



GEF-6 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

PROJECT TYPE: Full-sized Project

TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

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PART I: Project Information

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Project Title: | Land/Seascape planning and restoration to improve ecosystem services, and livelihoods, expand and effectively manage protected areas | | |
| Country(ies): | The Gambia | GEF Project ID: ¹ | 9772 |
| GEF Agency(ies): | UNEP | GEF Agency Project ID: | 01565 |
| Other Executing Partner(s): | National Environment Authority (NEA) | Submission Date: | March 31, 2017 |
| GEF Focal Area(s): | Multi-focal Areas | Project Duration (Months) | 60 |
| Integrated Approach Pilot | IAP-Cities <input type="checkbox"/> IAP-Commodities <input type="checkbox"/> IAP-Food Security <input type="checkbox"/> | Corporate Program: SGP | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Name of parent program: | N/A | Agency Fee (\$) | 536,245 |

A. INDICATIVE FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER PROGRAM STRATEGIES²

| Objectives/Programs (Focal Areas, Integrated Approach Pilot, Corporate Programs) | Trust Fund | (in \$) | |
|--|------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| | | GEF Project Financing | Co-financing |
| LD 2 - Programme 3 | GEF TF | 1,548,579 | 5,500,000 |
| LD 3 - Programme 4 | GEF TF | 1,400,000 | 4,800,000 |
| BD 1 - Programme 2 | GEF TF | 2,696,106 | 9,497,260 |
| Total Project Cost | | 5,644,685 | 19,797,260 |

B. INDICATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Project Objective: To create an enabling environment for The Gambia in building national capacity to lead the reform of land use and marine spatial planning policies and to implement land/seascape level management that conserves ecosystem services in productive and protected land/seascapes

| Project Components | Financing Type ³ | Project Outcomes | Project Outputs | Trust Fund | (in \$) | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--|------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | | | | | GEF Project Financing | Co-financing |
| 1. Improved planning and enforcement system to identify and address causes of land degradation (LD) and biodiversity (BD) loss | TA | <p>Enabling institutional / policy environment established for mainstreaming BD conservation and SLM principles in land/sea and resource use policies and planning processes</p> <p>Improved capacity of central and local government institutions and other stakeholders to prevent, mitigate and offset negative impacts on BD and ecosystem services, measured by increased score in adapted Capacity</p> | <p>1.1: Situation analysis of current land/sea uses, land/sea use policies and land use options carried out with modern tools and technologies to assess their alignment with sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation approaches</p> <p>1.2: One (1) National Land/Sea Use and one (1) Local Government Area policies to take account of SLM approaches and local community objectives are revised and available for stakeholders consideration</p> <p>1.3: 3 Training sessions in participatory spatial planning (including conflict resolution) for government officials of national and decentralised institutions and local public authorities and communities</p> | GEFTF | 500,000 | 2,000,000 |

¹ Project ID number will be assigned by GEFSEC and to be entered by Agency in subsequent document submissions.

² When completing Table A, refer to the excerpts on [GEF 6 Results Frameworks for GETF, LDCF and SCCF](#) and [CBIT guidelines](#).

³ Financing type can be either investment or technical assistance.

| | | Development Scorecard ⁴ | | | | |
|--|-----|---|--|-------|-----------|-----------|
| 2. Enabling framework for districts within Kuntaur LGA to implement SLM practices across landscapes | INV | <p>INRM approaches enabled that reduce land degradation across forests, rangeland, and arable land</p> <p>Enhanced local capacities emplaced for compliance and enforcement of sustainable forest and land management and mainstreaming of forest connectivity in the Kuntaur LGA</p> | <p>2.1: Strategic Environmental Assessment completed for Kuntaur LGA that documents land degradation and biodiversity loss and provides recommendations for avoiding and mitigating impacts</p> <p>2.2: Spatially-based decision-making system for Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) established</p> <p>2.3: Integrated Land Use Management Plans (ILUMPs) developed for the 5 districts within Kuntaur LGA</p> <p>2.4: 5 Multi-sectoral stakeholder committees established in the five districts to facilitate dialogue on SLM and BD conservation by year 2020</p> <p>2.5: 5 Training and awareness raising programmes for INRM adoption and dissemination developed and implemented at local level by year 2020</p> | GEFTF | 900,000 | 4,500,000 |
| 3. Implementation of ILUMPs and strengthening of PA management within Kuntaur LGA produce landscape-level management system to achieve SLM and BD objectives | TA | <p>Landscape level management of PAs / ICCAs increases protection of ecosystem services and BD across 10,589 ha</p> <p>Unabated provision of ecosystem services such as water supply, flood prevention, soil productivity, and biodiversity conservation as a result of SLM activities and reforestation</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> <i>Increase in protected areas coverage in Kuntaur LGA with 10,000 ha</i> <i>Increase in METT score for newly established PAs and the River Gambia National Park</i> <i>Stable populations of known threatened species (species⁵, baseline and target to</i></p> | <p>3.1: Maps published of PAs, KBAs, Community Forests, and important areas for BD connectivity</p> <p>3.2: Zoning Plan developed and implemented for Kuntaur LGA covering 100,908 ha resulting in increased ecological connectivity between and within different priority biodiversity habitats</p> <p>3.3: River Gambia National Park (589 ha) management effectiveness is increased of about 30% from the baseline (to be established via the tracking tools during the PPG)</p> <p>3.4: Four Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) covering 10,000 ha established and capacitated</p> <p>3.5: SLM measures implemented in line with the developed ILUMPs improving productivity and sustainability of rangelands and farmlands in an area of 1,000 hectares of agricultural land.</p> <p>3.6: Proven SLM tools documented and disseminated for large-scale adoption</p> <p>3.7: Two Datasets on (i) socio-economic and (ii) environmental performance of project and baseline activities in Kuntaur LGA</p> | GEFTF | 2,692,030 | 7,500,000 |

⁴ To be developed during PPG

⁵ Could possibly include *Trichechus senegalensis* (VU), *Pan troglodytes* (EN), and *Hippopotamus amphibius* (VU)
The Gambia LD/BD PIF

| | | | | | | |
|---|----|--|---|-------|------------------|-------------------|
| | | <i>be established during PPG]</i> | available, validated by stakeholders and adopted by the GoG | | | |
| 4. Expansion of PA estate in ecologically important areas of The Gambia | TA | Creation of two new Marine Protected Areas increases protection of ecosystem services and BD across 18,000 ha <i>Indicators: Increase in marine protected areas in The Gambia Increase in METT score for newly established MPAs</i> | 4.1: Kartong Allahein River Marine Protected Area (3,000 ha) established and operating as a result of land use and marine spatial planning processes completed. 4.2: Labour Canyon Marine Protected Area (15,000 ha) established and operating as a result of marine spatial planning processes. | | 1,283,860 | 4,854,533 |
| Subtotal | | | | | 5,375,890 | 18,854,533 |
| Project Management Cost (PMC) ⁶ | | | | GEFTF | 268,795 | 942,727 |
| Total Project Cost | | | | | 5,644,685 | 19,797,260 |

For multi-trust fund projects, provide the total amount of PMC in Table B, and indicate the split of PMC among the different trust funds here: (NA)

C. INDICATIVE SOURCES OF CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY NAME AND BY TYPE, IF AVAILABLE

| Sources of Co-financing | Name of Co-financier | Type of Co-financing | Amount (\$) |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------|-------------|
| Recipient Government | National Environment Agency | In-Kind | 500,000 |
| Recipient Government | National Environment Agency – Environment Fund | Grants | 4,000,000 |
| Recipient Government | Funds for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) | Grants | 2,000,000 |
| Recipient Government | National Forestry Fund (NFF) | Grants | 2,000,000 |
| Recipient Government | Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Water Resources, Parks & Fisheries | In-Kind | 300,000 |
| Recipient Government | Ministry of Forestry (under the Office of The President) | In-Kind | 400,000 |
| Recipient Government | Ministry of Regional Administration and Lands | Grants | 1,000,000 |
| Recipient Government | Natural Resources Consulting, member of the ANR working Group | In- Kind | 200,000 |
| Recipient Government | National Agricultural Research Institute | In-Kind | 300,000 |
| Recipient Government | National Agricultural Sample Survey | In-Kind | 500,000 |
| Donor Agencies | National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project | Grants | 2,000,000 |
| Donor Agencies | AfDB – FASDEP: Food and Agriculture Development Project (NEA Execute the Monitoring Component of the Project) | Grants | 1,000,000 |
| Donor Agencies | Action Against Desertification (under the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative- GGWSSI) | Grants | 1,000,000 |
| Donor Agencies | Programme Building Resilience Against Food and Nutritional Insecurity in the Sahel | Grants | 1,000,000 |
| Donor Agencies | Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) | Grants | 1,000,000 |
| Recipient Government | Brikama Area Council | Grants | 300,000 |
| Recipient Government | Mansakonko Area Council | Grants | 300,000 |
| Recipient Government | Janjangbureh Area Council | Grants | 300,000 |
| Recipient Government | Basse Area Council | Grants | 300,000 |
| Recipient Government | Kuntaur Area Council | Grants | 300,000 |
| Recipient Government | Kerewan Area Council | Grants | 300,000 |
| CSO | Association of Farmers, Educators and Traders (AFET) | In-Kind | 100,000 |
| CSO | National Association of Credit Cooperative Union (NACCUFAG) | In-Kind | 100,000 |
| CSO | Kombo Foni Forest Association (KOMFFORA) | In-Kind | 100,000 |
| CSO | National Forestry Platform | In-kind | 100,000 |
| CSO | ADWAC | In-kind | 100,000 |
| CSO | Stay Green Foundation | In-kind | 97,260 |

⁶ For GEF Project Financing up to \$2 million, PMC could be up to 10% of the subtotal; above \$2 million, PMC could be up to 5% of the subtotal. PMC should be charged proportionately to focal areas based on focal area project financing amount in Table D below.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Private Sector | Kharafi | Grants | 100,000 |
| Private Sector | Mukhtara Holdings | Grants | 100,000 |
| Total Co-financing | | | 19,797,260 |

D. INDICATIVE TRUST FUND RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), COUNTRY(IES), FOCAL AREA AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS ^{a)}

| GEF Agency | Trust Fund | Country/ Regional/ Global | Focal Area | Programming of Funds | (in \$) | | |
|----------------------------|------------|------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | GEF Project Financing (a) | Agency Fee (b) ^{b)} | Total (c)=a+b |
| UNEP | GEF | The Gambia | Land Degradation | | 2,948,579 | 280,115 | 3,228,694 |
| UNEP | GEF | The Gambia | Biodiversity | | 2,696,106 | 256,130 | 2,952,236 ⁷ |
| Total GEF Resources | | | | | 5,644,685 | 536,245 | 6,180,930 |

a) Refer to the Fee Policy for GEF Partner Agencies.

E. PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)⁸

Is Project Preparation Grant requested? Yes No If no, skip item E.

PPG AMOUNT REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), TRUST FUND, COUNTRY(IES) AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS

| Project Preparation Grant amount requested: \$91,324 | | | | | PPG Agency Fee: \$8,676 | | |
|--|------------|------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| GEF Agency | Trust Fund | Country/ Regional/ Global | Focal Area | Programming of Funds | (in \$) | | |
| | | | | | PPG (a) | Agency Fee ⁹ (b) | Total (c)=a+b |
| UNEP | GEF | The Gambia | Land Degradation | | 47,704 | 4,532 | 52,236 |
| UNEP | GEF | The Gambia | Biodiversity | | 43,620 | 4,144 | 47,764 |
| Total PPG Amount | | | | | 91,324 | 8,676 | 100,000 |

F. PROJECT'S TARGET CONTRIBUTIONS TO GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS¹⁰

Provide the expected project targets as appropriate.

| Corporate Results | Replenishment Targets | Project Targets |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society | Improved management of landscapes and seascapes covering 300 million hectares | 28,589 Hectares ¹¹ |
| 2. Sustainable land management in production systems (agriculture, rangelands, and forest landscapes) | 120 million hectares under sustainable land management | 1,500 Hectares ¹² |

PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

1. Project Description

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

⁷ US\$1 million from the LD Focal Area GEF-6 Country allocation has been allocated to the BD Focal Area using marginal adjustment rule. Reference GEF/C.47/Inf.08 GEF Indicative STAR Allocations, Page 1, Bullet 4: "Further, as agreed by the Council in May 2014, countries with total STAR allocations of less than US\$7 million will have full flexibility to program the allocation across the three focal areas. In GEF-6, 49 countries will benefit from this flexibility rule. Countries above this threshold will have an allowed marginal adjustment of US\$ 2 million"

⁸ PPG requested amount is determined by the size of the GEF Project Financing (PF) as follows: Up to \$50k for PF up to \$2m (for MSP); up to \$100k for PF up to \$3m; \$150k for PF up to \$6m; \$200k for PF up to \$10m; and \$300k for PF above \$10m. On an exceptional basis, PPG amount may differ upon detailed discussion and justification with the GEFSEC.

⁹ PPG fee percentage follows the percentage of the Agency fee over the GEF Project Financing amount requested.

¹⁰ Provide those indicator values in this table to the extent applicable to your proposed project. Progress in programming against these targets for the projects per the *Corporate Results Framework* in the [GEF-6 Programming Directions](#), will be aggregated and reported during mid-term and at the conclusion of the replenishment period.

¹¹ Area of River Gambia NP (589 ha), new Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (10,000 ha), and new Kartong Allahein River MPA (3,000 ha) and Labour Canyon MPA (15,000 ha)

¹² Agricultural land under SLM (1,000 ha) and degraded land restored / reforested (500 ha)

Country Overview

The Gambia is a small, narrow country enclosed by the Atlantic Ocean in the west and Senegal on the three remaining sides. The Gambia is less than 48.2 km wide at its widest point, with a total area of 11,295 km² and a generally flat terrain, with the highest point only 53m above sea level. With a population of 1,856,417 million¹³ in 2013, the Gambia is one of the most densely populated countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (population density in 2013 was 176.1 per km²). From 2003-2013 the population grew at a rate of 3.1% per year; at this rate the population is expected to nearly double in 21 years. The Gambia is a low-income country; according to the World Bank, GNP per capita in 2012 was USD 510, and around one third of the population lives below the international poverty line of US\$1.25 a day¹⁴. The country's human development index (HDI) in 2014 was 0.441, ranking it 172 out of 187 countries; poverty rates are higher (73.9%) in rural areas than urban (32.7%)¹⁵. From 2006-2012, Gambia's annual GDP growth rate was between 5-6%. The Gambia has a liberal, market-based economy characterized by traditional subsistence agriculture, a historic reliance on groundnuts for export earnings, a re-export trade built up around its ocean port, and a significant tourism industry. Services, especially the tourism sector, account for around 59% of GDP, while industry accounts for another 8%. Agriculture accounts for roughly 30% of GDP and employs about 70% of the labour force. Within agriculture, peanut production accounts for 61.9% of GDP, other crops 8.3%, livestock 5.3%, fishing 1.8%, and forestry 0.5%. The majority of Gambian farmers are agrarian wage earners and are responsible for about 40% of the total agricultural production in the country. The limited amount of manufacturing is primarily agriculture-based (e.g. peanut processing, bakeries, a brewery, and a tannery). Even before the political crisis that began in late 2016, a significant percentage of The Gambia's population was in crisis. One study in 2013 estimated that at least 370,000 people are in need of either immediate humanitarian assistance or remain vulnerable and require some sort of support to strengthen their resilience to future crises¹⁶. Malnutrition is widespread, being most prevalent in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Kuntaur, Janjanbureh, Basse and Kerewan (all above 10%).

Policy & Institutional Context

In 1996, the Government of The Gambia declared the long-term development goal of achieving middle-income country status by 2020 ("The Gambia Incorporated Vision 2020"). Following the adoption of Vision 2020, a series of major sector policies and strategies have been developed with the overall objective of improving and sustaining measurable levels of food and nutrition security and effective management of the environment and the natural resource base; these include the Gambia Environment Action Plan (GEAP), the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) policy, the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the Fisheries Policy, and the Forestry Policy. In turn, all of these policies fed into the medium-term national development strategy and investment plan known as the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) developed in 2012, which aims to improve livelihoods and food security, and reduce the poverty of populations that depend on the Gambia's natural resources (including rangeland, forests, fisheries, and wildlife) through sustainable management and use of these resources.

At the institutional level, the mandate of the *National Environment Agency* (NEA) is largely one of coordination, advice and consultation, including overseeing implementation of the GEAP, as well as overseeing environmental quality and monitoring standards and controlling the importation and use of pesticides and hazardous chemicals. The *Ministry of Agriculture* and the *Ministry of Environment* have traditionally had the most direct role in land-use and management, and are responsible for policies, plans and programs that ensure sustainable land management. The *National Agricultural Research Institute* (NARI) manages an agricultural research system that develops appropriate technologies (i.e. integrated pest management, biological pest control mechanisms, soil fertility amendment strategies etc.) for farmers. The *Department of Parks and Wildlife Management* (DPWM) is the government agency responsible for the protection and the management of the nation's wildlife resources, and has jurisdiction over wildlife both within and outside of wildlife protected areas. The *Department of Forestry* is mandated to manage 30% of the total land area under forest with a view to enhancing environmental protection through minimizing soil degradation and erosion, maintaining river bank stability, protecting wetlands and improving, conserving and preserving biodiversity. Other agencies with responsibilities relevant to the proposed project include the departments of *Community Development*, *Livestock Services*, *Water Resources*, *Agricultural Services*, *Fisheries*, and *Physical Planning*, as well as the *National Disaster Management Agency* (NDMA) and the *Gambia Bureau of Statistics* (GBOS). The *National Environment Management Council* (NEMC) has the overarching role of

¹³ Gambia Bureau of Statistics (2014) *The Gambia 2013 Population and Housing Census Preliminary Results*, Government of The Gambia

¹⁴ Human Development Indices. Table 3: Human and income poverty, p.35. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDI-2008.EN-Tables.pdf>

¹⁵ UNDP, 2014. *The Gambia National Human Development Report 2014: Youth Development*.

¹⁶ Based on projections of food insecurity situation following an October 2013 assessment conducted by the Prevention and Management of Food Crises Network (PREGEC), as well as other factors such as increases in commodity prices; resurgence of epidemics; prevalence of natural disasters; chronic shortages and limited access to basic social services.

ensuring that development policies, plans, programs, and projects fully consider environmental management needs, and the council functions as an inter-ministerial organ to guide and support sustainable environmental development. Under the NEMC, the *Agriculture and Natural Resources Working Group (ANR-WG)* is responsible for the coordination and harmonization of cross-sectoral natural resources development issues, and is therefore of immediate importance for SLM measures, and the *National Water Resources Council (NWRC)* is responsible for overseeing national water resource development policies and related projects.

Local level administration in rural areas is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Local Administration, Traditional Rulers and Lands, which supervises Governors at the regional level, Head Chiefs (Seyfolu) at the district level, and Village Heads (Alkalolu). The country is divided into eight Local Government Areas (LGAs); two of these are the City of Banjul and the Municipality of Kanifing (which collectively form Greater Banjul), while the other six LGAs cover the rest of the country. Each LGA is under the management of a Local Government Authority or Council, which include elected members as well as representatives of traditional groups (Seyfo and Alkalo representatives), persons representing women's and youth groups, and various nominated members representing local, commercial and social interest groups. LGA councils are empowered to raise local revenues and to execute infrastructure and development projects, including for environmental preservation. The Local Government Act provides for the creation of Natural Resources Management Committees to be established by each authority to enhance the decentralization of natural management. The Committees are yet to be established, though each region has a natural resources and environment working group. The Regional Coordinating Committee (RCC) is at the centre of decentralized development planning and is designated to assume a coordinating role in natural resource management and protection.

Biodiversity & Ecological Zones

Despite its small size, The Gambia is endowed with rich and varied ecological systems – closed and open woodlands, trees and shrub savannah, wetland ecosystems, grassland savannah, marine and coastal ecosystems and agricultural ecosystems. The River Gambia, which is over 1,130 km long, originates in the Fouta Djallon highlands in Guinea and flows the length of the country before emptying into the Atlantic Ocean. The three major biological regions of the country – the marine and coastal zone along the western coast, the area along the River Gambia and related freshwater and estuarine ecosystems, and the terrestrial ecosystems behind the coastline and to the north and south of the river – harbour biodiversity that is globally significant, as well as biodiversity and natural resources of great significance at national and local levels. Wetland ecosystems cover almost 20% of the total land area, consisting primarily mangrove forests (64%), uncultivated swamps (7.8%) and cultivated swamps (3.2%). The Gambia has designated 3 RAMSAR Sites and is on the verge of designating additional sites. The country's total forest area, including mangroves, is estimated to be 505,300 hectares or 43% of the total landmass of the country¹⁷. At present, no forest areas are classified as protection forest. State forestlands account for 78% of the total forest area; approximately 7% of the total forest area is included in the 66 gazetted forest parks. Community and private forest areas constitute only 17,487 ha, but are expected to increase as more state forestland is brought under these management systems. Overall, there are 117 species of mammals, 47 species of reptiles and 30 species of amphibians in the Gambia. The Gambia is also endowed with a rich avifauna estimated at a total of 576 species, of which 10% are migratory. The River Gambia and inland water bodies such as flood plains and wetlands are considered to be rich in terms of species abundance and diversity of freshwater species, including hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibious*), West African manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*, VU) and African Clawless Otter (*Aonyx capensis*). Mangroves and tidal areas serve as important spawning and nursery grounds for more than 100 fish species; provide nesting and feeding habitats for endangered and threatened species including birds migrating along the East Atlantic Flyway, dolphins, sharks, marine turtles (leatherback, loggerhead and green), the West African manatee, West African dwarf crocodile, West African red colobus, clawless otter, hippopotamus, and others. Information on marine species diversity in The Gambia is limited, but various marine mammals, sharks, molluscs, shrimps and lobsters are considered threatened.

Three primary agro-ecological production zones exist in The Gambia. The Sudano-Sahelian Zone or Riverine Zone, characterised by savannah woodland, covers a great part of the country (492,999 ha); 76% of this zone is cultivated and it accounts for more than 60% of national agricultural production. The main agricultural production in this area is early millet, groundnuts, sorghum, maize, cotton, upland rice and irrigated rice. The Sahel-Savannah Zone or Semi-Arid Zone covers approximately 147,684 ha; only 44% of the area is cultivable and the area only accounts for about 12% of national agricultural production. This zone has relatively low rainfall (below 900 mm) and concentrates on the cultivation of early maturing cereals such as maize, early millet, upland rice and "Findi grass"; the zone also has a fairly large livestock population that puts significant pressure on natural resources. Finally, the Guinea-Savannah Zone or Humid zone, located

¹⁷ State of the Environment report (2010)

along the coastline, has high and moderately reliable rainfall (1000 mm and above), and covers an area of 179,790 ha, of which 66% is cultivable. Major cereals produced in this zone are primarily late varieties such as late millet, sorghum, and upland rice; the zone also has a large cattle population and extensive use of animal traction in agricultural production.

Protected Areas & Community Forests

Currently, there are 22 protected areas in The Gambia, occupying a total area of 76,064 ha, or approximately 6.4% of Gambia's total surface area (details in Annex 1). Eight of these protected areas are reserves and national parks, while the other 14 are community-based conservation areas under the mandate of the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPWM). Community participation in PA management and community development within PAs is a priority in The Gambia; all PAs form governance teams that are responsible for park level decision-making, and all parks and nature reserves undertake projects on community development. While the PA network encompasses many of the principal ecosystems found in the country, including mangroves, tidal zones, and guinea savannah and dry deciduous woodlands, a notable gap is terrestrial and inland water areas, of which only 0.16% are protected. Three of the country's PAs are Ramsar sites (Tanbi Wetland National Park, Niimi National Park and Bao Bolong Wetland Reserve), and six are recognized as Important Bird Areas (Tanji, Tanbi, Abuko, Niimi, Bao Bolong and Kiang West). In addition to the 22 PA sites, the country has 66 forest reserves covering a total of 34,029 hectares that are managed by the Department of Forestry, as well as local community forests that cover an area of 18,000 ha. Both state and community forest reserves are exploited for firewood, timber and grazing.

Project Site Information

Most of the project field-level activities will take place in the Kuntaur Local Government Area (LGA), located in the Central River region of the country. Kuntaur LGA had a population of 99,108 persons in 2013¹⁸ and covers an area of 100,908 ha, which is composed of forests (16.4 %), other wooded landscapes (27.2 %), other land (52.3%) and inland waters (12%)¹⁹. Various studies, including The African Waterfowl Census (AfWC), various mangrove and rice field surveys, and several monitoring reports, have highlighted the important biodiversity resources in the Kuntaur Local Government Area (State of the Environment Report, 2009). Within Kuntaur LGA, the project will undertake field-level work at one National Park and three Key Biodiversity Areas, as well as on agricultural lands and degraded forestlands in the productive landscape adjoining these priority sites.

River Gambia National Park (589 ha) is a complex of five islands, primarily composed of gallery forest with some open swampy or savannah areas, situated about 300 km by road from Banjul (the park is located within the Islands of the Central River Division KBA – see below). River Gambia NP is managed jointly by DPWM and the Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Project (CRP). Since 1979, CRP has carried out a project to reintroduce chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) confiscated from the illegal animal trade into the park; this species is already extinct in much of its former range, and disappeared from the wild in the Gambia in the early 1900s, but at present there are about fifty reintroduced chimpanzees living on three of the larger islands. River Gambia NP is also home to other primates such as the Guinea baboon (*Papio papio*), green monkey (*Chlorocebus sabeus*), western red colobus (*Piliocolobus badius*). The park is one of the last refuges for the very threatened hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) within The Gambia. Other mammals include the prolific warthog (*Phacochoerus africanus*), aardvark (*Orycteropus afer senegalensis*), honey badger (*Mellivora capensis*), serval (*Leptailurus scriptus*), Maxwell's duiker (*Cephalophus maxwellii*) and common duiker (*Sylvicapra grimmia*). Reptiles are likewise plentiful and include the Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*), snakes and lizards. The avifauna of RGNP is very rich and varied; one islet of just a few acres provides a nesting site for many thousands of breeding egrets, herons, cormorants, sacred ibis, weavers and doves, which nest in close proximity to each other.

In addition to River Gambia NP, three sites within Kuntaur LGA -- the Samba Sotor to Kaur wetlands, Dankunku Wetlands, and Islands of the Central River Division -- have been designated as Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs). The Samba Sotor to Kaur wetlands (1,500 ha) is a group of shallow freshwater and brackish lakes bordered with extensive beds of Typha swamp, mudflats and rice cultivation that provides important habitat for numerous bird species. The Dankunku wetlands (6,500 ha) consists of significant areas of mangrove, as well as a 1 km. wide strip of *Phragmites karka*, forming the largest continuous area of reedbed in the country, and seasonal freshwater and brackish marshes. Finally, the Islands of the Central River Division (3,000 ha) consists of a number of low, alluvial islands in the Gambia River with extensive mangroves as well as areas of reedbeds and scrubland. Approximately 20,000

¹⁸ 2013 Population and Housing Census of Gambia

¹⁹ Department of Forests, 2010. National Forest Assessment; Government of The Gambia and FAO

waterbirds congregate at this site, which is an important roosting area for non-breeding wildfowl. Annex 2 has additional details on all three of the KBA sites.

The other area for project field-level interventions consists of two proposed Marine Protected Areas situated along the Atlantic coastline of The Gambia. The proposed Kartong - Allahein River Marine Reserve (3,000 ha) is a KBA located at the mouth of the Allahein River near the Senegalese border, and encompasses beach, seasonal lagoon, and freshwater lake ecosystems that harbour large population of various species of gulls, terns and waders (additional details on this KBA site are provided in Annex 2). The other site is the proposed Labour Canyon Marine Reserve (15,000 ha), located approximately 15 nautical miles beyond the Bijol Islands off the coast of the Tanji Bird Reserve. This reserve is notable for including a submarine canyon (depth greater than 250 meters) that is believed to be a significant breeding ground for marine species, including many fish and cetaceans, as well as extensive areas of seagrass beds believed to provide important food resources and breeding habitat for many marine species. This site is also recognized as an IBA, and was identified as a priority site for protection during the EBSA process under the CBD and during a gap analysis of the network of marine protected areas in West Africa (RAMPAO). If gazetted, this MPA would represent a new type of PA (offshore MPA) in the Gambia and its large size would greatly help the country in its efforts to meet its national target for MPA coverage in its international commitments under the CBD.

Threats

Ecosystem degradation and conversion: Habitat conversion is one of the major factors of biodiversity loss in The Gambia. 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. 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. Demand for timber and non-timber products from protected areas is high, and many areas within and adjacent to protected areas are being degraded. Between 1946 and 1998, 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. According to the 2010 National Forest Assessment (NFA)²⁰, 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 this period, mangrove forests alone declined from 67,000 ha to 35,700 ha. Under business-as-usual rates of deforestation (estimated at 5-7%)²¹, more than half of the remaining forest/woodland cover in The Gambia will be lost in the next ten years.

Unsustainable agricultural practices: The Gambia is confronted with problems frequently associated with unsustainable agriculture, livestock, and forestry production, including soil salinization and erosion, decreasing fertility of the arable land, and finally migration and out-migration. Agricultural production systems for crop farming in The Gambia consist of intensive land use characterized by low levels of input. Shifting cultivation is still widely practiced in the country, although fallow periods have been considerably reduced as land becomes scarce in most farming communities. The compounding effect of high population pressure and the scarcity of land has forced farmers to intensively cultivate small areas of land year after year, which exhausts the soil nutrients and ultimately leads to declines in crop yields. Furthermore, land placed under continuous cultivation has high levels of erosion that produce sedimentation of downstream rice fields and aquatic and marine habitats. Soil erosion and siltation from agriculture (and livestock grazing) are important processes in habitat loss and fragmentation in The Gambia. Annual soil erosion is estimated at 12.5 tonnes per hectare per year for frequently cultivated soils having a slope of 2% or more²². These processes have diminished soil productivity, and the eroded materials are deposited in the lowlands of the river basin, causing sedimentation in the rice growing areas and adverse impacts on aquatic life.

Overgrazing: The Gambia has a large livestock population with high stocking density. Livestock are reared in an extensive free-range system in open grasslands / rangelands. Due to the high stocking density and the incidence of annual bush fires that consume most of the feed resources, there is consistent scarcity of livestock feed during the dry months of the year. The

²⁰ Department of Forests. 2010. National Forest Assessment; Government of The Gambia and FAO

²¹ Sillah, J. 2007. Ecology and Climate Change of the Mangrove Ecosystems of Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea and Sierra Leone. IUCN and Department of Forests. 2010. National Forest Assessment. Government of The Gambia and FAO

²² Ministry of Agriculture (2010) *Gambia National Agricultural Investment Plan (GNAIP)*. Government of The Gambia
The Gambia LD/BD PIF

convergence and concentration of livestock in and around isolated pockets of remaining grazing areas leads to range degradation, loss of topsoil, and the proliferation of unpalatable species.

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. The Gambia's inability to regulate and control wild forest fires is influenced 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 current thinking and practices related to early-dry-season controlled burning, which has proven successful in Niokolo Koba National Park, and in the Kiang West National Park in both Senegal and the Gambia.

Increasing pressure on coastal and marine areas: 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. In the quest to meet the ever-increasing demand for new construction in the coastal region, sand mining has become a highly disorganized and chaotic local industry, and illegal sand mining is still a common, contributing to the process of coastal erosion and threatening many protected ecosystems such as the Tanji Bird Reserve. Illegal sand mining activities in the areas of Kartong and Bijilo are responsible for extensive erosion. The coast also is the primary tourism destination in the country, which is further increasing development pressure in this zone. Subsistence and small-scale economic exploitation also impacts natural resources; forests and mangroves are subject to harvesting for fish smoking and domestic fuel sources, and to clearance for crop production and animal rearing, while fish stocks are subject to intense fishing pressures. There is evidence of significant pressure on species of global and regional concern, such as nesting and migratory birds and marine turtles whose eggs 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.

The long-term solution to the above threats: To address the identified threats and implement Vision 2020, The Gambia must continue to improve its capacity to manage the environment and natural resources, particularly as the level of economic activity controlled by the private sector and potential environmental impacts increase. However, a number of barriers exist to implementing this consolidation and strengthening of the country's sustainable development efforts, as described below.

Barriers

Inadequate land use and land right policies and lack of institutional capacity for land use planning: In The Gambia, government policies on, and definition of, ownership and user rights of natural resources are unclear, and there is a wide divergence between the perceptions of state agents and those of local communities on these issues. Programs and activities to address land degradation are sectorally fragmented, and as a consequence, land use conflicts between various groups and sectors persist and land uses in many instances are not compatible with land capacities. If left unaddressed, the deep-rooted conventional approach of "top-down" development as currently practiced by environmental sectorial agents will negatively impact the implementation of both the Local Government Reform (LGR) process and the Gambia Environment Action Plan Phase 2 (GEAP II 2009-2018). As a result, the LGR process has identified the need for a review of existing acts and legislation with a view to integrating local perceptions, interest, knowledge and skills into the body of laws, rules and national programmes that affect the interest and well-being of local communities. This need was echoed in recent studies carried out as part of the Alignment of the National Action Plan to combat desertification, which found that The Gambia needs an analysis of the impacts of relevant national policies on land degradation and cooperation among key stakeholder agencies and groups in order to guide policy reform and development, as well as significant amendments to existing legislation pertaining to the use and management of land. One critical barrier is the lack of any wetland policy to adequately address wetland conservation and livelihood issues, and to facilitate the designation of more RAMSAR Sites in order to enhance biodiversity conservation. With regard to capacities, the poor functioning of the National Planning Board has stymied the development of adequate governance and control mechanisms that would simplify the work of regional planning authorities, which has held back better control and management of land resources, and led to inadequate and less-than-useful land use databanks that are important for proper administration and control. In addition, since the decentralization process began in 1997, the government has established regional planning offices throughout the country, but to date these offices have been ineffective and inefficient due to very limited technical capacities at all levels and limited awareness and support among the local citizens.

Absence of planning processes and local capacities / support to enable integrated application of SLM measures: The manipulation of fragile ecosystems for human habitation and other uses has increased the incidence of floods in both the rural and urban areas, and poor land use planning and management is identified as a critical factor contributing to this problem. The absence of insurance coverage for commercial operators in many sectors has increased the impact of natural and man-made disasters. Community capacities to participate in planning, implementation, and monitoring related to land use and management are extremely limited, compounded by low literacy rates and resource constraints, including the absence of basic facilities and poor communication. The problem of access to basic ecological and socio-economic information and models for innovative practices is a constraint to adopting sustainable land management and land use planning practices, made worse by difficulties in accessing information concerning regulatory texts by the affected principal rural actors. Finally, adoption of sustainable land use practices 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 (such as efficient land use) as beneficial only to outsiders, and for this reason do not support many environmental initiatives.

Lack of experience and models for integrated land use planning and management that supports SLM practices and reduces negative impacts on key biodiversity habitat from adjacent productive landscapes: With regard to the impacts of land degradation on natural habitats and biodiversity, the ability of Gambian authorities to implement measures such as rotational grazing and decreased stocking rates in regions adjacent to protected areas is limited due to the lack of any landscape-level planning / management processes that address both productive and protected landscapes; a lack of experience and tested approaches for such processes; and inadequate infrastructure and technical capacities. Within protected landscapes, efforts to implement biodiversity conservation measures are constrained by insufficient human resources and low motivation (i.e. low staff pay), inadequate financing, limited park facilities and infrastructure, and the failure to implement a systemic approach for biodiversity conservation and management of protected areas. DPWM has attempted to address these problems by establishing the Biodiversity Trust Fund (BTF) for sustainable financing, promoting private sector involvement such as the Eagle Height project, training of personnel, PA infrastructure development, and creating plans to restructure DPWM into an Authority in order to address staff demotivation, remuneration and system decentralization among other activities. However, the DPWM restructuring has yet to be implemented and training and financing programs remain limited. Furthermore, the existing system of protected areas is not sufficiently connected by ecological corridors, and key areas remain entirely unprotected.

Inadequate protection of marine and coastal ecosystems and lack of experience and capacity for MPA management: At present, there are no MPAs in The Gambia, and those PAs that are located along the coastline (Niimi NP, Tanbi Wetland NP, and Tanji Bird Reserve) focus almost entirely on the conservation of terrestrial ecosystems. As a result, critical ecosystems including seagrass beds and coral reefs, and the biodiversity that they harbour, are not included in the national protected areas system at all, while other ecosystems such as mangroves, lagoons and coastal lakes are under-represented (contributing to the very high rates of mangrove loss in the country and the on-going degradation of coastal water bodies from sand mining and infrastructure development). Furthermore, understanding of the importance of coastal and marine biodiversity and ecosystem services and of their ecological processes is very low in the country, and technical capacities and practical experience in marine spatial planning and managing marine protected areas does not exist. Given the intense pressures on coastal and marine environments from in-migration and infrastructure development, as well as the emerging threat of oil exploration and development, the lack of experience in The Gambia with establishing and operating marine protected areas, whether in coastal or offshore (e.g. submarine canyons) environments, is a critical barrier to conserving globally significant biodiversity and ecosystem functioning in the country.

2) The baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects

The GEF incremental investment will be firmly rooted on one hand in the lessons learnt and achievements from previous investments particularly with the GEF Trust Fund support and on the other hand in significant baseline investments made through government programmes and initiatives. The GEF supported investment and lessons learnt include those from: (a) 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. Even though the current project will not intervene in the two protected areas supported by ICAM, the lessons learn from the establishment process of the two Protected Areas by ICAM and the testing of community involvement in the PA management including site management committees in all national PAs of the country will be capitalized and incorporated in the current project design. Another experience from ICAM relevant to the project is the improvement of the conservation and sustainable management, including the establishment of monitoring programmes, of globally significant species (marine turtles,

dolphins, the manatees, etc.) in coastal and marine ecosystems. The proposed project will strengthen the monitoring system of species of global significance, it will also fill the gap of establishment of database and the scientific analysis of data collected in order to inform management decisions but also to strengthen the capacity of the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management staffs at all levels. 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. All these valuable achievements will be of importance for this new project; (b) 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 finance communities’ projects in the targeted areas. The preparation of guidelines for the private sector involvement in wildlife conservation and natural resources management as one of the project achievement will also be capitalized and used by the current project; (c) 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 on SLM will be replicated in Kautaur District and will be captured in the Land Use Planning policies review and development. Also the experience will be used around Kartong Allahein River Marine Protected Area to be created by the proposed project; (d) 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 harmonization of approaches between sectors and communities. The commitment for the synergy and complementary particularly with FAO projects has been discussed and agreed upon between stakeholders including FAO country Office and UNEP Task Manager and (e) FAO/ GEF ID 1909 Protection of the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) project supported the monitoring of management effectiveness of marine PA; the outcome of this project will be capitalized particularly in component 4 related to the Labour Cayon MPA and Kartong River marine PA – The project will capitalize on the tools and approaches for these MPA monitoring and apply it to the 2 targeted areas to be created but also to use the framework of the regional network on MPA to have these 2 new PA to be resisted as part of the network.

The UNEP/GCF project – on “Large-scale ecosystem-based adaptation in The Gambia: developing a climate-resilient, natural resource-based economy”. The expected result of the project which is of particular importance for the current project is the “Increased resilience of Ecosystems and ecosystem services (e.g. ecosystem conservation and management, ecotourism, etc.)”. The outputs of the GCF project in terms of resilience will be captured in the Land Use policy review and the Local Land Use Plan development in targeted areas and ecosystems. As the GCF project is starting now, during the preparatory phase (PPG), the project will discuss with the GCF team on the area of coverage and avoid duplication. The project will build synergy and complementarity with EBA project so that the policy review envisage in component 1 will give due consideration to the EBA aspect in the land use planning.

The other investments include: The *Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) 2012 – 2015* identifies the agriculture sector as an important pathway by which The Gambia can reach its long-term development goals, especially regarding reducing poverty and achieving food security. The *Gambia National Agricultural Investment Plan (GNAIP)* is the medium-term (2011-2015) strategic plan of the government for achieving a vision for the agricultural and natural resources sector and food security within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa (NEPAD) Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). Under the GNAIP, the Government will improve the management of agricultural extension programmes so as to provide a flow of technical information relevant to farmers’ production problems and to integrate water resources management into farming practices. Proposed interventions are expected to achieve at least 8% growth in the agricultural sector in The Gambia, and combined with accelerated non-agricultural growth, could stimulate the level of growth needed in the sector to transform the country’s rural areas and to significantly reduce poverty levels.

Funds for *Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC)* come directly from the state budget per the public debt cancellation process agreement with external international monetary institutions (IMF, WB). The Fund is recharged by refunds provided annually by The Gambian State from its fiscal resources, which are paid into a special account with the MOFEA. The collected funds are reallocated to public investment in identified priority sectors under the supervision of an advisory Committee responsible for the monitoring of HIPC funds. These funds can be an important co-financing source for this project. Currently, 458 communities countrywide are participating in the *Participatory Forest Management Programme*,

designed to fully involve local populations in the sustainable management and utilization of forest resources by offering total legal ownership of both land and trees. The programme also promotes joint management of forest parks, primarily through the Community Forestry Committees (CFCs) and JFPM committees. The extension work being carried out through the programme covers: i) renovation of forest stations; ii) management of regional nurseries and production of seedlings for tree planting carried out by CFCs; iii) capacity development of field staff in participatory forest management approaches; iv) capacity development of CFCs and JFPM committees in tree planting and forest management; and v) support and oversight of fire management and prevention measures undertaken by local communities. A number of funding mechanisms are in place in the Gambia relevant to sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity conservation. 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 for investment and is an expected source of co-financing to invest in SLM and SFM activities at the local level. The National Forest Funds (NFF), established by the forest Act of 1998 to finance the sustainable management and development of forest resources, has revenues of around USD 400,000 that can co-finance activities on the ground that will contribute to this project's objectives. Almost all forest communities, having legal forest ownership, benefit from forest revenues derived from community forestry activities, which are deposited either into a commercial bank or village banking system (VISACA). Earnings from Community Forests (CFs) are generally divided, with 85% for investments in village development and forest management and 15% to the Department of Forestry for services rendered. Based on the past three years, the allocation from forest revenues to different municipalities is estimated at \$300,000 per year; these funds constitute co-financing for the project at the municipal level.

Several donor-funded projects also contribute to the baseline for the proposed project. The IFAD-funded "National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project" (2013-2019) is designed to increase local incomes from improved productivity based on sustainable land and water management practices. The project is financed with an IFAD grant of US\$20.27 million, a domestic contribution of US\$2.9 million, and an Islamic Development Bank contribution of US\$15 million. The project has three sub-components: A) promoting communal gardens and investments in upgrading or construction of perennial irrigation systems and animal-proof fences around garden perimeters; B) improving road access to agricultural fields, vegetables gardens, and other sites and constructing local markets at strategic locations; and C) improving the technical and management capacity of producer groups. 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. The AfDB-funded Food & Agriculture Sector Development Project (FASDEP) project (2013-2018) has a budget of USD17.6 million and the objective to reduce rural household poverty through efficient use of arable land and water resources for agricultural production and productivity. FASDEP includes components on i) improved agriculture infrastructure development and management, including the creation of 40 community land use plans and establishment of community-based agroforestry sites across the country; and ii) improved value chains for agro-enterprises to support the production, diversification and commercialization of agriculture/natural resources. The AfDB-funded Programme to build resilience to food and nutrition insecurity in the Sahel (P2RS) is designed to build the resilience of vulnerable populations to food and nutrition insecurity in the seven Sahelian countries most affected by food crises (including The Gambia), as well as a regional component to benefit all 13 CILSS member countries. The Gambia will receive a grant of Euro 12.85 million from the project.

LGA councils are empowered to raise local revenues and to execute infrastructure and development projects, including for environmental preservation. The Local Government Act provides for the creation of Natural Resources Management Committees to be established by each authority to enhance the decentralization of natural management.

3) The proposed alternative scenario, GEF focal area²³ strategies, with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project

Building on national momentum, the objective of the GEF project is to create an enabling environment for The Gambia in building national capacity to lead the reform of land use and marine spatial planning policies and to implement land/seascape level management that conserves ecosystem services in productive and protected land/seascapes. In so doing, the project will address important national gaps regarding 1) integrated landscape-level management of productive and protected lands, and 2) establishment and effective management of marine PAs. The land use policy analysis in the different ecosystems that is coastal, marine and inland ecosystems will help to generate all range of policies issues to be considered in the policy reforms. Therefore, by addressing land and coastal based ecosystems within the same project, will

²³ For biodiversity projects, in addition to explaining the project's consistency with the biodiversity focal area strategy, objectives and programs, please also describe which [Aichi Target\(s\)](#) the project will directly contribute to achieving.

give opportunity for this cross-ecosystems policies analysis. Furthermore, the project is approaching its activities using a holistic approach to ensure that the impacts of SLM and biodiversity conservation activities at upstream level will have positive impacts on coastal zone. Most particularly the issue of pollution, erosion and sedimentation will be addressed with the holistic idea of conserving both upper land and coastal areas.

Component 1 - Improved planning and enforcement system to identify and address causes of land degradation (LD) and biodiversity (BD) loss: Under Component 1, the project will support the strengthening of land/sea use policies and of national and local capacities for land use and marine spatial planning and enforcement, which will be decentralised but supported nationally. To begin, the project will undertake an analysis of current land/sea uses, land/sea use policies and land/sea use option, including a cost-benefit analysis of the long-term benefits of sustainable land and sea use options as compared to the shorter timeframe of benefits provided by most unsustainable options. Based on this analysis, the project will support NEA and other partners in revising policies related to national land use and marine spatial planning and the management of Local Government Areas (LGAs) to be better aligned with sustainable land/sea management approaches and to take account of the interests and objectives of local communities. Finally, the project will provide technical training to officials within national-level and decentralised institutions, local public authorities, and communities in participatory spatial planning, conflict resolution, and other approaches to addressing the causes of land degradation and biodiversity loss in the country. Together, these activities are designed to strengthen the policy and institutional frameworks for mainstreaming BD and SLM principles into planning processes and policies for land/sea and resource use and management, and to improve the capacity of key stakeholders to prevent, mitigate and offset negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services and functions.

Component 2 - Enabling framework for districts within Kuntaur LGA to implement SLM practices across landscapes: Under Component 2, the project will support the development of a systematic, landscape-level land use planning and management framework in the Kuntaur Local Government Area (LGA) that integrates protection of forests in protected areas with SLM measures on adjacent productive lands and strengthens local capacities needed to implement the framework. The project will undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Kuntaur LGA to identify and document the extent and causes of land degradation and biodiversity loss in the area; the assessment also will develop recommendations for avoiding and mitigating these negative trends, including in the face of potential climate change impacts. At the same time, the project will collaborate with local resource management agencies to establish a spatially based decision-making system to enable them to develop and apply Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) approaches. The SEA and decision systems developed under the project will be used to create Integrated Land Use Management Plans (ILUMPs) for each of the five districts within the Kuntaur LGA, which will be designed to ensure the optimal allocation of land to generate development benefits and critical environmental benefits in tandem. A multi-sector stakeholder committee will be established in each district to guide implementation of the ILUMPs, to support the work of the technical agencies, and to facilitate dialogue and information sharing on SLM and BD conservation approaches among all stakeholders. Finally, the project will support training programs for resource managers and community representatives on the use of decision-making systems, participation in consultative planning processes, and the adoption of sustainable resource management activities, as well as awareness raising programs on INRM for local decision makers.

Component 3 - Implementation of ILUMPs and strengthening of PA management within Kuntaur LGA produce landscape-level management system to achieve SLM and BD objectives: Under Component 3, the project will support implementation of the enabling framework developed under Component 2, including implementation of the ILUMPs, strengthening the management capacities at one National Park, upgrading the conservation status of existing community forests within KBA sites to become Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs), and implementing SLM activities on adjoining farms and grazing lands to reduce LD impacts on protected landscapes and enhance local livelihoods. To begin, the project will undertake mapping of Protected Areas, Key Biodiversity Areas, Community Forests and their adjoining landscapes, in order to enable effective management and control over the NP and the ICCAs, to identify areas in the productive landscape with the potential to negatively impact protected areas, and to identify gaps in connectivity between key biodiversity habitats (especially forest, wetland and aquatic zones). Based on this mapping exercise, the project will develop a list of priority sites for further expansion of PAs, ICCAs and other forms of protected areas to enhance connectivity, and will identify sites for the implementation of SLM measures including forest restoration. Connectivity will be enhanced through upgrading of conservation status for some areas; possible sites include parts of the River Gambia that may be critical for the West African Manatee population, and forest stands south of the river that connect the riverine ecosystem with the Dankunku wetlands. Connectivity may also be enhanced by establishing buffer zones with local communities, such as areas with stricter controls on fishing to protect the manatee and/or areas of sustainable rice production to reduce impacts on wetlands, and by undertaking forest restoration to counteract on-going and past land degradation. In the protected landscape, the project will support strengthening of management structures and

capacities in the existing River Gambia National Park to enable effective conservation of priority species (e.g. the manatee) and assist in the management of the chimpanzee rehabilitation project; to guide the on-going negotiations to expand the boundaries of the NP; and to carry out basic monitoring and visitor management functions. The project also will work with local authorities and communities to establish four Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) in the Niani sukuta, Niani Kayayi, Jailani Bakadagi and Jarumeh Koto swamp areas, all of which are located partly or entirely within three KBA sites (Samba Sotor to Kaur Wetlands, Dankunku Wetlands and the Islands of the Central Division). These areas are considered priority habitat areas, with the presence of considerable Hippo populations and rare birds for The Gambia such as the African Finfoot (*Podica senegalensis*), among other species. Protection of these areas will reduce human – wildlife conflict (e.g. hippos versus rice growers) and enhance food security. Furthermore, by upgrading the conservation status of these sites (which currently encompass a number of community forests), and equipping the local communities with the technical and social skills needed to establish and manage the sites for conservation and sustainable use, the project will provide a model for improving the fast-spreading but poorly supported network of community forests in the country. In the productive landscape, the project will implement SLM measures in line with the developed ILUMPs to improve the productivity of smallholder farming and grazing practices while simultaneously reducing their contributions to land degradation and biodiversity loss. On farmlands, the project will support soil fertility maintenance, appropriate farm and cropping practices, and reliable and controlled water management systems; on rangelands, the project will support seasonal rotational grazing to maintain pasture quality and decreased stocking rates in moderately degraded pastures. Together with better planning and zoning processes for the region, these practices will reduce soil erosion / degradation and reduce the flow of agricultural chemicals and sediments into wetland and aquatic ecosystems. At the same time, by increasing the yields and value of agricultural products per unit input through improved practices, and by assisting farmers in marketing of their product, the project will help to decrease the pressure to convert more natural lands to agricultural production. The project will document and disseminate the most effective SLM techniques and tools tested in the Kuntaur LGA, and promote their adoption on a larger scale in The Gambia. Finally, the project will establish a framework for monitoring and evaluation of the BD conservation and SLM activities with a focus on their socio-economic and environmental performance, which will be submitted to the Government of the Gambia as a model for adoption at the national level.

Component 4 - Expansion of PA estate in ecologically important areas of The Gambia: In recent years, marine conservation actors agreed on the need to intensify efforts to improve the conservation status of marine ecosystems. Based on the awareness of the huge gap between the level of protection between the terrestrial and the sea and aquatic level, efforts have been made and some progress achieved with the establishment of many marine protected areas (MPAs) and MPAs networks. However, the situation remains a concern because the overall level of protection is estimated at 12.7 % at the terrestrial level (excluding Antarctica), while coastal waters (between 0 and 12 nm) are protected only 7.2%. The situation is even more dramatic for marine offshore areas within the limits of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), with only 3.5%. At the 10th Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD/CP10) in Nagoya, Japan in December 2010, the international community adopted the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan of the Convention and the Aichi Targets, particularly targets 6, 10 and 11 related to coastal and marine biodiversity. State Parties are committed to protect by 2020, 17% of terrestrial and 10 % of coastal and marine areas. This commitment is being reiterated by Parties to Abidjan Convention including the Gambia during the ongoing COP 12 in Abidjan. The project, under Component 4, will support the legal establishment and management capacity of two new Marine Protected Areas on the west coast of the country. With support from the Western African regional Network of Marine Protected Areas (RAMPAO) and the Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine conservation in Western Africa (PRCM), The Gambia undertook the process to identify Ecologically or Biologically Sensitive Marine Areas (EBSAs), which in turn could guide the establishment of the country's Marine Protected Areas. During this exercise, sites at Kartong - Allahein River and Labour Canyon were considered priorities for designation as MPAs. The project will support finalizing the scientific, including a landuse/marine spatial planning exercise in the two areas, and policy processes required to establish these two sites as Marine Protected Areas, which will greatly enhance the area of coverage and diversification of ecosystem types in the PA system of The Gambia. At the Kartong Allahein River MPA site, the project will in one hand support development and capacity building of national stakeholders including staff from the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management (DPWM), National Environment Agency, National Agriculture Research Institute and the Fisheries Department ; and in other hand development and capacity of this offshore MPA co-management structure between the government, the local community of Kartong, and WABSA (a local NGO), with the possibility after the site is designated, of establishing a transfrontier MPA with a Senegalese park across the border. Priority activities in the MPA will include guiding a landscape restoration plan in areas of former sand mining in order to conserve and/or restore critical bird habitat, stabilize sand dunes, and provide areas for orchards and fish farms for local residents. At the Labour Canyon site, the project will support capacity building for government management of this offshore MPA, which is threatened by the potential development of oil fields, as well as an assessment of the biodiversity of the deep sea canyons, seagrass beds, and other important habitats at the site. Note: During

the PPG phase, an assessment will be carried out of the challenges and opportunities related to establishing and managing this site, as well as to confirm whether it meets KBA criteria.

Aichi Targets: The project responds to the following Aichi targets: (i) Target 11: By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas especially area of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscape and seascape. Under this target, the project will establish 28,000 ha of new protected areas or effective area-based conservation measures and will increase the management effectiveness of protected areas across 28,589 ha. (ii) Target 12: By 2020, the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those in decline has been improved and sustained. The project will influence the conservation status of a number of known threatened species in the target areas. These species include *Trichenchus senegalensis* (VU), *Pan troglodytes* (EN) and *Hippopotamus amphibius* (VU).

4) Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, CBIT and co-financing

The Situation without GEF: In the baseline scenario, land degradation will continue to be a critical problem in The Gambia that adversely affects the structure and functional integrity of the country's ecosystem resources. Inappropriate land management practices in croplands, overgrazing of rangelands, and deforestation in forest and woodland areas will degrade ecosystem services and biodiversity habitat; in the country's lowlands and riverine wetlands, destructive flash floods, siltation and sedimentation due to increased rainwater runoff from degraded uplands will continue unabated. Farmers and producer organizations will not possess the skills in natural resources management to solve these issues on their own, and resource management agencies will lack both the technical capacity and the policy and planning frameworks to address issues where they can be most effective, i.e. at the landscape level. Even protected areas, and the critical habitat and species they harbour, will continue to be subject to degradation processes, occurring both within PAs and in adjoining landscapes. Marine and coastal ecosystems will continue to be absent from the protected area estate of the country, and as a result will continue to face threats from infrastructure development, sand mining, over-harvesting of resources, and potential oil field development. In sum, without the intervention of the project, these trends will continue to impact the natural resource base of the country and the livelihood of its people, and will hinder the full attainment of Vision 2020 and other sustainable development goals.

Situation with GEF: Through the implementation of this proposed project, the underlying causes of land degradation and biodiversity loss will be greatly mitigated. National and local level stakeholders will possess the technical capacities and policy and institutional frameworks necessary to adequately and sustainably manage land and resources in a coordinate and collaborate manner. Models for integrating PA management with SLM measures and forest restoration on adjoining lands will conserve and restore ecosystem functioning and habitat connectivity, thereby helping to maintain the country's biodiversity and ecosystem services and improve rural livelihoods. For the first time, critical marine and coastal habitats will have legal protection and will be managed by trained staff to ensure conservation and access to resources for sustainable use by coastal communities.

5) Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)

GEF funding will secure protection of critically important biodiversity and reduce land degradation impacts in The Gambia. It will deliver global benefits, including:

- Sustainable agricultural production measures across agricultural lands (1,000 ha) reduce land degradation and negative impacts on adjoining protected landscapes, and improved farm productivity results in reduced use of shifting cultivation and thereby reduces pressure on forest habitats
- Land rehabilitation / reforestation on degraded lands (500 ha) reduces land degradation, conserves ecosystem services such as water supply, flood prevention, soil productivity, and biodiversity conservation, and enhances connectivity between priority protected habitats
- Priority habitats under increased protection within Key Biodiversity Areas in The Gambia, including River Gambia National Park (589 ha) and four newly established Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (10,000 ha), and enhancing the conservation of priority species including African manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*; VU), chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*), hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibious*), and numerous bird species on the IUCN Red List, including Senegal Thick-knee (*Burhinus senegalensis*), Collared Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola*), Great White Egret (*Ardea alba*), Black Heron (*Egretta ardesiaca*), and African Darter (*Anhinga rufa*)

- Priority marine and coastal ecosystems under increased protection within two newly established Marine Protected Areas -- Kartong Allahein River MPA (3,000 ha) and Labour Canyon MPA (15,000 ha) -- and enhancing the conservation of priority species, including the Atlantic Humpback dolphin (*Sousa teuszii*; endemic to the Atlantic Ocean's African coast) and other dolphins, cetaceans, sharks and rays as well as various bird species including Audouin's Gull (*Larus audouinii*), Grey-headed Gull (*Larus cirrocephalus*), and Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*)

6) Innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up

Innovation: Even though the use of ecological assessments to inform environmental policies and planning is not new in The Gambia, their use in land use planning in the country has been extremely limited, and the piloting of local integrated land use management plans that incorporate ecological information and considerations of environmental sustainability will therefore be innovative in the country. Furthermore, the establishment of Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) will provide a new, strengthened model for community forest management based on enhanced community technical capacities and participation, as well as a new model for enhancing ecosystem connectivity between a National Park and ICCAs and reducing activities in productive landscapes (e.g. rice cultivation) from negatively impacting protected landscapes. At least one ICCA also will establish the first experience in the country of managing a protected area for the benefit of the Manatee.

Sustainability: The project's capacity building activities under Components 1 and 2 are designed to ensure that personnel in both private and public sector institutions, as well as community organizations, at the national, regional, district and ward levels will have the skills required to enable them to support project initiated activities after the project. For example, as the project executing agency, the National Environment Authority (NEA) will have its capacity developed in integrated land use planning and in the coordination of stakeholders to ensure that development activities integrate environment sustainability concerns. In addition, the capacity of both the national Department of Parks and Wildlife and NEA will be strengthened so that they can undertake long-term management approaches for key National Biodiversity Areas within the context of broader landscape-level planning. The financial sustainability of project activities will be ensured by the operationalisation of the biodiversity and forestry trust funds which the legal documents for its operationalization are expected to be approved by the Government very soon. The recent-elected Government has already taken on board the urgency to operationalize these trust funds. The project team and NEA will ensure that these trust funds will support communities and conditions will be laid down to ensure the communities consider sustainability in the application and execution of activities under the trust fund. These funds will be used as deterrent for propagation of unsustainable and illegal activities as response to the threats to conservation and SLM. Furthermore, conservation of key biodiversity will be enhanced through development of revenue-generating activities such as ecotourism products for manatee viewing and bird watching.

Scaling Up: The project will pilot local Integrated Land Use Management Plans (ILUMPs) in Kuntaur LGA, which will generate lessons to support large-scale adoption and implementation of ILUMPs in all LGAs in the country. The project also will document and disseminate the most effective SLM techniques and tools tested in the Kuntaur LGA, and promote their adoption on a larger scale in The Gambia, and will establish a framework for monitoring and evaluation of BD conservation and SLM activities that will be submitted to the Government of the Gambia as a model for adoption at the national level.

2. **Stakeholders.** Will project design include the participation of relevant stakeholders from civil society organizations (yes /no) and indigenous peoples (yes /no)? If yes, identify key stakeholders and briefly describe how they will be engaged in project preparation.

| Stakeholder | Role in the project |
|--|---|
| National Environment Agency (NEA) | NEA coordinates all environmental issues in the country, and will act as project Executing Agency and will be responsible for project coordination and facilitating stakeholder participation. While the Department of Lands and Surveys (see below) will play a key role in addressing policy review and local land use planning, NEA will ensure participation of relevant stakeholders and that consensus is reached for necessary policy reforms. |
| Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Water, Wildlife and Fisheries | The Ministry, which is responsible for forestry and wildlife management and includes departments of Forestry and Parks and Wildlife, will provide policy guidance for the review of national and local land use policies as they relate to natural resources management, will be an executing partner for environment management activities, and will be a member of 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, take a lead role as executing partner for forestry related activities, and will be a member of the PSC. |
| Department of Water Resources | The department, which carries out meteorological and hydrological, water quality and rural water supply functions, will provide policy guidance on water resources management related issues, provide technical guidance on land use planning, and will be a member of the 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, ensure that policy review and land use planning is conducted with due consideration of the existing legal framework on national PA management, and will be a member of the 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, support implementation of activities related to fisheries development and marine protected areas, and will be a member of the PSC. |
| Ministry of Agriculture | The Ministry, which is responsible for agricultural development and promoting production technologies that reduce land degradation, will take part in policy review and development of land use plans as they related to agricultural activities, support awareness raising and advocacy for agricultural development that reduces deforestation and mainstreams biodiversity conservation, and will be a member of the PSC. |
| The Ministry for Local Government and Lands | The Ministry, and the Department of Lands and Surveys and the Department of Physical Planning and Housing within the ministry, are responsible for supervising the implementation of Local Government Act 2002 and the enforcement of legal regulations on land administration. In the context of the project, these agencies will provide policy guidance on land and land tenure, and the Ministry will be a member of the PSC. |
| 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) | CBOs will be the local executing partners and will be actively involved in the consultation process to develop integrated land use management plans, as well as being actively engaged in the implementation of those plans |
| West African Bird Study Association (WABSA) | A charitable non-profit, non-political organization with wide range of experience in biodiversity conservation programmes for more than twenty years. It is the first NGO in the Gambia to start the mangrove conservation with the help of Department of Parks and wildlife management. It has experience on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agro-biodiversity at village level with aims to blend farming and conservation, - Conservation and environment education programmes in schools and local communities covering the 7 regions of The Gambia. - Being the first NGO to introduce mangrove planting in The Gambia in North Bank, Western and Lower River region of The Gambia.. In this project, WABSA will share information as will provide technical support and advice to local communities to implement project activities at community level. |
| The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO) | TANGO will represent local executing partners and will be actively involved in the consultation process to develop the integrated land use management plans and implementation of those plans. TANGO members 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 to develop the land use plans and guide their implementation |
| National Resources Consulting (NACO) | NACO will act as local contractors and will be actively involved in the consultation process to develop the land use plans and be actively engaged in the implementation of those plans |
| 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. |

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Are issues on gender equality and women's empowerment taken into account? (yes /no). If yes, briefly describe how it will be mainstreamed into project preparation (e.g. gender analysis), taking into account the differences, needs, roles and priorities of women and men.

Women constitute the majority of the economically active population working in agriculture in The Gambia. 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. In addition, women lack access to and control and ownership of productive resources (farm inputs, implements, land and capital). These constraints affect food self-sufficiency and food security, and constrain the ability of women to move from subsistence to commercial farming to maximize their income. This reduced productivity and income for women increases their health risks and reduces their ability to engage in other productive ventures. On the positive side, the formulation of the National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy 2010-2020 encourages 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 biodiversity planning can bring the diverse roles, needs and knowledge of women to bear on national strategies to reverse the loss and unsustainable use of biodiversity. 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.

4. 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).

| Risk | Risk level | Mitigation measures |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Process in The Gambia to decentralize decision-making on resource management does not succeed | Medium | The policy review envisaged in Component 1 and the consultative process to develop land use plans at the local level will be used as opportunities to ensure a participatory and widely inclusive process. In addition, capacity building among local authorities and communities under Components 2 and 3 will strengthen decentralized approaches to conservation and sustainable resource management. |
| Low priority and funding given to biodiversity conservation due to lack of understanding of the economic benefits of conserving BD and ecosystem services | Low | The ecological and socioeconomic assessments of natural resources, including cost benefit analyses of long-term benefits of conserving BD and ecosystem services as compared to other land use options which offer short term benefits, to be conducted under Component 1 will provide baseline data and technical capacity for properly understanding and demonstrating the economic value of natural resources and ecosystem services and their contribution to local development, which will then be integrated into local land use planning that will be developed piloted in the Kuntaur LGA under Components 2 and 3. Lessons learned from these pilot activities will be replicated at the national level through dissemination / communication mechanisms to be developed by the project during its operational phase. |
| Climate change impacts, including declines in rainfall and increased coastal erosion as result of sea level rise | Medium | Project activities will help to protect coastal ecosystems that function to prevent coastal erosion and seawater intrusion, while activities to improve connectivity between conserved forest areas will help to preserve sufficient habitat for species in the face of potential climate-related stresses on habitat. The ecological and socioeconomic assessments of this project will support policy reviews and adoption of ecosystem resiliency measures that will generate environment and social benefits, within the framework of the local integrated land use management plans developed by this project. Further, the project will collaborate with a GCF-funded and UNEP implemented project to direct GCF financing towards adaptation and mitigation measures identified in the land use plans |
| Resistance and/or conflicts between community members related to resource access | Low | The project, in collaboration with local Community Based Organizations, will help to 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. Furthermore, creation of new forest conservation areas will be in the form of Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs), where local residents take the lead role in decision-making as well as monitoring and protection of resources, while in the MPA sites, mechanisms for community co-management will be developed. |
| Power struggles | Low | In The Gambia, the role of different institutions has been established by law, and in the |

| | |
|---|---|
| among national partners lead to delays in decision-making | 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. |
|---|---|

5. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other initiatives.

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. The project also will build on the experiences of the completed UNEP/GEF Fouta Djallon Highlands Integrated Natural Resources Management Project (FDH-INRM) (Tranches 1 and 2) regional project, which was aimed at promoting holistic approaches to integrated ecosystem management-based participatory and community-based strategies. 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 with the PA network project on issues such as strengthening PA management at the site level; coordinating PA management with community-based management initiatives on sustainable land management; and monitoring of critical habitats and species. It is important to note that although this UNDP/GEF project is designed to expand and strengthen the management of priority protected areas in The Gambia, including through enhanced community-based natural resource management, it does not address marine protected areas, and the work of the project in terrestrial PAs does not fully address the integration of PAs into the wider landscape and ensuring that biodiversity conservation is seen as an integral and necessary part of sustainable development at the landscape level.

The UNEP/GEF project strengthening of The Gambia's Climate Change Early Warning Systems is designed to enhance adaptive capacity and reduce vulnerability to climate change through a strengthened early warning and information sharing mechanism for a better informed decision making by government and affected population. The UNDP/GEF project Enhancing Resilience of Vulnerable Coastal Areas and Communities to Climate Change in the Republic of Gambia is designed to reduce Gambia's vulnerability to sea-level rise and associated impacts of climate change by improving coastal defences and enhancing adaptive capacities of coastal communities. The UNEP/GEF Strengthening Climate Services and Early Warning Systems in the Gambia for Climate Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change 2nd Phase of the GOTG/GEF/UNEP LDCF NAPA Early Warning Project is designed to strengthen the climate monitoring capabilities, early warning systems and available information for responding to climate shocks and planning adaptation. The FAO/GEF project Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia will promote sustainable and diversified livelihood strategies for reducing the impacts of climate variability and change in the agriculture and livestock sectors. All of these projects have the potential to provide important data / information on climate change related impacts on land management, agriculture, native habitats and biodiversity, etc., and the proposed project will seek to access and use such information to guide project design and implementation.

In addition to the GEF-supported projects noted above, the proposed project will benefit from and coordinate with several other on-going programs. As noted in the baseline, 458 communities countrywide that cover about 31,682 hectares of forestland are participating in the Participatory Forest Management Programme, which aims to increase community participation and ownership in the management of forest resources, ensure sustainable utilization thereof and improved contribution of forests to local food security and livelihoods. The GEF incremental investment will leverage the extension work carried out under the programme on community forestry and joint forest parks management. Agroforestry activities under the GEF project will leverage the investments of the National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project (NEMA) in establishing country-wide village vegetable scheme, and community-based forest enterprises and agroforestry schemes under the GEF project will leverage on the improved access roads and market infrastructure put in place by NEMA. In addition, NEMA project activities on technical and management capacity of producer groups will support the GEF project, as the majority of the households in the project clusters targeted by the GEF project have women involved in the producer groups, which will ensure the leveraging of the capacity building efforts, especially in the context of agroforestry and enterprise strengthening under the GEF project. The Food and Agricultural Sector Development Project (FASDEP) will develop community land use plans (40 plans) and establish community-based agroforestry sites across the country, including establishment of agroforestry nurseries and development of operational and maintenance manuals. Agroforestry efforts under the GEF project will leverage these substantial investments to extend agroforestry into areas around Community Forest sites. In addition, the GEF project's efforts to strengthen small-scale forest enterprises and to link local enterprises to local and national level markets will benefit from FASDEP activities to

promote agro enterprises through improved value chains, and to establish a Market Information System (MIS) and platforms for value chain actors such as business forums among micro enterprises and agribusinesses and promotional activities (trade fairs, field and market days). The FAO - Forest and Farm Facility is a partnership between FAO, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN); in the Gambia, FFF's main partner is the National Farmers Platform of the Gambia (NFGP). Through the National Environmental Agency (NEA), FFF also supports the ANR Platform, a multi-stakeholder platform that represents all national and subnational actors in the Agricultural and Natural Resources sector. FFF also has supported its partners with training courses, policy advocacy for removing barriers for effective tenure transfer to local communities, and biophysical assessments of selected CFs, and the proposed GEF project will leverage the capacity building and policy advocacy activities carried out by FFF. In addition, FFF will work in the coming years to strengthen producer organizations, specifically bringing dispersed CFs and small holders together; this would provide a key area for enterprise development work for the GEF project to build on.

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.

6. Consistency with National Priorities. Is the project consistent with the National strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions? (yes /no). If yes, which ones and how: NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc.

The Gambia is in a critical stage in its national development as it tries to implement a programme of sustainable growth aimed at improving the basic living standards of the majority of the population. To guide this process, the government has introduced a multi-year Vision 2020 development programme in which it commits to conserve and promote the rational use of the nation's natural resources and environment for the benefit of present and future generations. At the core of Vision 2020 is the recognition that accelerated economic growth will require increased investment and exploitation of the country's natural resources, as well as the successful incorporation of new technologies that are environmentally sound to increase productivity. The macro-economic policy objectives of Vision 2020 provided the basis for the elaboration of sub-sectoral policies and strategies in the agriculture and natural resources sector and other sectors of the economy in pursuit of the overall goal of the Vision. For example, SPA II, which supports the 4th strategic theme of Vision 2020, "Promotion of Participatory Government", serves as the framework for public sector investment in poverty reduction. To enhance its implementation as a programme based financing instrument, as opposed to the sectorial orientation of earlier strategies and project-based approaches, the Government has made it a condition that any national programme must be integrated into SPA II to be eligible for funding under the PRGF. A Roadmap for the integration of SLM into national strategic frameworks include inter-alia the wholesale submission of action plans and their investment plans as content elements of the VISION 2020.

The Gambia Environment Action Plan Phase 2 (GEAP II 2009-2018) indicated that farmers engaged in non-sustainable agricultural practices would be provided with viable alternatives by the sectors concerned, and proposes a number of key objectives, including (*inter alia*): 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. The Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE, 2012-2015) supports efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. The Agricultural and Natural Resources Policy (ANRP, 2009-2015) lists food security among its four strategic objectives and also supports the sustainable and effective management of natural resources and strengthening of the ANRWG. 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) identify priorities to "discourage uncontrolled extension of agricultural land into virgin forests, wetlands, marginal areas and other environmentally sensitive areas" and "develop sound grazing management systems". 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.

7. 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.

The project will support a situation analysis of current land uses, land use policies and land use options, as well as a Strategic Environmental Assessment to document land degradation and biodiversity loss; as results from these analyses will be inputted into a spatially-based decision support system to enable Integrated Natural Resource Management, this will provide a mechanism for sharing data and knowledge on land use, resource conditions, and INRM approaches with relevant stakeholders, including with local communities. Lessons learned under the project will focus particularly on the development of good practices to rehabilitate, protect and conserve different types of ecosystems. As The Gambia is participating in the World Bank Great Green Wall initiative, the project will develop synergy with this project and will contribute to the monitoring systems and development of key indicators for combatting land degradation and ensuring food security.

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


A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT²⁴ OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S):

(Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template. For SGP, use this SGP OFP endorsement letter)

| NAME | POSITION | MINISTRY | DATE (MM/dd/yyyy) |
|--------------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| Mr. Momodou Jama Suwareh | Ag. Executive Director and GEF Operational Focal Point | National Environment Agency, The Gambia | 03/01/2017 |

B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF policies²⁵ and procedures and meets the GEF criteria for project identification and preparation under GEF-6.

| Agency Coordinator, Agency name | Signature | Date (MM/dd/yyyy) | Project Contact Person | Telephone | Email |
|---|---|-------------------|---|-------------------|--|
| Brennan Van Dyke Chief, Strategic Donor Partnerships and Global Funds Coordination UN Environment |  | March 31, 2017 | Adamou Bouhari, UN Environment Task Manager | (225) 22514600 | Adamou.Bouhari@unep.org |

²⁴ For regional and/or global projects in which participating countries are identified, OFP endorsement letters from these countries are required even though there may not be a STAR allocation associated with the project.

²⁵ GEF policies encompass all managed trust funds, namely: GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF and CBIT
The Gambia LD/BD PIF

Annex 1: Protected Areas of the Gambia²⁶

| Name of Protected Area | Date Established | Total Area (ha) | Remark |
|---|------------------|-----------------|---|
| Abuko Nature Reserve | 1968 | 134 | The first Protected Area in the Gambia |
| Kiang West National Park | 1987 | 19,051 | This includes the extension |
| Niumi National Park | 1986 | 7,758 | First transboundary RAMSAR Site in Africa (Nuimi-Delta) |
| Boa Bolong Wetland Reserve | 1993 | 22,000 | Was designated a RAMSAR site in 1996 |
| Tanji Bird Reserve | 1993 | 612 | |
| Tanbi Wetland National Park | | 6,034 | Declared a RAMSAR site December 2002 |
| River Gambia National Park | 1978 | 589 | Managed as a project |
| Jokadou National Park | Pending | 15,028 | Site is in process of designation |
| Bolong Fenyo Community Wildlife Reserve | 2007 | 320 | The first community owned reserve |
| Bamako Community Conservation Area | In process | 1,032 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Barrow Kunda Community Conservation Area | In process | 359 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Badaru Community Conservation Area | In process | 2 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Demba Kanda Community Conservation Area | In process | 7 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Kass Wolof Community Conservation Area | In process | 24 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Chamen Community Conservation Area | In process | 32 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Oakau Njogu Community Conservation Area | In process | 502 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Faraba Bantang Community Conservation Area | In process | 59 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Kassagne Community Conservation Area | In process | 132 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Kanuma Community Conservation Area | In process | 47 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Tintiba and Dumbuto Community Conservation Area | In process | 172.3 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Berefet Community Conservation Area | In process | 984.9 | Process framework virtually completed |
| Bintang Community Conservation Area | In process | 1,184.9 | Process framework virtually completed |

Annex 2: Key Biodiversity Areas in the Kuntaur and Brikama Local Government Areas

1. Sites within Kuntaur Local Government Area

International Name: Samba Sotor to Kaur wetlands

- **Area:** 1,500 ha
- **KBA Criteria²⁷:** This site has been identified as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area based on the presence of: Significant congregations of one or more bird species at certain times in their lifecycle or seasonal migration.
- **Site Description:** The site comprises a line of shallow freshwater and brackish lakes bordered with extensive beds of Typha swamp, mudflats and areas of rice cultivation located on the northern bank of the Gambia River, 150 km from the coastline. The northernmost lake is a seasonal wetland, while the other lakes may be spring-fed and permanent.
- **Key biodiversity:** The birds of the lake nearest Kaur are relatively well known; those of the remainder much less so. The lake near Kaur is one of the most important in the country for *Pluvianus aegyptius*, *Vanellus albiceps*, and *Charadrius pecuarius*. In the early dry season over 100 *Circus aeruginosus* and *C. pyoargus*, together with a few *C. macrourus*, have been recorded congregating around the lakes.
- **Populations of IBA trigger species:**
 - Senegal Thick-knee *Burhinus senegalensis* (IUCN Red List Category: LC; Season: Winter; Population Est.: 450 individuals)
 - Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* (IUCN Red List Category: LC; Season: Winter; Population Est.: 1,600 individuals)

International Name: Dankunku wetlands

- **Area:** 6,500 ha
- **KBA Criteria²⁸:** This site has been identified as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area based on the presence of: Significant congregations of one or more bird species at certain times in their lifecycle or seasonal migration.
- **Site Description:** Although lying most opposite the Samba Sotor to Kaur wetlands site, on the other side of the river, these wetlands are of a quite different character. They extend for approximately 30 km, up to 3 km wide, on the eastern 'inner' side of a large meander of the Gambia River, where they run parallel to it. Next to the river is a narrow belt of *Rhizophora* mangrove, behind which is a 1 km wide strip of *Phragmites karka*, forming the largest continuous area of reedbed in the

²⁶ As per The Government of the Gambia, 2015. The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2015 – 2020)

²⁷ <https://www.ibat-alliance.org>

²⁸ <https://www.ibat-alliance.org>

country, and beyond, this in turn are seasonal freshwater and brackish marshes, which are a mosaic of shallow pools and low-growing Gramineae and Cyperaceae in the rains. The southern boundary of the site is Sofaniyama Bolon, tributary of the Gambia River which extends for 100 km into southern Gambia. It is fringed with *Rhizophora* mangrove forest along its length in the Gambia.

- **Key biodiversity:** The area is little studied. The mount of Sofaniyama Bolon is known for non-breeding gatherings of *Pelecanus rufescens*, *Mycteria ibis* and *Balearica pavonina*. The latter may also breed locally. Trees in the nearby villages hold breeding colonies for *Leptopilos crumeniferus*, which feed on the site. *Motacilla flava* and *Riparia riparia* have been recorded in large numbers and the reedbeds may be seasonally important roosts.
- **Populations of IBA trigger species:**
 - Great White Egret *Ardea alba* (IUCN Red List Category: LC; Season: Winter; Population Est.: 500 - 1,000 individuals)
 - Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* (IUCN Red List Category: LC; Season: Winter; Population Est.: 4,500 individuals)

International name: Islands of the Central River Division

- **Area:** 3,000 ha
- **KBA Criteria**²⁹: This site has been identified as an Important Bird Area (IBA) and Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) based on the presence of: Significant populations of globally threatened species
- **Site description:** The site consists of a number of low, alluvial islands in the Gambia River, where permanent saline water is replaced with fresh and where mangrove gradually gives way to freshwater riverine forest and thickets, much of which have been cleared. Between Kaur and Kuntaur is a line of seven islands separated by narrow channels and covered with *Phragmites karka* reedbeds. There are also three smaller islands, including Bird Island, covered with scrub. Further east, between Kuntaur and Georgetown, are two groups of islands, those of the Gambia River National Park and the Kai Hai Islands. Both groups are fringed with seasonally flooded riverine forest, dominated by *Mitragyna inermis*. MacCarthy Island, upon which Georgetown is located, is excluded from the IBA. Note: River Gambia National Park (589 ha.) is contained by the site.
- **Key biodiversity:** This site is an important roosting area for non-breeding wildfowl. Numbers are highly variable, but may include more than 10,000 *Dendrocygna viduata* and *Anas querquedula*, thousands of *Plecopterus gambensis* and an apparently declining population of *Sarkidiornis melanotos*, now recorded only in the hundreds. The diminutive Bird Island has the only large mixed waterbird colony on the river; although it has fewer than 1,000 pairs, it is the national stronghold for breeding *Phalacrocorax africanus*, *Anhinga rufa*, *Casmerodius albus* and, possibly, *Nycticorax nycticorax*. Bird Island is also a roost site for 15,000–20,000 herons, egrets, darters and cormorants, including up to 9,500 *Bubulcus ibis*. Little is known of the birds of the islands with the *Phragmites* reedbeds, which are potential strongholds for breeding *Ixobrychus minutus* and Rallidae, feeding areas for waterfowl, herons and egrets and roost sites for Palearctic Hirundinidae and Motacillidae. The riverine forest of the Gambia River National Park has isolated populations of a few forest species, including two species of the Guinea–Congo Forests biome. These include *Pyrenestes sanguineus*, which in The Gambia is found only here and in the nearby Nianimaru and Gassang forests on the mainland. Winter waterbirds of approximately 20,000 individuals assemble at the site.
- **Non-bird biodiversity:** The majority of recent sightings of *Trichechus senegalensis* (VU) are from this part of the river.
- **Populations of IBA trigger species:**
 - Great White Egret *Ardea alba* (IUCN Red List Category: LC; Season: Resident; Population Est.: 500 breeding pairs)
 - Great White Egret *Ardea alba* (IUCN Red List Category: LC; Season: Winter; Population Est.: 1,300 individuals)
 - Black Heron *Egretta ardesiaca* (IUCN Red List Category: LC; Season: Winter; Population Est.: 500 individuals)
 - African Darter *Anhinga rufa* (IUCN Red List Category: LC; Season: Winter; Population Est.: 600 individuals)

2. Sites within Brikima Local Government Area

International name: Allahein to Kartong Coast

- **Area:** 3,000 ha
- **KBA Criteria**³⁰: This site has been identified as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area based on the presence of: Significant congregations of one or more bird species at certain times in their lifecycle or seasonal migration.
- **Site description:** The Allahein river forms the border between The Gambia and southern Senegal. The river is half a kilometre wide where it meets the Atlantic Ocean. At its mouth is a sandbar, while extending to the north-north-west are 3 km of sandy beaches behind which lie shallow seasonal lagoons. The coastline then turns abruptly northwards to face west. One kilometre north of this bend is the border town of Kartong. There is a large area between the town and the coast that is quarried—the Kartong sand quarries, the country's main source of sand for building development. The quarrying has created several freshwater lakes. This part of the mine is being decommissioned.
- **Key biodiversity:** The area is relatively poorly known but there have been occasional records of Audouin's Gull (*Larus audouinii*) during the 1990s, with a maximum count of 38 birds. The area may prove to be an important roost site for other species of gulls, terns and waders. In addition to Grey-headed Gull (*Larus cirrocephalus*), the Kartong quarry lakes may also be important periodically for other waterbirds; numbers of Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*), Baillon's Crake (*Porzana pusilla*) and Allen's Gallinule (*Porphyrio alleni*) have been recorded.

²⁹ <https://www.ibat-alliance.org>

³⁰ <https://www.ibat-alliance.org>

- Non-bird biodiversity: The turtle *Chelonia mydas* (EN) is occasionally found dead on the beaches but is not known to breed.
- Populations of IBA trigger species:
 - Grey-headed Gull (*Larus cirrocephalus*) (IUCN Red List Category: LC; Season: Winter; Population Est.: 1,900 individuals)
 - Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*) (IUCN Red List Category: LC; Season: Winter; Population Est.: 6,000 individuals)