

# Analyse des Acteurs de la zone côtière de la Gambie

Asberr Natoumbi Mendy



**PROGRAMME  
CAPACITIES AND KNOWLEDGE**

**ANALYSIS OF ACTORS  
ON THE GAMBIA COASTAL ENVIRONMENT**

**BY:**

**Asberr Natoumbi Mendy  
Consultant**

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## List of Abbreviations

ADB	African Development Bank
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMN	African Mangrove Network
BD	Biological Diversity
BHE	Buried Hill Energy
BWI	Bretton Woods Institutions
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCD	Convention on Converting Desertification
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CCLME	Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem
CECAF	Committee for eastern Central Africa Fisheries
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CMEWG	Coastal Marine Environment Working Group
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
CP	United Nations Environment programme (UNEP) on Clean Production
DOSFEA	Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs
DPWM	Department of Parks and Wildlife Management
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ERP	Economic Recovery Programme
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FD	Fisheries Department
FIBA	International Fund for Banc Arguin
GBA	Greater Banjul Areas
GAMFIDA	Gambia Fisheries Development Agency
GAWA	Green Actors for West Africa
GEAP	Gambia Environmental Action Plan
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GREC	Gambia Renewable Energy Centre
IDSC	Inter-departmental Steering Committee
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPEN	International PoPs Elimination Network
ISCD	Inter-Sectoral Committee on Desertification
IUCN	International Conservation Union
NAAFO	National Association of Artisanal Fisheries Organization
NAM	National Assembly Members
NAP	National Action Plan to combat Desertification
NARI	National Agriculture Research Institute
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan NAM
NCC	National Climate Committee
NEA	National Environment Agency
NEMA	National Environment Management Act
NEMC	National Environment Management Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PRSP	Poverty reduction Strategic Plan
PSD	Programme for Sustainable Development
SPA	Strategy for Poverty Alleviation
TANGO	The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCC	United Nations Fund for Climate Change
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

## Executive Summary

The Gambia is a sub-tropical coastal country in West Africa. It has a coastline of about 80 km long, and 25 km of this lie in the bay-shaped mouth of the Gambia River (an estuary) and the rest facing the Atlantic Ocean. Its continental shelf area is about 4000 Km<sup>2</sup>. The estuarine areas have a dense mangrove forest (67,000 hectares, FAO/UNEP, 1996); provide breeding and nursery grounds for important commercial marine fish species, shrimps and other valuable aquatic organisms.

As a result of the serious drought spells of the mid 1970's and 1980's, agricultural production and animal husbandry has declined causing an intense rural-urban drift of youth looking for gainful jobs in the coastal areas. The coastal areas are heavily populated and increasingly exerting pressure on finite natural resources; in particular the exploitation of coastal and marine resources for both subsistence and other economic advantages. In the Gambia, economic activities in the coastal zone are dominated by fisheries, tourism, housing, industry, agriculture and mining.

The Gambia is very rich in terms of biological diversity. It has several coastal and marine habitats of high ecological importance including; the Toll point to cape creek (Camaloo comer), Oyster creek mangrove swamp, Tanji Bird Reserve, Tujereng Lagoons, River Kakima Delta-kachuma forest, Dau Dula to Kartong coastal forest and Kartong point at the Allahein river mouth (NBSAP, 1999).

The call for action to address environmental and natural resources management issues by The Banjul Declaration in 1977 resulted in the establishment of a Department of State Environment Unit in 1982 to coordinate environmental matters and monitor the impact of various projects and to provide advice to Government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO). The enactment of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) by Government in 1987 and the establishment of the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) chaired by The President provided both the legal framework for environmental planning, management and decision-making. The Gambia is signatory to and has ratified several conventions resting on environmental and natural resources conservation and protection.

Several Governmental institutions together with Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) including fisheries associations are actively engaged in coastal and marine environment protection.

Generally, most Government institutions, NGOs and CSOs are constrained by lack of adequate and appropriate human, financial, institutional and technical capacities to effectively and efficiently carry out their functions in the area of environmental management.

## **Method**

The task was to carry out an analysis of stakeholders in the conservation of the coastal zone of the Gambia. The coastal areas are normally densely populated, supporting various social and economic activities which impact on the environment. This task was undertaken by studying/examining existing literature and other relevant documents as stipulated in the Terms of Reference (TOR) annex 2. To complement the above exercise, interviews were conducted with key persons in Government and Non-Government institutions including Civil Societies on matters related to coastal and marine environment. Their area of activity and mandate were assessed highlighting constraints, needs and priority needs.

Information necessary to satisfy the enquiries were extracted and analysed. It was a daunting task to find literature/documents on programmes under execution by the NGOs and Civil Society Organizations. Equally difficult is the profiling of the organizations and their programmes.

## I. Global context

### 1.1 Background (Political, Institutional and Societal)

The Gambia, officially the Republic of The Gambia, is between 13°N and 14°N latitude on the west coast of Africa, bordering the Republic of Senegal and the Atlantic Ocean (Figure 1; The World Factbook, 2008). It is a sub-tropical country in West Africa with a total land area of approximately 10,689 km<sup>2</sup>, a population of about 1,400,000 people and a population growth rate of 4.2% per annum. The country has a total area of approximately 11,000 square kilometers. Its coastline extends from the mouth of Allahaen River (San Pedro River) in the South at 13° 4' N, to Buniadu Point and Karenti Bolong in the north at 13°31'56"N. The Coast line of the Gambia is about 80 km long, and 25 km of this lies in the bay-shaped mouth of the Gambia River and the rest facing the Atlantic Ocean. Its continental shelf is about 4000 Km<sup>2</sup>. The estuarine areas have a dense mangrove forest of 67,000 hectares (FAO/UNEP, 1996), stretching up to 200 km inland from the mouth of the River Gambia, which provides breeding and nursery grounds for commercial marine fish species, shrimps and other valuable aquatic organisms. The coastal environment, living reefs offshore environments and coastal associated habitats are believed to have high biodiversity quality.



**Figure 1:** The map of the Republic of The Gambia

The Gambia gained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1965 and Republic status in 1970. It formed a short-lived confederation (Senegambia) with its only neighbour, Senegal between 1982 and 1989 following an abortive coup in 1981. In July 1994, the country witnessed a bloodless coup, overthrowing a 30-year old regime. A new constitution and presidential election in 1996, followed by parliamentary balloting in 1997, completed a nominal return to civilian rule. It has a unicameral National Assembly (Parliament) elected by a popular vote system involving multi party participation. The country is a secular and multi cultural state with a strong and generally vibrant press. The Gambia participates in and encourages participation from many local, national and international organizations.

The economy has, until quite recently, been heavily dependent on rain-fed agriculture but following the serious drought of the mid 1970's and 1980's and the resulting decline in agricultural production and in animal husbandry, migration from rural farming communities intensifies. The rural-urban drift became more prominent against the backdrop of low productivity rain-fed agriculture with youths seeking jobs in the Greater Banjul Area (GBA), mostly settling in the coastal areas.

Its coastal and marine zone is an important breeding, nesting, feeding refuge for endangered and threatened species such as migratory birds, dolphins, sharks, marine turtles, the west african manatee and other species of regional and national significance. Like any other coastal state, the population density is high and increasing along the coastal zone. This has its implications as human activities along the coastline exert increasing pressure on the coast; in particular, the exploitation of coastal and marine resources for both subsistence and other economic purposes. The scope and extent of pressures exerted on the area is constrained by the lack of baseline data for monitoring systems.

## **1.2 Economics of the coastal zone**

Like in many coastal states, the coastline of The Gambia has since independence and during and after the drought spells of the 1970s and 1980s been developed intensively and presently is occupied up to the very limits of the sea. This occupation includes: residential, commercial and fish landing facilities and following the tourist boom of the 1970's, a significant number of beach hotels.

The Gambia's economic performance was relatively good in the early 1970s, experiencing an economic and financial downturn from the mid- 1970s until 1984/85 as a result of expansionary financial policies, inappropriate exchange rates and other pricing policies as well as adverse exogenous conditions such as the oil price increase. The imbalances created by the downturn had led to interrupted economic growth, accelerated inflation and external payment arrears. In 1985, the Government adopted a comprehensive Economic Recovery programme (ERP), supported by the IMF and the World Bank Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) financing and an increase in foreign aid. The adjustment programme has laid the base for sustained economic growth, which has reached an average of 4-5 % (real GDP growth). Among the achievements of the adjustment programme are; the floating exchange rate system; the meeting of budgetary targets; restraint in overall credit policy; controlling inflation and real interest rates.

Following the serious drought of the mid 1970's and 1980's and the resulting decline in agricultural production and in animal husbandry, the Government of The Gambia took the decision to seek redress from other economic sectors. Against the backdrop of low productivity rain fed agriculture and the country's endowment a plentiful and diverse supply of fish species: cephalopods, crustaceans and pelagic fish in the Gambia River and the marine waters, the focus shifted to fisheries, tourism and recently mining as sectors with great potential to make a substantial contribution to the socio-economic development of The Gambia.

Groundnuts remain however the single most important cash crop, and, aside from the re-export trade, also constitutes The Gambia's main export product. Groundnuts account for

nearly one third of agriculture's contribution to total GDP and on average nearly 32 per cent of the value of total merchandise exports (including re-exports) between 1995 and 2000. Fish and fish products account for approximately 15 per cent of export earnings (excluding re-exports). The bulk (about 80%) of fish and fish product exports are sent to the markets of the European Union (EU).

Industrial activity, mainly limited to groundnut processing, fish freezing and drying, the Banjul Brewery and leather tanning, contributed 9 % to GDP. Services constituted about 43 % of GDP, the largest contribution arising from trade (16% - including the profitable re-export trade), government (10 %) and transport (8 %). The direct contribution from tourism through hotels and restaurants was 3 %. The Gambia's small size, undiversified agricultural economy, and trade openness make it vulnerable to weather conditions and the price of groundnuts and economic conditions in neighbouring countries.

### **1.2.1 Economic activities in the coastal zone**

Subsequent to the aftermath of the depression of the 1970s coupled with the drought spells of the mid 1970s and 1980s, The Gambia implemented an Economic Recovery programme (ERP), supported by the IMF and the World Bank structural adjustment financing and an increase in foreign aid. In 1994, the Government of The Gambia prepared its first Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (SPA I) with a view to reducing poverty that impacted on an estimated 58% of the population (PRSP, 2006). According to Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan (2006), the Gambia renewed its commitment to poverty reduction in 1996 through the preparation of Vision 20/20. The goal for Vision 20/20 is:

*"to transform The Gambia into a financial centre, a tourist paradise, a trading export oriented agricultural and manufacturing nation, thriving on free market policies and a vibrant private sector, sustained by a well educated, skilled, healthy, self-reliant and enterprising population, guaranteeing a well balanced ecosystem and a descent standard of living for all, under a system of government based on the consent of the citizenry".*

The Gambia planned to realize these goals through a series of five-year development plans. The advent of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) in 1999 as a requirement by the Bretton Wood Institutions (BWIs) to get The Gambia onto a programme with the IMF necessitated preparation of the second Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (SPA II), which was the country's first PRSP (PRSP, 2006).

The key role the coastal zone will play in the fulfilment of the Vision 2020 cannot be over-emphasized. The characteristics of the coastal areas: the most heavily populated and huge fisheries resources, vast tourism area and other offer opportunities for gainful economic activities. In The Gambia, economic activities in the coastal zone are dominated by fisheries, tourism, housing, industry, agriculture and mining. In this section an analysis is made of the socio-economic importance of these activities to the coastal communities and the country at large.

### 1.2.1a Fisheries

The Gambia has a continental shelf of about 4000 km<sup>2</sup> which is considered to have considerable fish resources both in terms of biological diversity and abundant commercial fish resources. Its location in the highly productive upwelling zone of the Atlantic Ocean; the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME) region which is further enhanced by influxes of nutrients from the River Gambia, an estuary which are transported throughout the water column by the very active upwelling system supports huge fauna. The river, fringed with mangroves provides ideal spawning, nursery and refuge for many commercially important fisheries resources including aquatic mammals.

With the assistance of FAO and UNDP, surveys of the fisheries potentials of the marine waters of The Gambia were conducted between 1964 and 1965. The survey results indicated that the country has considerable maritime fisheries resources and that the exploitation and utilization of the resources can contribute significantly to national socio-economic development. This led to the creation of the relevant public institutions, the enactment of legislation and the elaboration of fisheries policy objectives for the development and management of fisheries.

The fisheries policy objectives are linked to some key national development objectives such as: increased food self-sufficiency and security; a healthy population and enhanced employment opportunities for nationals; increased revenue generation and foreign exchange earnings; and the attainment of national social and economic development. The sectoral policy objectives have basically remained unchanged over the years but the strategies for their attainment are being continually amended (and some discarded) to reflect the changing situations in fisheries at the national, sub-regional, regional and global levels.

Two types of fisheries operate in the Gambia: small scale (artisanal fisheries) and industrial fisheries. These fisheries are distinguished by their mode of operation. Artisanal fisheries has a fleet of 1 785 canoes (Frame survey, 2006) operating in both the marine and the River Gambia. It provides direct employment to 1 410 head fishermen and 4 694 assistant fishermen with an estimated 11 000 people as members of the head fishermen households. Fisheries operators spans beyond fishermen to include its ancillary workers such as boat builders, fish processors, fish retailers, etc. According to Mendy (2003), over 200 000 people are directly or indirectly dependent on artisanal fisheries and its related activities for their livelihoods.

The development of industrial fisheries has been relatively limited in the Gambia. Of the 20 locally registered companies only 8 companies have made investments in on-shore processing factories with no sea going fishing vessels. It is interesting to note that, presently, all fishing vessels operating in Gambian waters are foreign owned. These vessels land their catches in foreign ports where the fish is processed, packaged and labelled as products originating from those foreign ports. It is estimated that less than 2000 people are employed in the industrial sub-sector, the majority of whom are factory workers (mainly women).

The Artisanal fishery is the major source of raw fish materials for the fish processing establishments in the Gambia and the major supplier of food fish for the Gambian population. The bulk of fish exports from The Gambia could be traced back to artisanal fisheries.

## Status of Major Stocks

Although constrained by lack of research vessel, The Gambia benefits from regional surveys of its small pelagic fish resources and assessment by the R/V DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN and the FAO Working Group on Small Pelagic fish off Northwest Africa respectively. Unfortunately, unlike small pelagic fish stocks survey, the last survey of the country's demersal fish stocks was in 1986 but a regular assessment is being carried out by the CECAF/FAO Demersal Working Group. The results of the surveys and the assessments over recent years have all indicated that the major fish stocks are over-fished or fully exploited (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Status of main stocks

Species/Stock	Status	Year of assessment	Reference
<b>Small Pelagic Fish</b>			
<i>Sardinella aurita</i> /NW Africa	O	2008	FAO SPWG NWA (2008)
<i>Sardinella maderensis</i>	N A	2008	FAO SPWG NWA (2008)
<i>Ethmalosa fimbriata</i>	N A	2008	FAO SPWG NWA (2008)
<i>Scomber japonicus</i>	O	2008	FAO SPWG NWA (2008)
<i>Trachurus trecae</i>	F	2008	FAO SPWG NWA (2008)
<i>Caranx rhoncus</i>	O	2008	FAO SPWG NWA (2008)
<b>Demersal Fish</b>			
<i>Pagellus belottii</i>	O	2007	FAO/CECAF DEM_WG (FAO, 2008)
<i>Arius spp</i>	O	2007	FAO/CECAF DEM_WG (FAO, 2008)
<i>Pseudotolithus spp</i>	F	2007	FAO/CECAF DEM_WG (FAO, 2008)
<i>Epinephelus aeneus</i>	O	2007	FAO/CECAF DEM_WG (FAO, 2008)
<i>Penaeus notialis</i>	F	2007	FAO/CECAF DEM_WG (FAO, 2008)
<i>Octopus vulgaris</i>	O	2007	FAO/CECAF DEM_WG (FAO, 2008)

Nb. O – over-exploited ; F – fully exploited and NA – inconclusive assessment

### 1.2.1b. Tourism

Tourism has become an important source of income for the Gambia. The first tourist flight arrived in The Gambia from Sweden in 1965. The number of tourists arriving annually in the country has increased rapidly from 27,000 in 1974/75 to 74,000 in 1984 and has reached over a 100,000 now. The industry became so successful that by 1970, existing facilities became overstretched, creating the need for more basic infrastructure. Consequently in 1972 the area stretching from Cape Point to Kololi (and later extended to Brufut/Kartong as well as Barra Point) was designated a Tourism Development Area (TDA).

The Gambia has traditionally been promoted in its target market of Northern Europe as a destination for those escaping the long and cold European Winter. In the past, tourism was concentrated in the GBA where touristic infrastructures were mainly located. Modern hotels have been established within the reach of sandy beaches along the coastline with all sorts of attractions for tourists. However, in recent years there has been a subtle change in the direction of the industry. According to the Department of State for Tourism, the mission of the sector is to provide a diversified, quality product and to shift emphasis from the mass charter tourism to the sale to and attraction of high spending individual travellers and special interest groups ([www.lead.virtualcentre.org](http://www.lead.virtualcentre.org), 2008). This change in policy has been reflected by new initiatives in both the private and public sectors. These include setting up ecotourism development units in the DPWM (Abuko & Kiang West), an ecotourism advisor working at the NEA and tour operators offering more up country and tailor-made tours. As well as the public sector initiatives, charities such as Tourism Concern have highlighted the need for development to take place in line with community development and environmental protection measures.

The rate at which the Tourism Industry is growing risk adverse competition for resources with other coastal resources users; therefore eco-tourism has the potential to contribute to the alleviation of pressure on the coast as most tourist attractions are concentrated within this area. The usage and competition for coastal resources is compounded by the increasing rural-urban drift to already crowded coastal areas. The implications of this is quite explicit; over-exploitation of resources and environmental degradation.

### **1.2.1c. Mining**

The Gambia is endowed with titanium (rutile and ilmenite), tin, zircon, silica sand, clay and petroleum. The exploitation of these natural resources is limited but sand mining used to take place along the coast, commercial beach mining was since 1985 up to recently concentrated at Bijilo and Sanyang. It is estimated that between 100, 000 and 150,000m<sup>3</sup> of sand were extracted from the beach at these sites resulting in major environmental damage. The construction boom in the coastal zone which is related to urban developments and particularly the tourist industry, has led to widespread removal of the natural vegetation cover and dune formation (rendering the coast more vulnerable to erosion). Laterite is also mined at Bijilo just next to the beach.

Ilmenite used to be mined along the coast but ceased due to apparently being not economical.

Although hydrocarbon exploration in the Gambia commenced in 1956 with the award of an onshore exploration licence to British Petroleum (BP) followed by Shell and Arraca in 1972, Chevron in 1976 and through the 1980s and 1990s by Elf and then PetroCanada. Only Chevron managed to drill an offshore well, Jammah-1 in 1979 after acquiring further seismic and gravity-magnetic data. The well was drilled in 674 m of water and was plugged and abandoned as a dry hole after reaching a total depth of 3020 m in Albian age rocks.

In September 2006, the Government of the Gambia awarded deepwater acreage to Canadian company Buried Hill Energy (BHE). The company plans an exploration campaign involving seismic data acquisition and the drilling of at least one well.

### 1.3 Priorities and environmental matters of the coastal zone

Direct threats to biodiversity in The Gambia include the loss and fragmentation of the natural habitats due to deforestation, wetland drainage and infrastructural development, overgrazing and poor farming practices. While indirect threats are population pressure caused by rural urban drift since 1970s, poverty, illiteracy, lack of resources, limited trained human power and inappropriate policy and institutional regimes. In The Gambia, the last 15 years have been characterised by rapid urbanisation due to the rural-urban drift. From a growth rate of 8% in 1993, the urban population in 1995 was about 29.1% of the total population with an annual growth rate of 4.03% (1995-2002). The years 1973-1983 and 1983-1993 were characterised by a tremendous increase in the population of the coastal areas and The Gambia as a whole (State of Environment, 2002 in press). This was a time when considerable expansions were made in various sectors of the economy, attracting population masses from all levels of society into the urban cities. The resulting impact of habitat clearance and alteration is the extinction of many species and loss of area available for biodiversity in the coastal areas. Agricultural encroachment, construction activities and habitat destruction contribute to habitat loss and fragmentation on the coastal environment. In the Gambia, biological diversity has experienced serious assault from both human activities and natural forces. Several species have been lost due to deforestation, pollution, over-exploitation of biological resources, and the industrial and green revolutions

#### 1.3.1 The biodiversity wealth of the coastal zone

The Gambia is very rich in terms of biological diversity. It has several coastal and marine habitats of high ecological importance including; the Toll point to cape creek (Camaloo comer), Oyster creek mangrove swamp, Tanji Bird Reserve, Tujereng Lagoons, River Kakima Delta-kachuma forest, Dau Dula to Kartong coastal forest and Kartong point at the Allahein river mouth (NBSAP, 1999).

Due to the urgency of the biodiversity situation, particularly the extinction of species and the serious threats facing them, The Gambia Government declared its intention to encourage the protection of the remaining wildlife species (fauna and flora) by setting aside protected natural habitats for them and simultaneously promote conservation education to increase public awareness about wildlife and general environmental issues. Since 1916, six wildlife protected areas with a total land area of approximately 37,777 ha (i.e about 3.5% of The Gambia's land area) (Table 3). In the Gambia, four marine and coastal Protected Areas (PA) have been gazetted as follows: Niimi national park (1986); Tanbi wetland complex (2003); Tanji bird reserve (1993); Bao bolon wetland reserve (1996). Bao Bolon Wetland Reserve, Niimi National Park and Tanbi Wetland Complex are designated as Ramsar sites since the country ratified the Ramsar Convention in 1996.

**Table 3:** National Parks and Nature Reserves in the Gambia

Name	Date	Area (ha)
Abuko Nature Reserve	1968	105

River Gambia	1976	589
Nuimi National Park	1986	4940
KiangmWest National Park	1987	11526
Tanji Coastal Park	1993	612
Baobolon Wetland		20000
Total Area		37,769

**The Niimi/Sine Saloum National Park**, established in 1987 has an area of approximately of 4,940 ha. The park is contiguous with Senegal's Delta du Saloum National Park and Biosphere Reserve. Apart from being an important fish breeding ground, the area constitutes one of the last untouched mangrove areas on the West African coast north of Equator. This complex of mangrove, bolongs (tributaries) and adjoining habitats is a veritable magnet for many thousands over-wintering migrant birds (Land use...). Recent surveys indicate that at peak population periods, a good number of the world's known ospreys are to be found in this region. Although the mammal population of this area is by no means as rich or as obvious as its avifauna population, one of the world's rarer mammal species is found here - the west african manatee. The endangered cape clawless otter is also found here.

**Baobolon Wetland Reserve** is about 35 km<sup>2</sup> in area. It is a valley stretching over a length of more than 140 kms from the Senegalese border south of the Ferlo towards the River Gambia. This valley crosses several regions in Senegal and penetrates the Gambian Province of Illiassa. Large in certain places - more than 2 kms - and possessing secondary ramifications, it is entirely dry during 8 months of the year (except for the bottom of the valley), but during the rainy season it is more or less like an immense creek where the waters are full of large seaweeds and fish without any large exit to the river. Presently the area is not being used for agriculture because of salt water intrusion. However, the area still remain a wetland of great significance not only for weatherboards, but for the local communities as well because of its importance as a source of fish (Tilapia), fencing materials and thatch grass. The proposed baobolon wetland Reserve is the first Ramsar site to be designated in the Gambia.

**Tanji Bird Reserve incorporating the Bijol Islands** is the estuary and adjacent land at Bald Cape (the Promontory between Ghana Town and Tanji) together with the Bijol Islands. It has an area of about 136.87 ha. This area has been declared a bird reserve with species emphasis on the remarkable bird faunas that are to be found there. Tanji bird reserve has a high diversity of African and Palaeartic bird species; approximately 300 species. It has a significant numbers of migrants: Intra-African migrants 32 species (11%), palaeartic migrants 82 species (27%) and Resident species 181 (61%). This constitutes 295 species from 61 families out of 515 species and 75 families nationally.

**The Bijol Islands** are a major offshore roosting area for very large number of seabirds, migrant ospreys, shorebirds, etc. Also found in the bijol islands are Dolphins, upside down jelly fish, fiddler crabs, Ghost crabs, sand crabs, mud skipper, etc; and the list of mammals include but not limited to the following: Senegal bush baby, Bushbuck, clawless otter and Gambian mongoose.

**The Abuko Nature Reserve** holds a substantial population of Nile Crocodiles and attracts a wide variety of birds and mammals especially during the dry season. It has a total of 23 species of mammals, 37 reptiles and over 270 bird species. It is also an important Gallery

Forest. Abuko Nature Reserve has one of the most representative samples of Guinea woodland which harbours a number of species of very local distribution within The Gambia, including the dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*), Ahanta Francolin (*Fringilla achantensis*), White-spotted Flufftail (*Sarothrura Pulchra*) and African Goshawk (*Accipiter tachiro macrosceliders*).

The inclusion of Bijol Islands as part of Tanji Bird Reserve is a major asset to the status of the reserve. The Reserve, although small, is critically placed on prominent point of coastline (3700 m) not including estuary thus, the main reason for the importance of the site to migrants. It has a very high habitat diversity in small area: marine, estuary, freshwater swamp, coastal dune, woodland, thicker. Most of these are not represented in the other existing resources. Most importantly, it is close to the centre of population as well as the TDA. There is a limited utilization of the reserve for firewood extraction, clam gathering in the lagoon, some grazing and access for fishing pirogues.

**The wetlands** of The Gambia cover almost 20% of the total land area of the country. Of this 6.4% is mangrove forest, 7.8% is uncultivated swamps and 3.2% cultivated. Wetlands are increasingly being used for rice cultivation and for dry season grazing for livestock and they provide the main breeding and nursery areas for the main commercial fish species. Many species of wildlife are totally dependent on wetlands including the rare and threatened west african manatee, the clawless Otter and the Sitatunga antelope. Preliminary manatee survey (2006) by the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management (DPWM) to determine the population status of manatees has suggested an increase in the population of the species. It has now found that manatees inhabit areas beyond their traditional range.

The Gambian Wetlands are of international importance for numerous species of rare breeding birds such as the White-Backed Night Heron, Pels Fishing Owl and the Fin Foot. They also serve as wintering grounds for vast numbers of Palearctic migrants, waders, terns, herons and birds of prey such as osprey. The annual water bird census conducted by the DPWM with financial support from Wetlands International has revealed that most of the countries wetlands outside formal protection face threats ranging from habitat degradation and loss of species as a result of unsustainable use of wetland resources. However much of the wetland ecosystems particularly those still not protected retain much of their original vegetation cover and associated species.

### 1.3.2 Habitat degradation

The coastal area of the Gambia consists of the areas that border the Atlantic Ocean and brackish water environments that border the River Gambia, extending 200km inland (NEA, Coastal Definition Study, 1996). Coastal areas are usually the most populated zones in the world providing a lot of employment opportunities for a significant number of people. In the Gambia, increasing human population and the corresponding poverty impact heavily on the fragile and finite coastal resources. The demand by this seemingly large population on the natural resources base in terms of fuel wood supplies, construction materials, food production and other needs, put Gambia's coastal natural resources under great strain. Sand mining and laterite extraction have resulted in severe habitat destruction in coastal reserves. These problems are particularly true of Tanji Bird Reserve. Cutting down of mangroves for

social and economic purposes culminate into loss of habitat; nursery and refuge area for important fish species and other fauna.

The mangrove systems provide important revenue in terms of oyster and shrimp culture. Mangrove forests also provide a source of wood and experience some threat from agriculture but this effect seems more important in the estuary than in the coastal area. It is difficult at this stage to determine the value of the mangrove systems or to estimate the potential loss in productivity.

#### **1.4 National policies on the sustainable development of the coastal zone**

Subsequent to the call for action to address environmental and natural resources management issues by The Banjul Declaration in 1977 below, the Department of State's Environment Unit was there established in 1982 to coordinate environmental matters and monitor the impact of various projects and to provide advice to Government and Non-Governmental Organisations. The enactment of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) by Government in 1987 and the establishment of the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) chaired by The President provided both the legal framework for environmental planning, management and decision-making. These arrangements had led to very intensive and highly-participatory approach in the preparation of the Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP), thus providing a national framework to address environmental and natural resources management concerns. The first preparation process (workshop) was funded by the United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) which brought in participation from by a wide spectrum of interest groups including the Government, Non-Governmental Organizations, Donor Agencies, the private sector, and local communities. The UNSO/GAM/90/X02 Project and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provided additional financial support resulting in the commissioning of two Working Groups on natural resources and social services in 1991.

##### *The Banjul Declaration*

*"It is a sobering reflection that in a relatively short period of our history most of our larger wildlife species have disappeared together with much of the original forest cover. The survival of the wildlife still remaining with us and the setting aside of protected natural habitats for them is the concern of all of us. It would be tragic if this priceless natural heritage, the product of millions of years of evolution, should be further endangered or lost for want of proper concern. This concern is a duty we owe to ourselves, to our great African heritage and to the world. Thus I solemnly declare that my Government pledges its untiring efforts to conserve for now and posterity as wide a spectrum as possible of our remaining fauna and flora."*

The Phase I of the GEAP from 1992 to 2001 adopted in 1992 with the creation of the National Environment Agency (NEA) in 1993, was of pivotal importance in its commitment to a sustainable management of the country's environment. The GEAP was now set to improve economic performance and quality of human life and restore, maintain and enhance ecological processes, natural resources, and cultural and natural heritage.

The whole machinery was evaluated in 1996 and a second evaluation and preparation for Phase II was carried out in 2001. The GEAP remains a viable and functional approach to environmental and natural resources management. The results of the first evaluation have been accepted and are being put into action.

### Policy Objectives

**Environmental Policy Framework:** The ultimate goal of the GEAP is to ensure sustainable development. Consistent with the Government's commitment to this goal and the set environmental priorities, the policy objectives to provide the operational guidelines for the environmental protection and natural resource management intervention:

- To conserve and promote the rational use of natural resources for the benefit of the present and future generations ;
- To protect and improve the health and quality of life of all Gambians through sound environmental management ;
- To preserve and restore the equilibrium of ecological processes ;
- To strengthen the institutional framework for the environmental coordination and management at the national, regional and global levels ;
- To increase the environmental awareness and understanding of the public and bring about effective public participation and community involvement in environmental management
- To ensure the integration of environmental considerations in all development strategies and related activities ;
- And, to accelerate the adoption of alternate source of renewable energy.

**Parks and Wildlife Management:** Due to the rapid rate of loss of wildlife habitats Government initiated a strategy to set up a system of protected areas and thus a total of six national parks were established. The new policy objective is to increase national parks to 5% of the total land area, and to put emphasis on community conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity among others. Other biodiversity-related sectoral laws include the Wildlife Conservation Act, 1977, the Wildlife Regulations, 1978, and the National Environment Management Act, 1994.

**Fisheries:** The conservation and management of coastal fisheries resources are guided by the fisheries policy objectives which had evolved over the years. Following the first fisheries development policies that led to the creation of the Fisheries Department in the late 1960's, policies intended to facilitate the development of a fisheries sector evolved over the course of two national 5-year development plans (1975 to 1980 and 1980 to 1985) when the Government defined development objectives for the fisheries sector as a guide to public sector interventions. The broad objectives were reviewed as part of the Economic Recovery Programmes (ERP) of (1985–1989) and the successor Programme for Sustainable Development (PSD) of the 1990's. The policy objectives were further revised in 1994 following the formulation of a Strategic Plan for the Fisheries Sector of The Gambia. The plan was the proposed management system for the planned period 1994/1995 - 2004. The Strategic Plan is based on the knowledge that the fisheries sector has enormous potential and could make a significant contribution to the socio-economic development of The Gambia; as

long as there is judicious management, rational and sustainable production methods and efficient utilization of existing, perceived to be abundant, fish stocks.

The current policy objectives contained in the first (ever written) Fisheries Policy Document (2008), stipulated as adopted by the Government of The Gambia are as follows:

- To effect a rational and long-term utilization of the marine and inland fisheries resources;
- To use fish as a means of improving nutritional standards of the population;
- To increase employment opportunities in the sector;
- To increase the net foreign exchange earnings;
- To increase and expand the participation of Gambians in the fisheries sector ;
- To develop aquaculture; and,
- To improve the institutional capacity and legal framework for the management of the fisheries sector.

In adopting this policy document, the Government recognizes that responsible fisheries management is essential for the sustained development of the fisheries sector and its economic benefits as well as the welfare of its stakeholders. To achieve these goals the following should be addressed:

1. National Fisheries Planning for economic development to be based on principles of responsible fisheries and sustainable livelihoods.
2. Maintenance and enhancement of fisheries ecosystem, to conserve the variety and richness of the marine and fresh water resources.
3. Conservation and enhancement of the quality of natural heritage of the country including wildlife, wetlands, biotic diversity, river, estuary, and beaches.
4. Cooperating with international organizations for global protection of the marine and fresh water ecosystems.
5. Training facilities and research in fisheries matters including studies pertaining to socio-economic, cultural and legal aspects and to provide adequately trained professionals and technical capacity.
6. Improvement of access to financial resources by promoting the review of financial and micro-finance policies/regulations to take into account the special characteristics of fisheries.

**Forestry:** The main policy concerns are to preserve, maintain and develop forest land resources covering at least 30% of total land area; ensure that 75% of forest lands are managed and protected; and, ensure sufficient supply of forest products.

**Biodiversity:** The major policy concerns in biodiversity are developing a comprehensive development policy framework, which includes institutional strengthening of public education to create greater awareness, community involvement in conservation and research. The recently enacted Biodiversity/Wildlife Bill provides such a framework and addresses all the important concerns to Convention on Biodiversity (CBD).

The policy objectives further buttresses The Gambia's Vision 2020 Proclamation as given above.

### 1.4.1 Multilateral Convents on environment

In fulfilment of its international obligations, the Government had signed, ratified and or is a party to the following Conventions on environment.

- The Convention on Biological Diversity was ratified in June 1994 and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) concluded in 1999. In 2001, work was initiated on the Biosafety Protocol as a priority area of activity to build capacities in-country for the management of modified organism and exotics.
- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was also ratified in 1994 and the action plan for adaptation to climate change started in 1997.
- The UN Convention to Combat Desertification was ratified in June 1996 and the National Action Plan to combat Desertification (NAP) completed in 2000.
- The Gambia is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES),
- Convention covering the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage was ratified on 1 October 1987
- It is also a signatory to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (1996), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and The International Conservation Union (IUCN).
- The Gambia has signed and ratified Conventions such as the Montreal (1997), Bamako, POPs, Lome and participated in African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN). It has been collaborating with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on Clean Production (CP) and other environmentally related programmes, e.g. UNEP Chemical, and all those integrated preventive environmental strategies so as to increase efficiency and reduce risks on human and the environment.
- The Gambia adheres to the provisions and objectives of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF), Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change and the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central Africa Region (WACAF).
- Protocol concerning cooperation in combating pollution in cases of emergency (5 February 1985)

### 1.4.2. Management strategies of economic activities

In The Gambia, seven biodiversity “hot spots” were identified as requiring special attention. These include: Bao Bolong, Niimi National Park, Tanbi Wetland Complex, Tanji/Bijol Reserve, Bintang Bolong, Kiang West National Park and Abuko Nature Reserve (Personal communication- A. Jallow). These spots are considered biologically rich with ecological functions such as refuge/habitat, spawning and nursery grounds for important fish species, other aquatic animals and avifauna with social and economic value. The stabilizing effect of mangroves in most of the complexes is imperative in the maintenance of ecosystem balances.

Since the ratification of the CBD, The Gambia has taken steps in the conservation and preservation of the identified hot spots. The key institutions whose activities directly or indirectly impact on the coastline such as Departments of State for Local Government and Lands, Agriculture, Tourism and Culture, Fisheries, Natural Resources and Environment, and Trade Industry and Employment have formulated policies, enacted legislation, initiated projects and programmes to realise its overall national objective for sustainable development through the various sectoral approaches. Parks and Wildlife Management have management plans for almost all the hot spots.

Based on the competing interest and sectors that operate within the coastal environment, the relevant Acts are grouped as follows in Sallah-Njie (2004):

1. Environment and Nature
  - NEMA 1994 and related environmental action plans
  - Continental Shelf Act cap 26:01, Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone Act
  - Environmental Protection (Preventing Dumping) Act cap 72:02
2. Natural Resources Use
  - Wildlife Biodiversity Act, 2003
  - Fisheries Act 2007
  - Forestry Act, 1998
  - National Tourism Act/Tourism Master Plan
  - Minerals Act Cap: 64
3. Land Tenure, Planning and management
  - State Lands Act 1991
  - Physical Planning and Development Control Act
4. Transportation, Roads and Infrastructure
  - Ports Act cap 68:01
  - The Gambia Roads and Technical Services Authority Act 2003
5. Local Government Authorities
  - Local Government Act 2002

Several projects such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded “Integrated Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Management”, which concerns the conservation and sustainable management of globally significant biodiversity including mangroves, sea turtles, west african manatees and dolphins; the Gunjur Stay Green projects are being implemented in The Gambia.

### **Fisheries management strategies**

The 2008 Policy Document states that the Government shall take cognizance of a policy framework which would recognize that responsible fisheries management is essential for the sustained development of the Fisheries Sector and its economic benefits as well as the welfare of its stakeholders. The 2007 Fisheries Act also clearly stipulates management framework for fisheries resources of The Gambia. The implementation of fisheries legislation rests on the Secretary of State responsible for fisheries and the Director of fisheries advised by a Fisheries Advisory Committee comprising of all stakeholders. The following Articles of the present Act provides for the rational and sustainable use of resources.

Article 11 (1) of Part III- Fisheries conservation, management and development of the 2007 Fisheries Act makes provision for the Director to prepare and keep under continual review plans for the management and development of fisheries and aquaculture. In doing so, he should consult with stakeholders and fisheries authorities in the region. Also in Part III, Article 11 (3), it is spelt out what the said plan should contain. For example, the Director should identify each Fishery and Special Management Area and indicate their present state of exploitation.

In Article 13 (1) The Secretary of State responsible for fisheries may, in consultation with the Committee, in the interest of conservation, management and sustainable utilization of fisheries resources by Notice published in the *Gazette*, declare any area of the fisheries waters and corresponding subjacent areas, including marine protected areas or reserves established under any other laws, to be a Special Management Area for purposes of community-based fisheries management, application of certain conservation and management measures, artisanal or subsistence fishing operations or for any combination of the foregoing purposes or other specified purpose.

Also in Article 15 (1) of the 2007 Fisheries Act, the Secretary may, in particular where there is a need to take immediate conservation and management action, by Notice in the *Gazette* –

- (a) establish open or closed seasons for any specified area, for any fish stock and any period of time;
- (b) regulate the taking, from any area, of fish that are less or greater than a specified size, weight or dimension;
- (c) regulate the taking of fish from any area:
  - i. by a specified method, gear, equipment or instrument;
  - ii. by a specified class of persons;
  - iii. by a specified class of vessels;
- (d) regulate the landing, sale, display or offering for sale, transporting, receiving or possession of fish.

Article 16 (1) empowers the Secretary of State responsible for fisheries to, by way of Notice in the *Gazette*, declare any fish as protected which he considers is endangered or which are designated as endangered by international agreement.

The Secretary of State for Fisheries, Water Resources and NAM has just signed into Law, new Fisheries Regulations. The 2008 Regulations translate into action oriented provisions of the articles of the 2007 Fisheries Act for implementation. The regulations stipulated succinctly area, gear, fish size, fish species restriction.

It should be noted that the control and management of the coastal resources is entrusted to several key Departments of State. The institutions involved include the Departments of State for Local Government and Lands, Agriculture, Tourism and Culture, Fisheries, Water Resources and National Assembly Matters, Natural Resources, Forestry and Environment, and Trade Industry and Employment. The importance attached to the coastal area has led the government to formulate policies, enacted legislation, initiated projects and programmes to realise its overall national objective of sustainable development through the various sectoral approaches. At the global front the country is signatory to a number of International and Regional Conventions and Protocols, all geared towards better management and prevention of the damage and loss of the coastal ecosystems.

## **II. Analysis of actors involved in the environmental management**

The issue relative to environment was first raised in a declaration by the Former President of the Republic of the Gambia in 1977 dubbed the Banjul Declaration. A series of institutional developments followed, including the creation of the Environment Unit, establishment of the Department of State for Natural Resources and the Environment and recently, the enactment of the National Environment Management Act of 1987 (GEAP, 1999). However, public interventions to address environmental problems remain sectoral in perception and uncoordinated in terms of policy objectives. The Government recognizes the fact that policy alone cannot remedy this situation. To correct this requires a strong commitment to the principle of broad-based participation at all levels of planning and implementation of environmental policies.

The existing Central Government development management framework consists of the National Assembly, the Cabinet, thirteen line Departments of State and parastatal Organisations. The efforts of these public agencies are complemented by a host of bilateral and multilateral development partners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) (MEA, 2007).

The implementation of the Conventions to Combat Desertification (CCD), Biological Diversity (BD) and Climate Change (UNFCC) is carried out by five line Departments of State and their technical departments play a key role. These are:

- The Department of State for Agriculture and its four Technical Departments and the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI);
- The Department of State for Fisheries, Water Resources and NAM and its Technical Departments

- The Department of State for Natural Resources and the Environment and its Technical Department and National Environment Agency;
- The Department of State for Local Government and Lands and its Technical Department of Community Development, and Department of Physical Planning and Surveys, and Non-Governmental Affairs Agency;
- The Department of State for Trade, Industry and Employment and its Technical Agency, and the Gambia Renewable Energy Centre (GREC).

Prior to the enactment of the National Environment Management Act (NEMA) no legal framework existed for the coordination of the management of the natural resource development effort of the various line departments. Although the NEMA created the National Environment Agency as a coordination organ for the management of the environment, the arrangements and the procedures for the implementation of this function was provided by the GEAP process. The National Environment Agency (NEA), which was created in 1993, is mandated by the National Environment Management Act to coordinate the implementation of the Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP) and all environment related technical issues at the national level. The Agency discharges its coordinator functions through programmes assisted by eight working groups (including Coastal and Marine Environment), which together with the Agency constitute the elements of the GEAP process, refer to GEAP for further information. The membership of the working Groups are drawn from Governmental, Non-Governmental Organisations and private sector institutions.

The **Non - Governmental** Organisations and Civil Organizations actively participating in coastal environment management in the country are few (Annex III). These organizations implement projects in the agriculture and natural resources sector and thus impact directly on natural resource management.

Also important are the activities of some key programmes/projects in the coastal areas of the Gambia. A summary of these projects are given below.

**The Integrated Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Management Project (ICAM):** ICAM, jointly funded by GEF/World Bank and WWF is designed with the primary objective of strengthening coastal and marine protected area system and in-situ conservation of globally significant species and habitats in The Gambia. These include: strengthening of DPWM and training and awareness raising activities targeting local resource users, local government partners, and to a lesser extent, the general public. The project will also support the strengthening of the national conservation system/network and development of participatory conservation area management models.

**AEWA Project:** The project is funded by the Global Environmental Facility and being implemented by Wetlands International West Africa Programme as demonstration project in the framework of UNEP/GEF “Wings Over Wetlands”. It is being implemented in the Salou-Niumi Complex of Senegal/The Gambia. It supports a number of important activities including: designation of trans-boundary Ramsar Site; develop an integrated trans-boundary management plan; strengthen surveillance of waterbird breeding colonies; Capacity-building; awareness campaign (policy-makers); Promote sustainable use of natural resources; public awareness (of wetland values); and sub-regional workshop & exchange programme:

**Operational Management of Existing Marine Protected Areas Project:** This project is a pilot project funded by FIBA, WWF and IUCN and is intervening in the Niom National Park, Tanji/Bijo Island and Tanbi Wetland Complex. The project supports the following activities: increasing areas under protection; strengthening capacity to manage conservation areas; collection of information needed for the management marine protected areas; preparation and implementation of national/local level action plans for conservation of turtles, manatees, dolphins, migratory birds etc. ; development and testing replicable models for participatory biodiversity conservation and management through revising/preparing and implementing integrated conservation area and buffer zone management plans; and, capacity building of local communities and stakeholders and production of communication materials.

## 2.1. Weaknesses and strengths of main actors

### Weakness: NGOs and Civil Societies

In recent years, environment management strategies would benefit from increased collaboration between government and nongovernmental organizations. Coordinated effort in coastal environmental management is necessary for the achievement of the desired results. In The Gambia, the implementation of the GEAP processes are mostly done through a specific working group whose membership are drawn from key government and NGO institutions. The Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO), collaboration and cooperation between the member NGOs is weak. Also, the linkages between the NGOs and the Government institutions participating in the coastal environment management such as the NEA are weak. The tendency for each stakeholder to execute their programmes in partial or complete isolation is high. The fact is the Non-Government and Civil Society Organizations have diverse origin and philosophy providing services either directly to the rural poor or to grass-roots communities. It is imperative to note that in The Gambia, these organizations are independent and not mandated to collaborate in the way that government departments might be. They only collaborate only if Government institutions have something useful to offer.

General, most Government institutions, NGOs and Civil Societies Organisations are constrained by lack of adequate and appropriate human, financial, institutional and technical capacities to effectively and efficiently carry out their functions in the area of environmental management. Weaknesses highlighted for the various non-governmental organizations during the study were similar and are summarized as follows:

- ✓ The origin and the philosophy of NGOs and Civil Societies dictate the types of programme for implementation. The types and size programmes executed by these organisations limit scope of collaboration and cooperation with other key actors.
- ✓ The small size of most environmental project undertaken means that their projects rarely address the structural factors that underlie coastal and marine problems.
- ✓ Technical and human capacities militate against achievement of set goals and objectives. This also leads to inability to create effective learning forums and exchange of information.
- ✓ Some organisations lean mostly on volunteerism for works. Although this concept generates enthusiasm amongst beneficiary communities it does not augur competence.
- ✓ Accountability is a major problem. Some organizations tend to be more accountable to external donors than to the communities they serve.

### **Weakness: National Institutions**

Following the recommendation for the establishment and promulgation of institutional and legal framework for an integrated management of the coastal area by an ADB funded study on Coastal Area Protection and Management commissioned in 2002, an inventory of existing national legislations and institutions related to and responsible for aspects of Coastal Zone Management was undertaken in 2004. The reported noted that several institutions (mentioned above) have promulgated laws for the conservation of resources within their purview. It also made the following observations (weaknesses):

- (a) No formal Legislative framework exist for Coastal Zone Management
- (b) The jurisdiction over the coastal zone is fragmented and sectoral
- (c) No institutional infrastructure to regulate and control activities in the coastal zone
- (d) Lack of co-ordination between implementing agencies

In addition to the above weaknesses identified by the study, there is a general lack of consistency in sectoral policies as well as a general weakness in implementation capacity in line Departments in Government. It was observed that most institutions lack the capacity to effectively enforce existing regulations due manpower, technical capacities and logistical shortfalls. For example, Department of Parks and Wildlife Management cited inability to effectively operationalize and manage protected areas due to manpower shortage, lack of adequately trained personnel and mobility problems.

### **Weakness: National Research Institutions**

Environmental research especially related to coastal zone is limited in the Gambia. The Fisheries Department (FD), National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI) and Department of Parks and Wildlife Management (DPWM) noted as weaknesses, financial, technical and the requisite number of trained staff to effectively undertake environmental research programmes.

The quote below from the national report on integrated environment problem analysis nicely summed the weaknesses that beseeched national institutions.

*“The various institutions assigned the responsibilities of ensuring good coastal and environmental management, are on the whole weak, operate independently and in isolation rather than adopting a holistic approach in formulating and implementing policies. Even in the event where these institutions have formulated appropriate policies to address existing problems, there has always been the big problem of enforcement as a result of either shortage of the required manpower or resources”.*

The overall situation is that most NGOs, Civil Societies and National Institutions have weak capacities and require assistance in capacity building. The situation is more critical for those small NGOs and national institutions who are often constrained by lack of financial and human resources. As key stakeholders in the natural resources management, NGOs and civil society organisations could greatly contribute to the country’s overall development if their capacities are enhanced.

### **Strengths: NGOs and Civil Societies**

Despite the weaknesses NGOs (national and international) and national institutions showed some strengths. The size of the activities of these organizations in the coastal zones of the Gambia are small; coupled with the fact that most of the organizations are small and horizontally structured with short lines of communication. They are more responsive to changing circumstances. Also relative to size is the work ethic conducive to generating sustainable processes and impacts.

Most of the NGOs' concern with the coastal environment often maintain a field presence in the area and therefore are better placed to observe processes and intervene rapidly. With staff on the ground, the NGOs' rapport with the people allows them to draw on local knowledge useful for their success.

Some NGOs have encouraged and use participatory approaches for designing and implementing environmental programmes. This process enhanced exchange of information with regard to coastal environmental matters. Another strength of the NGOs is the ability to organize the local people into interest groups to meet certain technical and managerial requirements.

### **Strengths: National Institutions**

The strengths of national institutions normally are based on the fact that they are funded by Central Government with or without external support. They have the potential to undertake and accomplish programmes and activities related to the environment. The scope of intervention programmes and coverage are sometimes far-reaching than individual NGOs or Civil Society. National institutions involved in environmental management have promulgated laws for the control and management of the coastal zones which they could invoke to their advantage.

## **2.2 Links between actors in environmental management and capacity building**

Since the Banjul Declaration of 1997, environmental issues have been placed in vantage positions in Government agenda. It has led to the preparation of an environment action plan which calls for a strong commitment to the principle of broad-based participation at all levels of planning and implementation of environmental policies. Although the GEAP was prepared with the collaboration of all key players in the environmental sector of the Gambia, NGOs, Civil Societies and public interventions to address environmental problems remain sectoral in perception and uncoordinated in terms of policy objectives. Limited linkages exist between key actors in the coastal environment. While the NEMA has the exclusive responsibility for the management, control and regulation of the Coast Zone, it established a policy-making body - National Environment Council (NEMC) and an implementing and coordinating body, National Environment Agency (NEA).

An advisory body, the Coastal and Marine Environmental Working Group (CMEWG) established by the NEMA and under the aegis of NEA advises on matters related to the coastal environment. The CMEWG is a technical body with a multisectoral membership; central government institutions with a stake in the coastal environment. The NGOs and Civil Societies Organisations are co-opted as and when necessary. Nonetheless, it provides an ideal forum

and institutional arrangement for integrated coastal zone management. As a technical body, the working group deals with matters related to planning and implementation of programmes including capacity building.

### ***Donor Coordination***

*It is imperative to note that an Aid Coordination Unit was established under the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs (DOSFEA) as well as an Inter-departmental Steering Committee (IDSC) to coordinate the development activities in the country effectively and to create linkages and synergies in order to avoid duplication of interventions and waste of resources, particularly scarce budgetary resources.*

### **Strengths**

- The strength of the CMEWG lies on the fact that members of this body are decision makers normally mandated to decide on environmental matters.
- The body has the potential to network the relevant national institutions and all other key stakeholders for effective management of the coastal environment.
- The CMEWG has the potential to act as a rapid resources mobilization mechanism, for example pooling of resources to tackle a particular problem at a particular time.
- It provides a line of communication between the network of stakeholders represented at the CMEWG
- Provide an efficient platform for information exchange
- A potential platform for harmonization and creation of synergies amongst key partners

### **Weaknesses**

- The structure and set up of environmental management/intervention institutions may sometimes not allow for networking nor linkage with others
- The lack of regular consultation within and amongst key partners in coastal environment management
- Lack of coherent policies on environmental development; environmental policies and strategies are fragmented and sectoral.
- Inadequate media for information exchange

### **The Opportunities**

The coastal zone of The Gambia has witnessed rapid infrastructural expansion, high population growth and an immense rate of resources exploitation resulting in negative impact on the coastal environment. There exists though fragmented, Sectoral Laws and Regulations aimed at sustainable management of the various compartments of the coastal zone, development policy objectives of key institutions concerned with the developmental activities in zone are sometimes conflicting and inconsistent. The legal instruments formed the basis and platform for environmental management. The existing environmental laws and institutional framework provide an opportunity for a concerted effort to monitor and control

activities undertaken in the coastal area. The harmonization of the various development policies through an established network of key actors would provide a platform for stakeholders interaction thus creating an enabling environment for synergies and complementarism geared towards sustainable coastal resources management. As established by NEMA, the CMEWG has the potential to becoming that institution who networks, monitor and controls (oversees) activities undertaken along the coastline of the Gambia. The CMEWG could act as follows:

- ❖ The CMEWG could act as a forum for the defragmentation and harmonization of sectoral policies on the coastal environment.
- ❖ Create a platform for the dissemination of information on the activities, achievement, etc of the various actors/stakeholders.
- ❖ Provide a platform for collaboration and cooperation in planning and implementation of programmes including capacity building.
- ❖ Promote co-operation and transparency amongst stakeholders to reduce duplication of efforts
- ❖ Encourage both vertical and horizontal communication by key actors

The 2003 Biodiversity/Wildlife Policy and Legislation provided for Community and Civil Society involvement in biodiversity management. Although this call is recent, the coordinated participation of NGOs and CBOs with specialized experiences at the grassroots level will improve and strengthen institutional framework for environmental management at local level; especially for sustainable management and protection of the coastal zones and its resources as envisaged by PRSP II.

### **III. Analysis of the weaknesses of actors in terms of participation in environmental management and pre-identification needs for capacity building.**

#### **3.1. Weaknesses/Constraints and needs of actors group**

Since the call to conserve and protect the environment, Government institutions which activities relate to natural resources development and use were mandated to ensure their sustainable use along side implementation of sectoral developmental policy objectives. Prominent alongside activities of the key national institutions relative to the environment is the recent active participation of NGOs and Civil Society Organization in coastal environment management. The ultimate joint efforts, national institutions and the NGOs/Civil Society Organizations, should be seen as the desired goal for the attainment of sustainable natural resource management.

The legal and institutional framework is in place for the management of the environment but the issues of capacities and constraints featured prominently in both public and civil society organizations. An attempt to highlight the major capacity issues and constraints per key actor groups was undertaken as presented below:

### **Weakness/Constraints: Public Institutions**

National or public institutions with a stake in the coastal zone of the Gambia are the technical departments of Department of States stipulated in section II above. They form the core part of the Coastal and Marine Environment Working Group whose member includes:

National Environment Agency (Lead Agency)  
 Department of Fisheries  
 Department of Forestry  
 Department of Parks and Wildlife Management  
 Department of Lands and Surveys  
 Department of Physical Planning and Housing  
 Department of Water Resources  
 Department of Technical Services  
 Department of Tourism  
 Geology Unit

Representatives from the Non-Governmental Organizations and Local Community Organizations are co-opted when necessary to sit in the Work Group sessions.

From the review of the available literature and interviews conducted, it was apparent that public institutions involved in the management of the coastal zone environment are faced with a host of constraints and or needs that incapacitate/hinder the proper discharging of their mandate. The major constraints and needs identified for this group are as follows:

- Fragmented and sectoral development policies/laws
- Inappropriate, inadequate and conflicting legislation
- Ineffective institutional coordinating mechanisms
- Poor knowledge of the resource base (biology and ecology)
- Inadequate technical and professional skill levels of staff in the formulation and implementation of relevant environmental project proposals
- Inadequate technical capacity for effective environmental management
- Limited grassroot participation in environmental programme planning and management
- Inadequate budgetary allocations
- Low staffing levels
- Inadequate level of transparency or lack of transparency
- Inefficient/inadequate facilities and equipment for effective information exchange

The conservation and management of the coastal and marine resources in The Gambia cut across various sectoral departments as established by the government to regulate the use of natural resources and ensure their effective management for the benefit of the people. These public institutions have varied capacities. In assessing their needs, it was concluded that in general, institutional capacity constraints are: lack of adequate trained personnel and equipment/materials.

### Weaknesses/Constraints: NGOs and Civil Society Organizations

The participation of NGOs and Civil Society organizations in management of the coastal environment is quite recent and limited in scope. The non-governmental organizations involved in the management of the coastal zone are few, mostly small and localized. The following constraints and needs were attributed to them.

- The origin and ideology of the organization
- Inadequate consultations and ineffective coordination among NGOs, civil society organizations and Government agencies
- Lack of transparency
- Low level staffing and inadequate competence to participate in decision making
- Inadequate level of decentralization to facilitate the implementation of incentive measures.

### Weaknesses/Constraints: Others

These are grassroot organizations/communities complementing the efforts of the above two groups in the management of local coastal resources. In the fisheries sector, community fisheries centres, the National Association of Artisanal Fisheries Operators (NAAFO) and the Gambia Fisheries Development Agency (GAMFIDA) are contributing in the enlightenment of artisanal operators with regards sustainable utilization of fisheries resources. This group are more vulnerable and disadvantage in terms resources mobilization. Below are some major constraints and needs for the group.

- Limited involvement in decision-making and benefit sharing by local association and communities (example fisheries association and fishing communities).
- Lack of support from central Government
- Low levels of organizational skills
- Lack and or inadequate finance

### Needs (General)

The study has identified the capacity needs for the amelioration of the priority needs for all the groups as given in Table 4. The needs are common to all the groups.

**Table 4:** Capacity needs for priority constraints

Capacity Constraints	Capacity Needs		
	Individual	Institutional	Systemic
Low human Resource Capacity	Adequate professional and support staff in specified skill areas	Adequate human resource capacity in key skills	Adequate number of professional and support staff in key areas
Inadequate budgetary allocations	Review and revise remuneration level of personnel	Adequate and timely budgetary allocations	Adequate and timely budgetary allocations
Low level of	Availability of	Availability of	Availability of relevant and

equipment and infrastructure	sufficient equipment and infrastructure e.g. for communication	relevant and sufficient equipment and infrastructure	sufficient equipment and infrastructure
Few and limited capacity in information generation and dissemination	Acquisition of short-and long-term training	Conduct short and long-term training in information generation and dissemination	Capacity building through conduct of short and long-term training
Low institutional and coordinating mechanisms		Institute efficient coordinating mechanisms	Introduce and institute effective coordinating mechanisms among agencies
Inappropriate, inadequate and conflicting legislation		Review and update existing legislation and resolve conflicts arising thereof	Review and update existing legislation and resolve conflicts arising thereof

### 3.2. Groups of the most relevant actors for strengthening the involvement of the civil society in the conservation of coastal environment

The principal institutions involved in the conservation and the management of the coastal environment in the Gambia are : i) National Environment Agency, ii) Department of Fisheries, iii) Department of Forestry, iv) Department of Parks and Wildlife Management and v) the Department of Tourism. These institutions by way of their mandate are very active in the coastal zone. Although sectorally fragmented, these public institutions have promulgated into laws, environmental protection and management along the coastline of the Gambia.

The GEAP provides a framework for national environmental policy and, planning and decision making for natural resources management. The policy objectives of the GEAP directly support the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Correspondingly, different sectors have set different sector specific policy goals and objectives and long-term sector strategies that are relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. Some of the relevant sectoral policy objectives for the management of the coastal environment include the following:

- **Environment Sector:** To control environmental degradation and pollution in both natural and human ecosystems through firm regulations and application of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA).
- **Wildlife Sector:** To establish national parks and nature reserves covering at least 5% of the national land area for the conservation, protection and management of the fauna and flora with a view to improving the management capacity of the DPWM and increase revenue generation from wildlife resources.
- **Forestry Sector:** To reserve maintain, develop and manage 30% of the total land area under forest with a view to enhancing environment protection, through minimizing soil degradation and erosion, maintaining river bank stability, protecting wetlands and improving, conserving and preserving biodiversity.

- **Fisheries Sector:** To promote efficient conservation, management and development of inland and marine fisheries, with a view to ensuring the optimum and sustainable utilization of the fisheries resources for The benefit of the people of the Gambia.
- **Water Resources:** To provide an information base pertaining to water resources and Climate monitoring so as to enhance conservation of biological resources and address the requirement of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

### 3.3. Priority actors for capacity building

The priority actors identified for capacity building include the public institutions mentioned in earlier sections of the report, the civil organisations and the local associations/communities already on the ground. These actors need both institutional capacity strengthening and enhancement of professional capacities in order to effectively discharge their mandate. The NGOs and Civil Organizations specifically active in environmental management in the coast of the Gambia are limited in number and size. The efforts of the Fisheries Department in the management of coastal fisheries resources are being complemented by the National Association of Artisanal Fisheries Operators, GAMFIDA and the Fisheries Centres Management Committees. Provisions of the 2007 Fisheries Act has called for the active participation of the local fishing communities in the conservation and management of the coastal environment. As the purpose of the analysis was come up with a prioritized list of actors for capacity building; five NGOs/CSO (Annex: Profiles) were identified as follows:

- (a) Stay Green Foundation
- (b) West African Bird Study Association
- (c) National Association of Artisanal Fisheries Operators
- (d) Gunjur Environment Protect and Development Group
- (e) Makasutu Wildlife Trust

In the annex (constraints, needs, etc. Matrix), analysis of constraint, strengths, weaknesses and capacity needs are given. These needs were stipulated by the respondents who happen to be heads of the organization.

### CONCLUSION

The narrow coastline of The Gambia offers diverse fauna and flora whose rational and sustainable utilization will ensure the provision of wealth and welfare of the rapidly growing population settling in this area. Coastal zones of the world are the most populated areas; The Gambia's coastal area is overwhelmed with a host of activities ranging from fisheries, tourism agriculture to mining. Little has been achieved in biodiversity assessment and monitoring in The Gambia. Despite the participation of several national institutions and some NGOs in the development and management of coastal and marine environment, they are faced with a host of capacity issues and constraints which are accountable for this lack-luster state of environmental assessment and monitoring. These capacity issues and constraints can be conceived in four broad groups. These are: inadequate information, inadequate stakeholder participation, institutional inadequacies and inadequate technical and infrastructure requirements.



## ANNEXES

### **List of persons met**

1. Mr. Adiatou E. Njai, Director of Fisheries
2. Mr. Alpha .O. Jallow, Acting Director, Department of Parks and Wildlife Management
3. Mrs. Ndey Bacurin, Former Deputy Executive Director, National Environment Agency
4. Mr. Momodou Jama Suwareh, Acting Deputy Executive Director, National Environment Agency
5. Mr. Salmina Jobe, Coastal Zone Management, National Environment Agency
6. Mr. Lamin Bojang, Deputy Director, Department of Forestry
7. Mr. Amadou Saine, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Department of State for Fisheries, Water Resources and National Assembly Matters.
8. Ousainou Touray, Manager, ICAM

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Job/Work Plan

<b>Job</b>	<b>Duration (in days)</b>
Bibliographical work	5
Interviews, meets, survey	11
Analysis and editing	9
Final draft including FIBA's comments	3
Participation in the restitution workshop	2
<b>Total number of days for the study</b>	<b>30</b>