provide for: zonation and related regulations for strict protection and sustainable use of natural resources by local communities; PA governance, including co-management and conflict resolution mechanisms; effective law enforcement governing natural resource exploitation and wildlife poaching; and basic ecological monitoring systems for targeted habitats and species. The project will eventually also prepare a revised PA Programme of Work and Action Plan. The process will entail an ecosystem coverage assessment conducted under the project of the current national PA network to determine relevant ecological representation gaps, and an assessment of the forest park estate to identify sites that merit inclusion in the PA system for biodiversity conservation purposes; it will in the process consider the climate change scenarios and biodiversity adaptation measures proposed by the UNDP-WCMC/GEF PARCC project (see the last row in the two tables in Sections A.3. and A.4.) and any relevant ecological gap assessments conducted under RAMPAO (see § 6).

13. Under **Component 2**, the project will focus on the communities surrounding the three above PAs (i.e. in buffer zones) that exert significant pressure on the integrity of these PAs. The targeted stakeholders are primarily farmers and their households, totalling an estimated 70,000 people. Working closely with and through the MOA's National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project (NEMA), the project will introduce biodiversity-friendly sustainable land and natural resource management practices, to reduce the pressures (unsustainable wood/ mangrove extraction; land conversion for shifting cultivation; incidence and severity of wild and forest fires) these communities exert on the targeted PAs; and to begin restoring vital resources into the production landscape matrix, improving natural ecosystem integrity and connectivity. To achieve the latter, the project will establish nurseries and plant suitable fruit, forage, firewood and multi-purpose trees/ vegetation; pilot the latest conservation tillage agriculture; introduce/ establish inter-cropping regimes and nutrient-rich plants and hedges in degraded farmlands; introduce/ establish agro-forestry regimes and village woodlots and shelter belts; revisit fire and grazing practices; replant mangroves in degraded wetlands; pilot new salt-tolerant wet rice varieties to reduce land conversion for dry rice farming; promote / distribute fuel efficient stoves; and increase bee farming and horticulture. Agreements will be entered with local communities that will form the basis of these community-based interventions to be undertaken by the project. Implementation plans will be developed that define: the rights and responsibilities of both communities and project, and areas where community interventions will be implemented; prescriptions for suitable biodiversity-friendly NRM and SLM practices; resource-sharing mechanisms; extension support; and monitoring and compliance mechanisms. Through NEMA the implementation of the above community-based interventions will be a critical thrust of the project. The project will devise a monitoring system to provide relevant and science-based information on the state of natural resources and socio-economic conditions in the target areas. Lastly, the collaboration with NEMA will also catalyse the integration of biodiversity and PA aspects as well as of sustainable land and natural resource management into this large-scale agricultural/ rural development endeavour more widely. It is through the close integration of the here-proposed project with NEMA that more sustainable and biodiversity/PA-friendly strategies and SLM/NRM practices will be promoted and rolled out. As NEMA has substantial resources, including for SLM activities, the comparatively small GEF budget is meant to be catalytic to achieve this integration – through the anticipated co-location of the two projects, supported by targeted studies, concrete collaboration proposals and joint activities.

14. Incremental cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF-TF and co-financing, and the expected global environmental benefits. The following provides details on the incremental rationale underlying the project:

Current situation	Alternative to be put in place by the project	Selected environmental benefits
<p>Regarding the PA estate and related natural resource management: PA system in place and slated for expansion, but subject to various constraints to effective management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DPWM partly disconnected from relevant decision making in other biodiversity-relevant departments and projects such as on rural/ agricultural development and forestry;</li> <li>- PA management absent or exceedingly weak in an important subset of the country's PA system, including KWNP, BBWR and the newly-designated JNP, lacking capacity both for enforcement and for building community-based agreements;</li> <li>- PAs small, exposed to edge effects and fragmentation through further habitat loss in the wider landscape;</li> <li>- Insufficient PA financing;</li> <li>- High natural resource exploitation and land conversion pressures from surrounding communities, leading to: (i) rampant deforestation, in remaining forests/woodlands but also in river-border mangrove wetlands, to provide for domestic wood/ charcoal-based energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Revised PA Programme of Work and Action Plan, with ecosystem coverage assessment of the current national PA network and assessment of the forest park estate to identify sites that merit inclusion in the PA system;</li> <li>- Gazette expanded PA system: increase KWNP area by c. 10,000 ha, and add a 5,000 ha corridor between JNP and BBWR; complete gazettement for JNP;</li> <li>- All three PA fully demarcated on the ground, with adequate infrastructure and management plans in place;</li> <li>- Increased capacity of PA staff trained in planning, accounting, monitoring, enforcement, co-management approaches, etc.;</li> <li>- Involvement of communities in target sites in PA co-management, and adoption of sustainable natural resource management (e.g. sustainable use of mangroves, oysters and wetland rice fields, beekeeping, sustainable use of NTFPs, fire prevention and response);</li> <li>- Biodiversity, PA, NRM and SLM considerations integrated into a key ongoing large-scale rural/agricultural development project (NEMA).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National PA system expanded from 64,276 ha to 79,276 ha (+23%).</li> <li>- Improved management effectiveness of the 3 targeted PAs (JNP, BBWR, KWNP), covering 63,554 ha after expansion.</li> <li>- Extent and quality of globally relevant natural habitats especially closed forests as well as wetlands frequented by resident and migrant bird species maintained or improved.</li> <li>- Population status of several globally significant species maintained or increased, e.g. Dry Zone Mahogany, Muninga, Red Colobus.</li> <li>- Improved land and natural resource management by local communities inside and in buffer of targeted PAs, resulting in a reduction of: unsustainable wood/ mangrove extraction; land conversion for shifting cultivation; and incidence and severity of wild and forest fires.</li> <li>- Protection and restoration of forest cover, habitat integrity and connectivity across the targeted PA cluster, and of ecosystem goods and services within PAs, including: wood,</li> </ul>

and housing/ fencing needs; (ii) slash-and-burn shifting cultivation, and the widespread use of fire; (iii) uncontrolled grazing by and forage collecting for livestock (cattle, sheep, and especially goats).		fish and oyster stocks, fish recruitment zones, biodiversity habitat, tourism attractions, soil protection, water provision (quality and quantity), carbon sequestration.
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15. The indicative co-financing amounts to \$4,820,000 and will be availed by (i) the national government through the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management and the National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project (NEMA - receiving finance from the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Islamic Development Bank) (ii) WWF Gambia, and (iii) UNDP from its own resources.

16. *Innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up.* The setting in The Gambia is still at a rather basic level with regard to institutional capacity and alignment, financing structures, and biodiversity and protected area management, and on the integration of these aspects in rural/agricultural development programmes. It therefore seems most appropriate to focus on activities, outputs and outcomes that have proven to be effective elsewhere in The Gambia and similar countries. Innovative elements comprise most importantly the expected close integration of biodiversity / PA activities with the NEMA project, which will prepare the ground for integrating the challenges of biodiversity loss into agricultural development more widely. Sustainability of the project’s interventions will be promoted through a mix of strategies, principally building on the development of a strong appreciation within the government institutions on the importance of managing an appropriate PA network combined with long-term realisation of the economic and other benefits of PAs. The development of the revised PA Programme of Work and Action Plan and of the financial mechanism work under the current DPWM/World Bank/GEF *Gambia Biodiversity Management and Institutional Strengthening Project* is expected to help support the financing of the PA system. The project will take a highly participatory and consultative approach in the design and implementation of its sustainable resource management outputs to foster ownership over project strategies and results especially from local communities.

17. *Alternatives considered.* The proposed project focuses on the topmost priority issues threatening biodiversity and natural ecosystems in The Gambia. Considering the pressures from local populations and the advanced state of ecosystem degradation around the targeted PAs, a BD intervention based on enhanced PA management involving local communities was judged the most urgent, to safeguard the natural ecosystems and biodiversity present in the existing target PAs and expand these so they include further valuable areas and enhanced connectivity; the work with and through NEMA on community-based natural resource and sustainable land management leverages community support and reduces pressure on these PAs and is therefore a critical accompanying measure. A PA focusing only on the PA component would not address the pressures from communities as effectively. A standalone LD project would not address the immediate threat to the integrity of all three PAs, which are required to protect biodiversity and key ecosystem services that are not provided by agricultural landscapes. Sustainable Forest Management was not considered in the project strategy, most importantly because carbon emission reduction potentials are low in the targeted areas.

**A.2. Stakeholders.** Identify key stakeholders (including civil society organisations, indigenous people, gender groups, and others as relevant) and describe how they will be engaged in project preparation:

18. Under DPWM leadership, GOTG and UNDP supported two national workshops in 2012, where stakeholders were invited to contribute to the planning of the project and to the definition of its objectives. Participants included a wide range of representatives from government, local communities, NGO agencies, private sector and international organizations. In addition, preliminary social assessment activities were conducted and several local stakeholder meetings were held at each of the proposed sites. Local communities and regional authorities expressed strong interest in the project.

Ministry of Environment, Parks and Wildlife (MEPM): Department of Parks and Wildlife Management (DPWM)	MEPW/DPWM will be the leading executing partner. DPWM is in charge of the conservation, management and monitoring and development of biodiversity and wildlife resources in the country, both in and protected areas and in production landscapes. DPWM is the lead government agency for implementing the CBD, and hosts the National Focal Points for the CBD and POWPA/CHM/SBSTTA, as well as for CMS, AEWA, Biosafety and RAMSAR. DPWM has five functional units: Directorate; Conservation Education and Extension Unit; Parks and Protected Area Management Unit; Research, Crop Damage Assessment and Control Unit; and Surveillance Unit. DPWM is a member of ANRWG of MOA and is pivotal for better integrating biodiversity conservation and PA management matters into land use planning in general and into agricultural and sustainable land management around PAs.
National Environment	The ANRWG hosted by NEA is the umbrella body for land use-related development initiatives including



Agency (NEA) & Agriculture and Natural Resources Working Group (ANRWG)	PA-related matters – and will serve as the project steering committee.
Ministry of Agriculture (MOA): Soil and Water Management Unit (SWMU) and Department of Agricultural Services (DOAS)	Responsible for supporting and promoting the agricultural industry and for establishing a coherent legal, regulatory and enabling framework for agricultural development. The MOA and its agencies are therefore critically important for integrating biodiversity matters into agricultural development projects at all stages – in conjunction with the ANRWG. The DOAS, responsible for Gambia’s overall agro-product is also relevant in the promotion of sustainable land and waterscape management and the adoption of value addition initiative to enhance market value of products. The MOA hosts and implement a variety of agricultural development projects most notably NEMA with which this project here will closely integrate (see § 6). NEMA is also the project’s greatest co-financier.
Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources: Department of Fisheries (DOFI)	DOFI plans, coordinates and executes actions in the sector, develops fisheries management plans and elaborates the necessary laws and regulatory mechanisms. Fisheries are relevant in the context of the project because of the importance of the targeted wetlands for fisheries resources in terms of both utilisation and recruitment (oysters, fish, etc.). DOFI will be involved through the ANRWG i.e. the project steering committee.
Department of Forestry (DOF) at the Office of the President	DOF is responsible for marketing forest products, and for managing the forest resources in the country – in general as well as in national forest parks and reserves including under joint or devolved forest management schemes. DOF will be involved through the ANRWG i.e. the project steering committee and be consulted on technical matters. DOF will also be involved when forest parks and reserves are assessed with regard to biodiversity conservation / PA designation potential.
Municipalities and local authorities in the targeted PAs communities	Will be involved through local consultative committees and at national level through ANRWG.
NGOs, national and regional associations and local community groups	Increasingly play an important role in environmental conservation in The Gambia. Locally relevant groups will participate in the design and implementation of the project’s site-level components, such as the establishment and/or strengthening of community-based natural resource management agreements and on PA co-management plans. WWF Gambia and other biodiversity-related associations active in the cluster of three targeted PAs will be involved from the PPG stage. WWF Gambia is also a project co-financier through an emerging project.
Local communities, women and vulnerable groups	Key participants in and beneficiaries of the project, they will be involved throughout its duration - in the design and implementation of local interventions to ensure their equitability and sustainability. Gender and vulnerable groups, and related social issues, will be fully considered, and gender accountability is a cross-cutting issue that will be tracked as part of the M&E system. Special attention will be paid to gender issues in developing socioeconomic indicators, and in the capacity-building activities. General benefits resulting from enhanced natural resources management will directly benefit women in particular, who bear a significant share of the workload in rural households.

19. The Steering Committee of the project will integrate representatives from: the Ministry of Environment, Park and Wildlife Management; the Ministry of Agriculture and NEMA; the Director of Parks and Wildlife Management and CBD NFP; the Director of the National Environment Agency and GEF OFF; the Director of Water Resources and UNFCCC NFP; the Director of Fisheries; the Director of Community Development; the Gambia Tourism Board; the PA Committee Chairmen of pilot sites; a Park Warden of pilot sites; the Attorney General and Ministry of Justice; the Director of Forestry and UNCCD NFP; the NGO/CSO community; the UNDP Gambia Energy & Environment Analyst.

**A.3. Risks. 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)**

20. A listing of the main risks, risk ranking and risk mitigation measures is presented below.

Risk	Rating	Risk Mitigation Measures
The Government of The Gambia fails to mobilise and allocate sufficient political will and resources to maintain the protected area system and introduce effective	Medium-High	GOTG has expressed its commitment to the project; the project falls within a number of its priorities, especially with regard to the promotion of SLM. GOTG only recently announced investment of \$100 million in agriculture by 2020 and a share of this will be directed to sustainable practices, which will reduce the pressures on natural resources and ecosystems and the PA system. Furthermore, PA system co-management will be driven by invested local people trained by this project. The project will also construct linkages between communities and government to encourage continued budget allocations and provide institutional

sustainable land and natural resource management regimes.		mechanisms for direct participation by civil society in communication of needs and requests for sufficient support. Finally, the project will build on the ongoing work of the DPWM/World Bank/GEF <i>Gambia Biodiversity Management and Institutional Strengthening Project</i> on financing options and mechanisms to identify possible income sources.
Institutional programming among key agencies, ministries and other stakeholders and partners is not properly aligned, thereby undermining the coherence of agricultural/community development projects in the target areas and protected area governance in particular.	Low-Medium	The project will closely coordinate if not be embedded in the MOA's large and well-resourced NEMA project, with and through which it will work in local communities on sustainable land and natural resource management. This is expected to facilitate a good coherence of this and similar large development initiatives with the project's biodiversity / PA objectives. Mechanisms for conflict resolution will be established from the outset; the monitoring and evaluation framework will be sufficiently sensitive to determine partnership functionality.
Participation of all key stakeholders, particularly communities, is not achieved; meaningful and effective partnerships not achieved	Low-Medium	Tentative target communities have already expressed their strong interest in the project. The monitoring and evaluation framework will be sufficiently sensitive to determine partnership functionality including that with local communities; strong and supportive framework for the project management team with a meaningful M&E framework that feeds back into annual work plans.
Livelihood dependency of resource user communities may be detrimental to conservation and sustainable land management actions	Medium-High	The community-based collaborative management approach will comprehensively address the issue by specific programmatic interventions that work to maintain or improve environmental services while simultaneously identifying socially acceptable and environmentally benign income opportunities for community members. The DPWM has valuable and positive on-the-ground experience to corroborate the viability of the approach.
Absorptive capacities in the government, especially within the lead executing agency, may be limited and will delay or hinder implementation of project activities	Medium-High	Critical training will be provided at the onset of the project to the lead agency on the UNDP-GEF procedures, results-based management and implementation. The project is moreover expected to be embedded in the larger and well-resourced NEMA project of the Ministry of Agriculture, assuring positive synergies and opportunities for professional exchange and synergies and economies of scale.
The diverse impacts of climate change on natural and productive ecosystems and species-level biodiversity may undermine the consecution of project objectives	Medium	This is an unavoidable risk, any impacts of which can only be mitigated, to the best degree possible, by integrating climate change in the planning and execution of project activities from the start. In doing so the project will build – inter alia – on the recommendations emanating of the NEA/UNEP-WCMC/GEF project <i>Evolution of Protected Area Systems with regard to Climate Change in the West Africa Region</i> , considering most notably (at the PA system and/or individual PA levels): adaptive planning and management in a context of growing climate-induced ecosystem changes; increasing/restoring and diversifying available habitats in preparation for ecosystem change; adapting the notion of alien species; promoting/assisting target species dispersal such as by enhanced habitat permeability and connectivity; promoting maintenance of ecosystem functions; and reducing climate change impacts through direct management measures (such as preventive fire management or manipulation of microclimates by modifying vegetation structure). In the process, the climate change resilience areas identified by this regional project will be considered in the context of PA system planning and the related ecological coverage assessment. It must be highlighted though that no country-specific risk mitigation options have to date been formulated by the project for The Gambia and that important questions remain regarding national-scale impacts of climate change and the most appropriate biodiversity adaptation measures; any new results or recommendations in this context of the NEA/UNEP-WCMC/GEF project will be considered as they emerge. At the same time, 6 of the 9 PAs in The Gambia have already included some climate change aspects in their management plans.

**A.4. Coordination.** Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF financed and other initiatives:

21. The project builds on and will use relevant lessons from the following ongoing or planned other relevant projects:

Initiative and Objective	Coordination with project
<p><i>Gambia Biodiversity Management and Institutional Strengthening Project</i> of DPWM/World Bank/GEF (GEF # 3961, \$945,000 GEF, 2010-2014), set to (i) strengthen field effectiveness of biodiversity and protected areas management, (ii) develop a long-term sustainable financing vision and (iii) develop capacity for management of PAs and biodiversity.</p>	<p>The results of the DPWM/WB/GEF project as of today are: (i) regarding the construction of PA management infrastructures, in both target PAs (KWNP and Tanji Bird Reserve) mud houses were renovated and equipped with solar powered borehole and furniture for them to be used as office and education centre; (ii) PA committee meetings were organised every three months; (iii) METTs were conducted including in the specially targeted two PAs; (iv) monitoring of selected species and habitats in all PAs (however so far more on an ad hoc basis and by poorly equipped staff, wherefore the results lack scientific rigour and are of limited value for PA management); (v) the establishment of a Trust Fund (TF) for which an operational manual was developed and an initial capital of \$40,000 from the WB/GEF project was placed in the TF account; (vi) a study on sustainable PA financing, proposing new mechanisms such as trophy hunting and tourism visitation to generate sustainable revenue for the PA system; (vii) support to community livelihood including through bee keeping woodlots and the creation of waterholes.</p> <p>The here-proposed project can be expected to start after the closure of this DPWM/WB/GEF project, and will therefore build on its achievements and bring the PA system consolidation to the next level. It will strengthen PA management in three key PAs and integrate biodiversity and PA concerns into land management practices implemented through a key agricultural development project. The here-proposed project is expected to benefit particularly from the DPWM/WB/GEF project's work on institutional and individual capacity development and on financial mechanisms (with regard to project sustainability aspects) as well as from the presence of the management teams already established in Kiang West NP, which will be maintained by government.</p>
<p><i>Participatory Integrated Watershed Management Project</i> (PIWAMP, \$18.9m) and connected <i>Sustainable Land Management Project</i> (SLMP, \$4.4m), of MOA, GEF/IFAD and AfDB. Due to close in 2014. PIWAMP focuses on community-based watershed management, with elements on increasing land productivity and reducing soil erosion. The SLMP add-on grant was provided specifically for integrating the biodiversity and ecosystem function aspects into PIWAMP.</p>	<p>PIWAMP and SLMP have delivered primarily on the construction of access roads to markets and rice paddies; some local capacity development and institutional strengthening on SLM have taken place but the proposed national and regional level Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Platforms have not been established. No evidence was found for larger-scale results on conservation agriculture, improved ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation. Both NEMA and the here-proposed project will build on PIWAMP and SLMP, looking at lessons learned and successes/failures. The here-proposed project's key added value will be that it will be directly linked to a reduction of threats on PAs and improved PA management effectiveness, by focusing on areas adjacent to existing and future PAs, creating a more explicit link with biodiversity.</p>
<p><i>Forest &amp; Farm Facility</i> (FFF, Phase 2 launched in 2012, an estimated \$700,000 for the Gambia) and hosted by NEA/ANRWG and involving FAO, the World Bank, IUCN and IIED; it will work on sustainable farm and forest management, mainly by supporting the DOF in the designation and setup of further community forests, wood lots and orchards.</p>	<p>Information exchanges regarding community-based land and natural resource management interventions undertaken by FFF.</p>
<p><i>Evolution of Protected Area Systems with regard to Climate Change in the West Africa Region</i> (short title: <i>Protected Areas Resilient to Climate Change - PARCC</i>) of GEF/UNEP-WCMC. This multi-partner regional project will invest c. \$3 million for the Gambia to assess and integrate the impacts of climate change into protected area planning and management and build related capacity.</p>	<p>This project is hosted by the National Environment Agency and ANRWG. Due to close in late 2015, the PARCC project and its outcomes will be consulted on matters relating to climate change impacts on The Gambia's PA system, to mitigate the risk that climate change poses to the consecution of project objectives (see the Table in Section A.3. Risks). This applies especially to the management planning in the targeted cluster of PAs (JPN and expansion, BBWR and KWNP and expansion) and to the PA ecosystem coverage assessment under Component 1.</p>

## **B. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH:**

### **B.1. National strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, if applicable, i.e. NAPAs, NAPs, NBSAPs, national communications, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, Biennial Update Reports, etc.:**

22. The project will contribute to the implementation of key relevant international environmental agreements in The Gambia – most notably the CBD (1994). The project is furthermore in line with the country's nationally formulated priorities and strategies: the **National Mission Statement *The Gambia Incorporated Vision 2020*** sees “a well balanced ecosystem” as fundamental to achieving the national goal of Middle Income Country status by 2020. Under the **Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE, 2012-2015)** the government aims to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. The **Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP-II, 2009-2015)** calls for “the protection of existing forest and vegetative cover... [and the] conservation of coastal wetlands”. The **Agricultural and Natural Resources Policy (ANRP, 2009-2015)** which amongst its four strategic objectives lists the “Sustainable and effective management of natural resources” and led to the creation of the ANRWG at NEA. The **National Climate Change Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA, 2007)** recognises the need to promote and strengthen integrated management of the coastal and terrestrial zones and to preserve biological diversity and ecological assets. The **Gambia Biodiversity Policy 2003** and **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP, 1999)** amongst its priorities asks to “discourage uncontrolled extension of agricultural land into ...virgin forests, wetlands, marginal areas and other environmentally sensitive areas” and “develop sound grazing management system”. On PAs, the NBSAP moreover calls for improved protected area management effectiveness and an increase the total protected land area from 4.9% to 10% by 2020.

23. The project will equally contribute towards the achievement of a number of CBD Aichi Targets: Targets 5, 11 and 12, by increasing the coverage of the national PA system and further strengthening the management of existing PAs, and thereby reducing the loss, degradation and fragmentation of natural habitats and forests, and enhancing the conservation prospects of globally threatened species; and Targets 7 and 14, by working towards more sustainable land management (agricultural and grazing/browsing practices), thereby safeguarding and restoring ecosystem services vital for local populations.

### **B.2. GEF focal area and/or fund(s) strategies, eligibility criteria and priorities:**

24. The project responds to the significant and growing pressure on natural resources and conversion of natural ecosystems in the Gambia, including in the country's protected areas, which is increasingly undermining the status of biodiversity and related ecosystem services. The project therefore directly addresses BD-1: *Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems*, to safeguard the most important areas and biodiversity by strengthening the management of and expanding a key subset of existing PAs in biodiversity-rich regions in the Gambia. This will be combined with the adoption of more sustainable natural resource utilisation practices. The project will build programmatically on work initiated through a GEF-funded PA early action grant that led to the creation of the Gambia National Protected Area Partnership and Network (GamPAN).

### **B.3. The GEF Agency's comparative advantage for implementing this project:**

25. UNDP, as the Development Programme of the United Nations, is an active partner in efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and has a key role to play in making the trajectory of development more sustainable. The particular objectives of the here-proposed project are fully reflected in its Ecosystems and Biodiversity Programme with its two principal Signature Programmes “1. Integrating biodiversity and ecosystem management into development planning and production sector activities to safeguard biodiversity and maintain ecosystem services that sustain human wellbeing” and “2. Unlocking the potential of protected areas, including indigenous and community conserved areas, to conserve biodiversity while contributing to sustainable development”. The UNDP Country Office in The Gambia is a key player in sustainable environmental management in the country and has been working with the national government for the last 10 years to strengthen the technical and managerial capacities of environment-related institutions such as National Environment Agency, and the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management. During the period 2003-2013, the CO supported the updating of the Gambia Environment Action Plan and State of the Environment Report. The here-proposed project is consistent with the 2012-2016 UNDAF Outcomes 3.0 *Environmental sustainability and disaster risk reduction systems and services operationalised* and 3.1 *National policies and laws available on low*


carbon emission and climate resilient development pathways and natural resources management developed and implemented. The proposed and ongoing activities equally fall under 2012-2016 CPAP, particularly Outcome 2 Sustainable livelihood security enhanced for disadvantaged groups through the promotion of income diversification opportunities and better management of environmental resources. The UNDP Country Office CO has a proven track record of managing and implementing environment and energy projects. The team is administratively and technically supported by the UNDP-GEF Regional Service Centres in Bratislava and Addis Ababa.

### PART III: APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT BY GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT(S) AND GEF AGENCY

#### A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Name	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/dd/yyyy)
Ndey Sireng Bakurin	Ag. Executive Director/ GEF Focal Point	National Environment Agency	12 December 2013

#### B. GEF AGENCY CERTIFICATION

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF policies and procedures and meets the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF criteria for project identification and preparation.					
Agency Coordinator, Agency name	Signature	Date	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email
Adriana Dinu, UNDP/GEF Executive Coordinator and Director a.i		6 March 2014	Yves de Soye, UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor, Ecosystems & Biodiversity	+421 911 360 250	<a href="mailto:yves.desoye@undp.org">yves.desoye@undp.org</a>

### ANNEX 1: NATIONAL PARKS AND NATURE RESERVES IN THE GAMBIA

Protected areas of the Gambia					
#	Name	International designation	Date of gazettelement	Location (Region)	Area (ha)
1	Abuko Nature Reserve	IBA	1968	West Coast	134
2	River Gambia National Park		1976	Central River	589
3	Niumi National Park	Ramsar, IBA	1986	North Bank	7,758
4	Kiang West National Park	IBA	1987	Lower River	11,526
5	Tanji River Coastal Bird Reserve	IBA	1993	West Coast	612
6	Bao Bolong Wetland Reserve	Ramsar, IBA	1996	North Bank	22,000
7	Tanbi Wetlands Complex National Park	Ramsar, IBA	2001	West Coast	6,304
8	Bolong Fenyo Community Reserve		2008	North Bank	325
9	Jokadu National Park		Under preparation	North Bank	15,028
<b>TOTAL (ha)</b>					<b>64,276</b>
National territory land and sea (ha)					1,125,900
%					5.7%
Land area (ha)					1,000,000
%					6.4%