



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

Supplementary Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) Policy
Final Validated Policy

Compiled by Falie C.K. Baldeh

The findings, conclusions and interpretations expressed in this document are those of the consultant(s). Omissions and errors should not in any way be associated to the Government of The Gambia.

Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources

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Consultants:

Falie C.K. Baldeh – Lead Consultant

Resource Persons

Mamma Sawaneh - UTG

Lamin KM Fatty -UTG

Sector Experts

Mr. Ousman Mass Jobe/Dampha - Fisheries

Dr. Ebrima Njie - Forestry

Mr. Aruna Jobe - NEA

Mr. Ousainey Touray – Parks and Wildlife

Dr. Peter Gibba/Luis Mendy – Water Resources

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

ADB	African Development Bank
ADB	Agricultural Development Bank
ADWAC	Agency for the Development of Women and Children
AEs	Agro-Ecologies
AEU	Agricultural Engineering Unit
AEZs	Agro-Ecological Zones
AGOA	African Growth Opportunity Act
AIS	Agricultural Insurance Scheme
ANR	Agriculture and Natural Resources
ANRWG	Agriculture and Natural Resources Working Group
ANRP	Agriculture and Natural Resource Policy
BTF	Biodiversity Trust Fund
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CFM	Community Forest Management
CFNPP	Cornel Food and Nutrition Policy Project
CRRN	Central River Region North
CRRS	Central River Region South
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CU	Concern Universal
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAS	Department of Agricultural Services
ECOWAS	Economic for West African States
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FADSEP	Food and Agriculture Sector Development Project
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFHC	Freedom From Hunger Campaign
FNU	Food and Nutrition Unit
GAFNA	Gambia Food and Nutrition Agency
GAFSP	Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme
GATT	General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs
GBOS	Gambia Bereau of Statistics
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAP	Gambia Environmental Action Plan
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GNAIP	Gambia National Agricultural Investment Plan
GOTG	Government of The Gambia
IARC	International Agricultural Research Centres
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management

ICZM-WG	Integrated Coastal Zone Management Working Group
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IUU	Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
LADEP	Lowland Agricultural Development Programme
LUC	Land Use Classes
MAVA	Foundation for Biodiversity Conservation in West Africa
MDG 1C	Millennium Development Goals
MECCNAR	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change ² And Natural Resources
MoFWR	Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoFEA	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield
NACOFAG	National Coordinating Farmers Association of the Gambia
NAFSIP	National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plan
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NARS	National Agricultural Research Systems
NASS	National Agricultural Sample Survey
NAWFA	National Women Farmers Association
NBR	North Bank Region
NEA	National Environment Agency
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act
NEMC	National Environmental Management Council
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NERICA	New Rice for Africa
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NFTP	None-Forest Timber Products
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAGE	Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment
PCO	Programme Coordination Office
PPR	Pestes de Petites Ruminantes
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSC	Programme Steering Committee
PSD	Program for Sustained Development
PURA	Public Utility and Regulation Authority
R&D	Research and Development
STU	Seed Technology Unit
SRFC	Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission
UfW	Unaccounted-for-Water
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UPVO	International Union for Protection of New Varieties of Plants
UTG	University of The Gambia
VRC	Variety Release Committee
WAAPP	West African Agricultural Productivity Project
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WCR	West Coast Region
WDM	Water Development Management
WTO	World Trade Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy framework is supplementary and aligned to Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) Policy (2017 – 2026). It is primarily focusing on the Natural Resources sub-sector, aiming to adequately sharpen the policy guidelines for decision making and implementation. Agriculture and natural resources are inseparable, and this policy is by no means an attempt to divorce the two as a sector. It recognizes the crucial links; and is grounded in the country's national development and poverty reduction frameworks. The policy was developed through participatory and consultative processes (from national level to the grassroots) involving a variety of stakeholders from the public, non-governmental, civil society and private sectors.

Conditions in The Gambia are rapidly changing. The policy will therefore evolve over time, keeping pace with the changing needs of the population. Despite government's significant efforts in transforming the economy, The Gambia remains one of the least developed, low-income and food-deficit countries in the world, with an HDI ranking of 173 out of 188 in 2015. The country is highly vulnerable to recurrent droughts, floods, and food insecurity. Poor economic conditions bar households in meeting basic food and nutrition needs. About 48.6¹ percent of the population live on less than US\$1.25 per day, with 8 percent of them considered food insecure.²

Agriculture and natural resources sector is the mainstay of the rural economy. The sector contributed significantly to the foreign exchange earnings required to secure supplementary food supplies from external sources; makes up about 30 percent of the country's GDP, employs over 70 percent of the active labour force, generates foreign exchange earnings and provides two-thirds of total household income in 2010 (PAGE 2012 – 2015). The ANR sector is constrained by a host of factors including challenging climatic conditions, and depleting natural resources resulting to adverse effects on production levels. This policy establishes the basis for action to protect the rights and address the needs and aspirations of resource-users – implementing long-term natural resource protection, development and inclusion programmes that would spur sustainable economic development and build social capital.

The policy provides the framework for our overall direction in the next 10 years, and gives an impetus to focus efforts on the ANR sector, with a wider view and intent of contributing towards sector learning and practice. It sets out comprehensive and crosscutting policy directions, drawing on all sectors of the economy in a spirit of partnership and collaboration. The policy is grounded in the country's national development and poverty reduction frameworks, including the Government of The Gambia's Vision 2020 and the 2012-2015 Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE). It focuses on building both the capabilities of the citizens and the capacities of the sub-sectors to address critical needs of resource-users, which ranks very high in government's development agenda. It sets in place enhanced institutional arrangements for coordination and mainstreaming, and outlines a new integrated approach to resource mobilization and management, focusing attention on key sector priorities.

Public-private sector partnership in agriculture and natural resource development remains crucial for the policy objectives as the sector takes its critical role in the economic growth. The policy strategic focus is therefore, stimulating private sector investment and sustainable employment creation for the local populations, and promoting competitive value chains and market linkages in the sector.

¹ 2015 Integrated Household Survey.

² 2015 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis.

It emphasizes institutional capacity development of the core agencies, prioritized research and development while strengthening intersectoral partnership and coordination for efficiency and effectiveness. Sound trans-boundary resource management is a pre-requisite requirement in our regional cooperation in OMVG. The GoTG will review our collaborative efforts in the Convention in order to incorporate emerging issues.

The policy aspires for a **green economy** that is more inclusive and achievable to create jobs and generate decent incomes for resource users. The main thrust of the policy is to contribute towards economic growth through the natural capital that is fully developed, sustainably managed and used as sources and enablers of growth driven in partnership with the private Sector through the provision of appropriate institutional supports and services, as well as a conducive operating environment. Local communities and civil society are encouraged to be part of the engine. The key policy alignment is to transform agriculture and natural resource sector to a modern market-oriented commercial sector with well-integrated value chains in order to increase agricultural incomes.

Given the country's vulnerability to climate change, this policy will focus on adapting and mitigating the effects of climate-related hazards particularly on the productive sectors and the economic enabling infrastructure. The green growth strategies by adapting to emerging climatic constraints; preserving and enhancing the productive base; while protecting the environment and introducing Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The policy initiatives emphasizes the following priority areas and cross-cutting issues as identified in our consultative forums: combating land degradation; drought and desertification; protecting our invasive species; wetlands; marine and coastal resources; and cross-border conservation of natural resources.

The policy does not address the minute details of each sub-sector, but rather attempts to provide broad policy directions. Through the relevant ministries, The Government of The Gambia confirms its commitment to provide an enabling environment and support for the implementation of this supplementary policy.

1.0 BACKGROUND

This policy framework is supplementary to Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) Policy (2017 – 2026); and provisions in both documents are aligned. It is primarily focusing on the Natural Resources sub-sector, aiming to adequately sharpen the policy guidelines for decision making and implementation. This is compelled by our strong commitments in managing adaptations to the emerging climate change and accelerating desertification in The Gambia. As climate change begins to manifest itself with increasing frequency and intensity of hazards, the costs of natural disasters are rising, while the consequences are becoming more and more unbearable. This policy provides the framework for our overall direction in the next 10 years, and for work and decision making. It further provides an impetus to focus our efforts in implementing the ANR Policy (2017 – 2026), with a wider view and intent of contributing towards sector learning, policy and practice.

Despite its primary role in The Gambian economy, it is generally accepted that agriculture alone does not have the capacity to be the engine of sustainable economic growth. Agriculture and natural resources are inseparable, and this policy is by no means an attempt to divorce the two as a sector. The policy recognises the crucial link between the two and rural employment. This supplementary ANR Policy is grounded in the country's national development and poverty reduction frameworks, including the Government of The Gambia's Vision 2020 and the 2012-2015 Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE). It sets out comprehensive and crosscutting policy directions to implement national development strategies in agriculture and natural resources, drawing on all sectors of the economy in a spirit of partnership and collaboration.

The policy focuses on building both the capabilities of the citizens and the capacities of the sub-sectors to address critical needs of resource-users. Building the local economy and meeting the needs of vulnerable and underserved people ranks very high in government's development agenda. This Supplementary Policy set in place enhanced institutional arrangements for coordination and mainstreaming, outlines a new integrated approach to resource mobilization and management, and develop a clear policy direction for natural resource sub-sectors in the ANR sector. It focuses attention on policy priorities, and underscores linkages between the sub-sectors.

The social, economic, and political conditions in The Gambia are changing rapidly. The policy will therefore evolve over time, keeping pace with the changing needs of the population. It establishes the basis and framework for action to protect the rights and address the needs and aspirations of resource-users – implementing long-term natural resource protection, development and inclusion programs that would spur sustainable economic development and build social capital. The policy does not address the minute details of each sub-sector, but rather attempts to provide broad policy directions.

This Supplementary Policy was developed through participatory and consultative processes (from national level to the grassroots) involving a variety of stakeholders from the public, non-governmental, civil society, and private sectors. It reflects citizens' input obtained through a national and regional consultations that used focus group (for each sub-sector) and key informant interviews. Stakeholders were convened at each Regional Governors' Offices for policy development process at which, the basic framework for the policy was discussed. Following stakeholders' orientation and consultations, a national policy validation workshop ensued in Banjul that included a cross-section of people from stakeholder ministries and development partners was conducted to determine if the draft document reflected their input, needs, and aspirations.

PART I: POLICY CONTEXT

1.1 Current National Development Context

The Gambia is among the poorest countries in the world, with the HDI ranking the country 173 out of 188 in 2015³. The Gross Domestic Product per capita in Gambia was last recorded at 532.30 US dollars in 2016⁴, but the overall poverty rate was 48.6%⁵ using the less than USD1.25 per person per day, with 8 percent of them considered food insecure⁶. Rural poverty is on the increase as 60% of rural households living in poverty in 2003 increased to 62.1% in 2010⁷. The economy had been generally strong in the past decade, with an average annual real GDP growth rate of about 6% during 2003 - 2006, and a slight reduction to 5.3% during 2006 - 2010. Despite the global economic crisis in 2007 - 2008, economic growth has remained robust, mainly owing to the good performance in the service and agricultural sectors. The Gambia has been able to register an average growth rate of 3% over the decade 2004 - 2014, and 3.9% over the period 2012 to 2015⁸ (the time period covering the PAGE). The average growth rate masks a disturbing fact though; growth has been extremely erratic over this period. Over the past 15 years, The Gambia has experienced years of negative growth (2002, 2005 and 2011), one of which was due to policy slippages (2002) and the other two due to external weather shocks.

The above, coupled with an average population growth rate of 3.3% between 2003 and 2013 and a depreciating currency has meant that GDP per capita in dalasi has risen but in dollar terms has fallen from \$551 (2010) to \$428 (2014)⁹. Fiscal reports in 2015 showed that the country has steadily performed well, registering a growth rate of 4.7% in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), primarily driven by the developments in the service sector (including tourism, inflow of remittances and re-exports). Public debt (including both domestic and external debt, which stood at 74.8 percent of the GDP at the end of 2014, has declined to 73.5 percent of the GDP by end of 2015¹⁰. Despite this growth, the Gambia remains one of the poorest in the world with over 60% of the population still below the poverty line¹¹.

There was a change of government in The Gambia on December 1st, 2016; and the new government is now struggling to secure the desired economic growth and stability. It will require significant efforts to achieve this. Agriculture has not recovered under vision 2016. Post December 1st, witnessed the new government entering into new loan agreements to fund its agenda for economic transformation. This was in concurrence with donor pledges that may lead to rapid increase in social development and significant rise in Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), which can temporarily minimize the impact of our current economic depression.

Agriculture and natural resources sector has a key role in helping achieve Government's objectives for economic growth and development. Promoting growth and employment in The Gambia must reflect a more integrated ANR sector. Moreover, the deep horizontal inequalities that severely disadvantaged natural resource-users and fueling economic vulnerability to external shocks led to subsequent under-performance of the economy and increasing poverty in the country.

³ HDI, 2015

⁴ <https://tradingeconomics.com/gambia/gdp>

⁵ 2015 integrated household survey

⁶ 2015 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis

⁷ MDG Accelerated Framework MAF, 2010

⁸ Note that growth rate for 2015 is a projection by the Gambia Bureau of Statistics

⁹ IMF Country Report 15/104, April 2015

¹⁰ 2015 Budget Speech by the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs of the Gambia

¹¹ The Gambia National Entrepreneurship policy draft, 2016

Agriculture and natural resources sector is the mainstay of the rural economy. The sector contributed significantly to the foreign exchange earnings required to secure supplementary food supplies from external sources; makes up about 30 percent of the country's GDP, employs over 70 percent of the active labour force, generates foreign exchange earnings and provides two-thirds of total household income in 2010 (PAGE 2012 – 2015). With declining productivity over the years¹², the country's rural population faces higher prevalence of food poverty. Poverty and natural resource degradation coexist in the countryside, where majority of the rural population lives on agriculture and related rural activities that rely heavily on the use of natural resources. In the past, The Gambia have depended on export of primary agricultural and rural commodities produced by small farmers largely through traditional methods with very limited modern technology and inputs.

Indeed, agricultural and rural production are constrained by a host of factors, of which are adverse climatic conditions, overdependence on foreign aids(for instance food, fertilizer, human capital, etc), declining international primary commodity prices, poor domestic policies, and inadequate and inappropriate rural financial services to promote the productive base. During regional consultations, stakeholders reiterated that depletion of natural resources has reached serious proportions resulting in adverse effects to the ANR sector. Similarly, increasing shortages of land due to population pressure, recurrent droughts and the onset of climate change have led to the degradation of soils and natural resources. The upland watershed ecosystem has been disturbed and degraded largely due to deforestation, and over exploitation of other natural resources. Reduced water infiltration, high water runoff rates, drying of inland valleys and river tributaries and less water availability for crops and livestock, indiscriminate drilling of boreholes, illegal logging of forest trees, rampant and indiscriminate burning of forest land, uncontrolled sand minning, human-wildlife conflicts were among the issues raised during consultations. Furthermore, emerging issues emanating such as climate vulnerability, anthropogenic activities pose serious underlying environmental concerns which are threatening the long term productive potentials of the sector.

However, the sector has great potentials for eco-tourism and industrial development. Despite an overall degradation of the environment and changes of land use and cover in the past two decades, The Gambia is still relatively rich in biological diversity. The government made serious efforts to address the common problems. In fact the focus of its key macro-economic plans and the preceding ANR policy appears to be geared in the direction of the rural economy. Considerable resources in different forms have been invested by donors to assist in bringing about positive rural economic transformation. The Gambia made significant efforts towards attaining some MDG targets, but serious efforts are required in post-2015 to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

1.2 An Overview of the Natural Resource Base

The Gambia's Sudano-Sahelian climate, characterised by long dry season of seven months (November to May) with rainfall ranging 800 mm to 1200 mm per year (Yaffa, 2013), and increasing surface temperatures, occasional strong windstorm; and declining trends of rainfall are exacerbated by climate change vagaries in most parts, while the eastern part of the country experience prolonged drought and wildfires. The country has a total land area of about 10,400 km².

¹² GNAIP, 2010-2015 (pp 21)

Almost half of this is considered arable land, a large portion of which is being claimed by increasing desertification and rendered unsuitable for crop production. Agriculture is almost entirely rainfed, but the arable lands are characterised by widespread wind & soil erosion, sedimentation, water stress, soil acidity and salinisation¹³.

An analysis of current environmental trends show that The Gambia is characterized by improper disposal of solid wastes, land degradation, loss of biodiversity linked to loss of habitat, coastal degradation, and increasingly the effects of climate change. Environmental vulnerabilities range from high population densities, the fragility of the land coupled with adverse impacts of natural hazards such as climate change. The Gambia has an 81km open coastline bisected into the North and South Banks by the River Gambia, which has its source some 680 km upstream in the Fouta Djallon Highlands in Guinea (UNDP, 2010). The River Gambia is saline enough for mangroves to grow up to 150km from the open coast.

1.2.1 Land Use

The sustainable utilization of land is critical to the achievement of sustainable development in the country. With few manufacturing industries, Gambians depend on natural resources for most of their needs. The patterns of land use in The Gambia, to a large extent, correspond to the vegetation zones across the country. The vegetation zones in turn are largely determined by the rainfall patterns of the different parts of The Gambia. In general, the wetter western half of the country (which receives above 1,020 mm of rainfall) covering all of the Greater Banjul Area (GBA), the entire Western Region and the Western parts of the Lower River Region, have thicker land forest covers of bigger tree species. These areas attract greater human settlements with the residents mainly engaged in both crop farming and logging. On the other hand, the drier hinterlands, especially the North Bank of the River Gambia are covered mainly with shrubs and Savannah grasses. These lands are used for crop production and extensive livestock rearing and grazing.

The topography of The Gambia, another major determinant of land use, reveals three distinct zones: a) the river with its associated tributaries and mangrove vegetation; b) the extensive lowlands forming the river's floodplain; and c) the upland plateau, which extends into Senegal. The mangrove zone is largely unsuitable for any farming but commonly used for logging and oyster collection, which contribute to the degradation of mangroves. Generally, land quality is constrained by fragile soils, land tenure system, salinization and erosion, decline in the use of fertilizer, fluctuating rainfall trend, excessive exploitation of the upper or shallow sand aquifer and lack of appropriate renewable energy technologies to exploit the huge deep sand stone aquifer water resources.

1.2.2 The State of the Environment

The state of the Gambia environment is delicate as well as fragile with indiscriminate toxic waste release, imported solid waste dumping and poor sewerage release. Despite, The Gambia Environment Action Plan (GEAP), which is one of the best policies that integrates environmental concerns of all ANR sub-sectors into one coherent framework, inadequate enforcement of the legislation on waste management is resulting to several environmental communicable diseases and infections in the country. Environmental sanitation in rural towns and communities is appalling, and less than 14% of urban households have access to designated dumpsites¹⁴.

¹³ MANR, 1999

¹⁴ Living with Hazards in Banjul, UNDP, 2006

Refuse disposal systems in the country side are disorganized, and the main waste disposal methods are surface dumping, open burning and burying while industrial recycle is non-existent. Thus the present state of waste management encourages proliferation of pests and rodents and hence disease transmission, offensive malodors and pollution of the air by smoke and smog. The poor drainage system resulting to gully erosion in the townships; and inadequate housing planning (particularly, building constructions on water-ways and urban slums) in all municipalities are serious public concerns.

The liberalized export orientation of The Gambia, is giving rise to proliferation of imported junk items, particularly aging and out dated computers & vehicles, heavy engines and vehicle parts. These goods are generating large quantities of waste materials, while polluting our neighbourhood, introducing new breeds of pests such as cockroaches, and contaminating our soils and underground waters. Safeguards against such undesirable environmental effects would require awareness of the type of imports and ensuring that they meet regulatory standards and the use of fiscal incentives through tariff differentiation to encourage the importation of 'green' products. Sewage and liquid waste management is yet to be under control. The management responsibility has been shifting between the municipalities and the private sector agents. This is of great concern in GBA, as simple management flaws can result to serious health problems such as cholera epidemic. Furthermore, uncontrolled use of agro-chemicals, especially pesticides, herbicides and fertilizer, which accumulates hazardous materials in the soil is exacerbating degradation of the affected areas.

The First National Communication of The Republic of The Gambia on The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (2003), estimated the total emissions due to fuel combustion at 181,064 tonnes in The Gambia. The Report further showed that the Gambia energy sector is the main contributor to the emissions of Green House Gas (GHG) in the country. The sector activities that contribute directly to the emission of GHG are electricity production, transportation, domestic consumption of energy (mainly from fuelwood), and industrial and agricultural processes. The emissions from energy consumption consist of direct GHGs: Carbon Dioxide, Methane, Nitrous Oxide, Nitrogen Oxide, Carbon Monoxide, Non Methane Volatile Organic Compounds and Sulphur Dioxide. This contributes to global warming reinforcing climate change, which is presenting disturbing likelihoods of sea level rise, declining trends of agricultural productivity and productions, loss of wildlife species due to significant loss of habitat as many parts of the country have already been denuded of forest cover, etc. Therefore, the National Environment Act (NEMA 1994) and the Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides Control and Management Act, 1994, were developed to guide the management and protection of our environment.

1.2.3 Fisheries

The Gambia has exceptional natural conditions which support a diverse fisheries resource base. The country is endowed with considerable marine and riverine fish resources. The country is located within the Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean, an area classified as one of the richest fishing zones of the world. Wetlands, including marine, coastal, inland waters, seasonal fresh water ponds/marshes are distributed country-wide. The marine fish resources are enhanced by the freshwater flows of the River Gambia with substantial nutrients that attract marine fish species for feeding and spawning purposes.

The Gambia is said to be very rich in fisheries resources and by the nature of its geography and extensive swamp land, it has huge potential for aquaculture. As elaborated that with a continental shelf area of about 4,000 km² and approximately 10,500 km² of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), The Gambia is believed to be particularly rich in terms of fish species and diversity. This rich resource base offers great potential for substantial contribution to The Gambia's socio-economic Development, if fisheries resources are managed sustainably¹⁵.

The contribution of the fisheries sub-sector is constrained by a myriad of economic, physical, technical, institutional and social factors. Notable among these are the under-developed distribution and marketing systems; inadequate personnel with managerial and technical competence to operate fish business ventures (management of fish factories, fishing fleets etc.); lack of precise knowledge on the biology and population of fish species of economic importance; pollution of spawning sites from urban waste discharge and chemical residues in surface run-offs from agricultural lands; use of illegal fishing gears and illegal mesh sizes; fishing in fish spawning areas; and, pressure in the exploitation of demersal fish stocks.

The enhancement and management of the fish resources at the level of artisanal, industrial and aquaculture has been articulated in the Fisheries Policy of 2007 and the Fisheries Regulation of 2008, which provide the policy framework. The overall goal of the sector policy is to encourage responsible fishing and fish utilization practices as well as sustainable development of fishing for food security and poverty reduction in The Gambia. However, the sector faces a number of challenges which constrain its development. These include weak monitoring and surveillance systems to control the rate of poaching and indiscriminate usage of wrong fishing gears; Limited access to credit facilities for operators in the artisanal and industrial fisheries sub-sectors which is frustrating efforts to modernize the artisanal fishing fleet and investment capital in the industrial sub-sector for their development. The lack of appropriate onshore factories and high energy cost are also major physical constraints of the industrial fisheries subsector. Quality improvement and conformity to standards are also posing problems in The Gambia due to the limited capacities and infrastructure necessary to conform to international standards.

1.2.4 Forest Resources

The following land cover categories constitutes the forest resources of the country: - i). 'Closed Forests'-defined as woodlands with canopy cover exceeding 50% and tree height of at least 11m; ii) 'Open Forests' with a crown cover of 10 – 50%; and iii) 'Savannah Areas' with a crown cover of below 10 %. According to National Forest Assessment (NFA, 2010), The Gambia had a total forest area of 423,000 Ha in 2010 as compared to 520,400 Ha in 1998, representing a reduction of 18.7 percent equivalent to 97, 000 HA. This decline is largely caused by increasing population, inappropriate production methods, uncontrolled bush fires, overgrazing and encroachment for agriculture and human settlement. There is also, an alarming increase in the demand for forest products, particularly firewood and charcoal for household energy. Recent studies clearly indicate trends of deforestation; showing that annual rate of deforestation currently stands at 7 per cent (Sillah, 2007). This constitutes a significant deterioration compared to the figure of about 5.3 per cent deforestation rate as reported in the *State of the Environment Report* (SER, 1997, p.40).

¹⁵ Fisheries & Aquaculture Sector Strategy 2016-2020 (Zero Draft)

The Forest Policy (1995-2005) had a goal of having a forest cover of 30 percent which will be sufficient for maintaining an ecological balance necessary for sustainable economic growth with 75 percent of the cover to be managed by involving local communities and private sector players. About 423,000 Ha are declared forest reserves, 40,000 Ha constituting 66 gazetted forest parks and 41,682.32 Ha as community forests, while some of the inventoried land areas do not obtain clear designation. The policy aims at increasing protection of forest lands through community involvement, targeting about 200,000 hectares of which 43,000 hectares are for Joint Forest Park Management between government and local communities¹⁶. Community-based initiatives such as the introduction of community forest management programmes, reforestation, restoration, capacity building etc are being supported to attain these targets.

1.2.5 Parks and Wild Life Management

The Gambia harbours significant biodiversity, a wealth of terrestrial, coastal, marine and wetland habitats, as well as species of local, national, regional and global significance. Currently there are twenty-two (22) wildlife Protected Areas, occupying a total area 94,064 hectares, which is approximately 9.4% of the Gambia's total surface area (DPWM, 2017). The total land area for the 8 national parks and reserves is estimated at 89,205.9ha, which are co-managed and the surrounding communities have permanent representation for decision making. There are Indigenous Community Conserve Areas (ICCAs) that are purely managed by local people with technical support from department of Parks and Wildlife management. The fourteen (14) wildlife community protected areas occupied 4,858.1 hectares under the mandate of the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPWM).

The Gambia has three protected areas that are recognized as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention, namely, the Tanbi Wetland National Park, Niumi National Park, and Bao Bolong Wetland Reserve. In addition, six protected areas are recognized by the Birdlife International Partnership as Important Bird Areas: Tanji, Tanbi, Abuko, Niumi, Bao Bolong and Kiang West National Park (DPWM, 2014). Both the Tanji and Niumi protected areas regularly surpass the 1 percent criteria for Royal terns, Caspian terns, and others. Together, all the above constitute the wildlife in the country's biodiversity. Wildlife provides game meat and income, as well as ecotourism promotion which is also a credible source of revenue.

Conservation measures in The Gambia (including the establishment and improved management practices) are mainly covering the Protected Areas (PAs). Even though national parks and reserves are well protected and managed, in-situ conservation and protection outside national parks and reserves are constrained by limited investment in human and financial resources. Department of Parks and Wildlife places high premium on those reserves that became habitat islands and can lose some of their original species. Many wetland areas of high conservation value endure some human interference/use, and would therefore require vigilant protection activities. Gambia's parks and wildlife management accords to the Convention of Biological Diversity; adaptive in approach with collaborative and partnership efforts, linkages and overlapping programming with other subsectors including forestry, fisheries, land and environmental management. High value is placed on local ecological knowledge and adequate stakeholder consultations in the management is prominent in the intervention approach.

¹⁶ Country programme strategy for the gef- small grants programme 2011 – 2014 (GEF OP 5)

The wildlife and forest subsectors combined output is principally constrained by frequent and uncontrolled bushfires, drying of streams and other drinking points contributing to the disappearance of natural habitats and indigenous traditional wildlife species; high cost of forestry and wildlife development, inadequate human and financial resources, deforestation and weak involvement of local communities and private sector investment in the forest and wildlife management.

1.2.6 Water Resources and climate

i) Water Resources

The Gambia's water resources consist of surface waters (including River Gambia and its tributaries and a few coastal streams); and sub-surface water (in multiple aquifers found at different depths throughout the country). The country is bisected by one of Africa's most important and productive rivers and appears well endowed with water resources. With an average annual rainfall of only 850 mm, large parts of the country are poorly served with quality water and water scarcity is becoming common phenomenon.

The Gambia shares water from The River Gambia with Guinea, Senegal, and Guinea Bissau and the interests of each country are addressed through the OMVG. Being located at the outlet to the sea and the last riparian user of the river basin, the sustainable management of the upper catchment is of acute concern to The Gambia. The question of groundwater resources receives very little attention in the OMVG mandate, which is primarily concerned with surface flows - only passing reference is made to the importance of hydrogeology. The identification and quantification of trans-boundary groundwater resources is very complicated, and aquifers rarely align with geopolitical boundaries. Furthermore, The River Gambia is prone to water pollution by mercury from the gold mining activity in Senegal. In the recently concluded mercury inventory conducted by the NEA (using the UNEP mercury toolkit), the activity of Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) carried out upstream around the Kedugou region in Senegal was identified as one of the potential sources of mercury pollution downstream in The Gambia¹⁷. Relying as it does on groundwater and River Gambia for much of its water requirement, The Gambia is particularly sensitive to developments in the upper catchment that may affect subsurface resources. This Policy recognises this reality.

The water resources sector comprised a complex of natural, technical and social systems, and a wide variety of different relationships between organizations and institutions. The Department of Water Resources would be the obvious nodal organization for the coordination and regulation of all activities related to development and use of water resource including abstraction licensing and transboundary watercourse management. However, the legal framework which provides the mandate of DWR (– as the draft Water Bill has never been ratified) is limited to carrying out meteorological and hydrological functions, as well as water quality and rural water supply functions.

There is generally a low degree of stakeholder awareness regarding the myriad of pieces of sectoral legislation relating to the various aspects of water resource management and utilization in the regions. The legislation relating to the pricing of water, commercial abstraction of water, and the maintenance of water facilities and pipes are poorly coordinated.

¹⁷ See Annex 1 for details

Furthermore, areas of legislation are either weak or require additional clarification: the rights and entitlements of consumers as regards NAWEC services, inadequate awareness about IWRM rules and regulations, clarity of roles and responsibilities to address the overlaps in the present structures within the various sectors, mechanisms for the coordination of water resources activities, water use and enforcement, excessive, indiscriminate and unregulated abstraction of groundwater within the Greater Banjul Area through borehole drilling, archaic and unresponsive sectoral pieces of legislation, and no clear institutional roles and responsibilities at the regional level. This implies that, there is no known legislation about water quality and its systematic regulation, and the enforcement of the existing sectoral policies and legislations are weak. Water abstraction for whatever purpose is unregulated, uncoordinated and undocumented in The Gambia. This current poor state of coordination leads to duplication of efforts, inefficient use of resources, and unwarranted competition over development resources and attention. In addition, Departments of Water Resources is constrained by inadequate incentives, uncondusive working environment, inadequate funding and number of trained high level and middle level manpower.

ii) The Climate Change

The Gambia with its Sahelian climate, has been experiencing increasingly erratic rainfall patterns, higher intensity storms, intra-seasonal drought and increasing average air temperatures, ushered by periodic cold spells and heat waves. Between 1981 and 2010, both maximum and minimum temperatures have been observed to be increasing with minimum temperatures increasing much faster. Projections in mean monthly temperatures by the three GCMs show an increasing trend from 2020 to 2100. In fact mean annual temperatures are projected to change by at least +0.6°C by 2020 and +3.1°C by 2100. Three General Circulation Models (GCM) (CCC199, BMRC98 and GFDL) were used to project temperatures increase in The Gambia from 1981 to 2100. Results of these models indicated projected changes over the baseline average temperatures. The average annual temperatures from 2020 through ten-year intervals to 2100 are projected to change by at least +0.6°C by 2020 and progressively thereon to +3.1°C by 2100, whilst precipitation on the other hand, in the worst case scenario is projected to decline by -4% by 2030 and by -54% by 2100 (TNC 2017, Draft).

The Gambia has witnessed irregular precipitation patterns over the past 30 years. Previous studies concluded that there was decreasing seasonal precipitation during the rainy season of June to October over 1951 to 2000. Yet, the proportion of precipitation collected from intense events over the last decade in the wettest months of August and September have contributed toward observed annual rainfall increases from 2000 to 2010. Analysis showed that the mean monthly temperature of The Gambia over the baseline period 1981-2010 was 27.9°C, while the mean monthly maximum and the mean monthly minimum temperatures were approximately 35 °C and 21 °C respectively. High temperatures were recorded in the months of May and June. On average annual rainfall was 830.31mm and July, August and September represent the wettest months in a year.

The combinations of sea level rise, global warming and changes in rainfall patterns as projected by GCM models could impact freshwater resources *qualitatively* and *quantitatively*, the **fisheries sector by altering fish habitat availability, quality, and potential for the habitat to sustain fish Communities. Surface evaporation is expected to increase**, whilst **groundwater recharge is expected to take the reverse trend** and both phenomena enhance advective salt transport in the River Gambia and place additional constraints on management rules of an upstream reservoir.

However, the biggest threat of saline intrusion into the River Gambia and coastal aquifers comes from projected sea level rise (Jarju, 2009, Jaiteh and Sarr, 2011).

The SNC identifies agriculture, rangelands, forestry, water resources, fisheries and the coastal zone as particularly vulnerable to climate change. Crop agriculture will show a downward trend production and productivity; and forest and rangelands will be degraded by the persistent drought and accelerated erosion and desertification. Declining Atlantic fish resources due to increasing fishing intensity and irresponsible fishing practices may be exacerbated by the impacts of climate change. Loss of mangroves and salt marsh vegetation may affect fish production and productivity; while a drop in mean annual run-off due to climate change could result in a complete change in the hydrological and salinity balance of the River Gambia's estuary, in turn affecting some fish species. Furthermore, groundwater in western Gambia is at risk of increased salinization, while coastal aquifers may become reduced, which would affect fresh water supplies. There will be accelerated coastal erosion impacting on tourism and artisanal fisheries.

1.2.7 Rangelands and livestock

The livestock sub sector contributes significantly to the economy and livelihood of the population in the Gambia. The production system is predominantly traditional in nature and the species exploited consists of Cattle, Small Ruminants, Pigs, Equines, Poultry, Rabbits and other short cycled species. The various species are raised to provide meat, milk, income, draught power and manure for crop cultivation and for socio-cultural reasons. The importance of the different livestock species as a source of income and for enhancing Household Food Security for the rural population is increasingly becoming evident due to the precarious nature of the rainfall that is often manifested in poor crop yields and increasing reliance of farmers on livestock for sustenance during the lean periods when cereal stocks are near depletion.

According to the past studies, the rangelands in the Gambia can be divided in to upland and lowland range. The upland range consists of closed woodland, open wood land and fallow land; whilst lowland range comprises flood plains and uncultivated swamps. The closed woodlands are subjected to grazing both during the rainy and dry season whilst the open woodlands and tree/shrub savanna cover constitute the most important grazing areas. About 40% or 371,200 ha of the total land area are regarded as rangeland of which only 5,000 ha are classified as improved pasture as at 2010. Unimproved pastures and crop residues constitute the main sources of feed for livestock. Availability of feed varies considerably between the rainy and dry season. During the rainy season the carrying capacity of the rangeland is adequate to meet the feed requirements of the livestock population. In the dry season, the quality of grasses on the rangelands deteriorates and becomes nutritionally poor. Added to this problem, most of the biomass is destroyed by bushfires. With the progression of the dry season, scarcity of feed becomes more pronounced and animals depend on crop residues swamp grazing and browse. Recent estimates (2011) showed a livestock density of over 42 units/ha which is one of the highest in sub-Saharan Africa¹⁸. The current stocking density put lot of pressure on natural rangeland affecting soil structure as well as crop production and growth of forest trees.

¹⁸ Final draft ANR Policy (2017-2026)

1.3 Macro-Sectoral Strategic Framework

1.3.1 Strategies and Policies

The Government of the Gambia has demonstrated full commitment to poverty reduction by preparing a long-term strategy plan called “The Gambia Incorporated Vision 2020” in 1996. This plan aimed at transforming the country into a middle income, export oriented nation by 2020, with ANR sector identified as top priority. This was followed by the preparation and development of series of medium-term programs and strategies to address priorities with expectations of improving ANR sector performance. The government in its budget support commitments and efforts to fulfil the Maputo Declaration has allocated 7.09 percent to the ANR sector in the 2012 budget; aiming to progressively increase the subsequent budgets by 18.5% for 2013 and 2014¹⁹. However, this target has not been met in the last Government.

A number of policy and programme frameworks were also prepared to define the goals and provide the roadmap for achieving the MDGs. Among these are an in-depth review of the ANR sector, the preparation of the Medium-Term Agriculture and Natural Resources Sector Policy Objectives and Strategy (1998-2002), and the National Agricultural Development - Horizon 2010, as well as the National Food Security Outline. Government policy objectives were directed with a holistic approach to food and nutrition, while food security became the flagship policy objective. A number of actions were taken to implement the related programmes, including the Special Programme on Food Security and the Peri-Urban Project. The former laid the ground for succeeding the comprehensive projects for food security, and the latter enhanced awareness of producing food in urban areas for home consumption and markets. The Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP) was prepared and is one of the frameworks that integrate environmental concerns of all sub-sectors into socio-economic development objective of the country. At the same time, standalone policies were developed for ANR subsectors: forestry, fisheries, parks and wildlife, water resources, and land are implemented according to specific sector needs.

Other key and related government strategies include: the first Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (SPA I) (1995 – 1999), PRSP I & II (2003 – 2011) which were linked to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy (ANRP - 2009 – 2015). Also, the Gambia National Agricultural Investment Plan (GNAIP) was prepared in 2010, including the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) Component (2011 – 2015), which seeks to generally enhance economic growth and poverty reduction by increasing contributions of the ANR sector to the national economy as well as bridge the funding gap of the GNAIP. The GNAIP also supports resources (e.g. land, water, forests, etc.) management to combat problems of resources depletion, soil degradation, climate change and unsustainable resources management and land tenure, and as well as the objectives of the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (2012 – 2015). Cross cutting issues like gender and women empowerment, environment, youth empowerment, climate change, pests and diseases, biotechnology and bio-safety are among emerging issues addressed in government strategies towards enhancing the ANR sector. The lessons from all these strategic and policy documents can provide critical strategies for removing the barriers to and advancing the ANR sector programs. These policies and programmes have provided a consistent framework to improve and commercialize the ANR sector, promote national food and nutrition security and reduce poverty.

¹⁹ Final budget Speech 2014 by the Minister of Finance and Economic affairs

1.3.2 Private and Public-Sector Involvement

Private sector development remains crucial for the policy objectives of the Gambia as the sector takes critical role in the economic development. The establishment of a public private partnership unit in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs will support initiatives for the Government to partner with private sector in national development. Thus, the optimization of natural resource base can be built on the strides made in public private partnership policy framework. A broad range of stakeholders (from resource users to government agencies) will participate in the negotiation, implementation and monitoring of this policy. The stakeholders include representatives of implementing agencies, development partners, members of the National assembly steering and technical committees, the private sector, NGOs, CSOs, media organizations, Farmer-based organisations and beneficiary communities through the national and regional consultations to represent the interests of all stakeholders at different level.

1.3.3 Institutional Support Services and Linkages

Gambia's ANR sector comprises Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, and Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources with some programme linkages and overlaps with the Ministry of Local Government and Lands. The sector encompasses 7 core agencies namely: Departments Agricultural services, Fisheries, Forestry, Livestock Services, National Environment Agency, Parks and Wildlife and Water Resources for programme implementation. The levels of their capacity and performance are key determinants for successful ANR and rural development programmes. However, these core agencies are constrained by inadequate basic infrastructure and equipment, limited human resource capacity, low staff remuneration levels, weak institutional framework and poor coordination which remain pervasive in their programming.

The ANR sector is facing a fragmented service delivery system, with overlapping mandates and programmes among the core agencies, coupled with uncoordinated programming of non-state actors and the private sector. Roles and responsibilities which are shared among the core agencies are not clearly defined, and there is virtually no integration in planning and budgeting processes of the recurrent and development budgets. As a result, the relevant subsectors are experiencing poor linkages in policies and priority programming. The service delivery system suffers a major problem, namely; low to nonexistent coordination among the core agencies, and duplication, underutilization, and underperformance are among the major challenges. Stepping out of the box to understand and harmonise the linkages and interdependence of the subsectors will provide a good economic sense to invest in the ANR sector programming. For instance, The department of Parks and Wildlife, in implementing the UNCBD on expanding conservation areas and the establishment of the Ecologically and Biologically Sustainable Areas (EBSA's) as one of the important obligations, is contemplating the establishment of a Marine Protected Area (MPA) beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the area called Labor Canyon. Under the mandate of the parks and Wildlife Department, this area among other MPA's are to be managed with a strong involvement of the fisheries department for they are conducive areas for fish and fisheries spawning, breeding and schooling habitats. Such area will be managed with the implicit support of the fisheries department to curb illegal fishing in the area.

This supplementary ANR policy responds to the above dichotomy, and is fully consistent with the environmental and rural development priorities of the Gambia, represents a major step forward in the implementation of subsectoral policies and plans, and major national and international strategy plans. The implementation of the policy will thus be crucial to national development and Gambia's contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

1.3.4 2009 – 2015 ANR Policy Gap Analysis

Generally, the ANR policy is meant to be a roadmap for the governance of agriculture and natural resource base of the Gambia. However, the preceding policy focusses mainly on agricultural resources than the natural resources. As a result, the management, protection and sustainable utilization of natural resource is neglected to some extent. The specific policy gap in the ANR Policy include the following:

- The policy generally focusses on agricultural resources with limited emphasis on the issues governing the management and utilization of natural resources
- The conflicting issues such as overlapping institutional/sectoral mandates confronting the protection and management of natural resources of the sub sectors not well articulated.
- Management of Transboundary resources especially water resources, wildlife and fisheries still remain a challenge as no legal framework is captured in the ANR policy.
- Policy areas and goals of sub sectors of the ANR are not adequately addressed
- The policy document is limited as far as policy strategies are concern for each sub sector.

Despite the significant role played by ANR sector in the economy, it's share in total employment and most importantly its contribution to exports have been on the decline²⁰ and most times underestimated. This is due to adverse climatic conditions, declining international primary commodity prices and, inadequate domestic policies.

²⁰ GNAIP, 2010 - 2015

PART II: THE POLICY

2.0 POLICY FOUNDATIONS

2.1 The Need for a Policy Framework

The Gambia's slow pace in its economic transformation and structural changes during the last two decades have ironically resulted to deepening food and overall poverty largely due to poor economic governance, given resource constraints within a fragmented policy context. The country is unable to effectively guide its resource allocation towards programmes for sustained development resulting to underperforming ANR sector and stagnating economy. It is therefore clear that an overarching ANR policy framework is needed to steer and transition agriculture and natural resources to a vibrant sector for enhanced productivity and accelerated economic growth.

The need and purpose of the policy framework is to provide the ANR sector core policies and a set of minimum standards for organizational effectiveness and programme management. This policy framework establishes clear roles of the respective sub-sectors in our economic transformation process. It sets out and defines certain principles to inform decisions. It provides a basis for accountability and gives consistent bench marks against which to monitor and assess practice.

2.2 Vision

This supplementary policy accords to, and supports the vision of the ANR Policy: “a *marketed-led commercialized, efficient, competitive and dynamic ANR sector in the context of sustainable development*”. This policy sets out programmes to contribute, not only to building a systemic response to natural resources protection and development, but also integrating agriculture value chain (and value-addition) development. The following conditions are critical to the attainment of the vision: a) clarified public sector roles in service provision, and private sector involvement in the respective sub-sectors; b) a supportive environment for resource-users and pro-poor growth prioritized; c) openness in international trade relations maintained; d) youth and gender roles mainstreamed in the ANR sector; and e) opportunities for rural communities to participate in and benefit from diversified sub-sector activities.

2.3 Statement of Intent

“Work with resource-users to balance the ecosystem, while enhancing their livelihoods and food security through sustainable natural resource management”. The GoTG through the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, and Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources are committed to reforming the ANR sector to provide the highest quality of technical services to the population, while building a governing system that will respond adequately to our natural resources depletion concerns. Our combined determination is to protect Gambia's natural resource base from degradation by promoting sustainable production, use and management of available resources, and taking urgent action on climate change, so that the sub-sectors can support the needs of the present and future generations. This core intent articulates the aims of the sub-sectors and implementing core agencies. The core intent encompasses two goals that these agencies believe are inextricably linked. The first focuses on resource-users and their livelihoods, and the second is on the environment and policies that impact them.

2.3 The Goal

The ANR Policy provides the overall framework within which the sub-sectors will operate. The goal of this Supplementary ANR Policy is to ***increase overall agricultural productivity and production through judicious utilization of the natural resources base on sustainable basis***. This goal is rooted in our renewed clarity of purpose, and the unity of effort that inspires the sub-sectors. It is grounded in an expanded efforts of the ANR sector to a) create employment and generate income for the majority of the rural population who are primarily depending on the natural resources; b) provide effective linkages between the agriculture and natural resources sector and other sectors of the economy particularly the tourism sector so as to enhance reciprocal benefits on sustainable basis, and; c) ensure judicious and sustainable utilisation of the country's natural resource base so as to conserve and improve biodiversity for enhanced productivity to serve the needs and protect the rights of future generations.

2.4 Policy Objectives

Programming in the sub-sectors will be pursuing the over-arching objective of the draft ANR Policy (2017/2026): ***“maximization of poverty reduction and enhancement of food, income and nutrition securities through the optimal utilization of the resources of the sector consistent with safeguarding the integrity of the environment”***. This means growth without compromising the quality of the natural resource base, while putting resource-users at the centre of our policy and practice – a commitment which will allow us to engage on research and development boldly and embrace errors.

Specifically, this over-arching policy for the natural resource subsectors seeks:

- a) To put in place effective management of ecosystems and biodiversity that promotes sound and equitable natural resource base, reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts to achieve the desired **green economy**.
- b) To provide the basis for sound natural resource management, capacity enhancement of decentralized structures and clear allocation of resources, roles and responsibilities.
- c) To provide overall policy direction for inclusive management and use of Gambia's natural resource base, effectively integrating climate change into all sub-sectors and across all scales, and mainstreaming gender, youth and climate risks and opportunities into national and sectoral frameworks through effective policy coordination and implementation.
- d) To build capacities of communities and ensure a sound resources base through participatory, equitable and pro-poor approaches to natural resources management and use that emphasise the meaningful inclusion of women and youth.
- e) To integrate community-based adaptation with ecosystem-based approaches to strengthen people's adaptive capacities and develop more climate-resilient livelihoods, by investing in sustainable natural resource management initiatives.

The policy objectives means that The Gambia will pursue pro-poor natural resource management, equitable and inclusive growth, and that sound natural resource management can be one of the levers of sustainable development.

The country will pursue a coordinated integrated resource management and leverage the available opportunities. Climate change adaptation and mitigation mechanisms will be selected to contribute towards poverty reduction and building long-term resilience to climate-related hazards. This policy establishes an institutional and operational framework that will drive successful implementation of sound natural resource management. Because managing nature is multidisciplinary and multi-dimensional, all our development partners are called upon to work with Government in building the national **green economy**.

2.5 The key Guiding principles

The relationship of the ANR sector with others shall be governed by the following principles:

- i. **Quality:** Seeking the best practice, defined as work of the highest quality, but also cost-effective.
- ii. **Innovativeness,** which requires the courage to be creative in research and development without fear of failure.
- iii. **Partnership and synergy,** which allots different responsibilities and respects the mandate, rights and obligations of all parties. Also, forging sustainable linkages and networks between sub-sectors; and with the government, private sector, development partners, multi and bilateral cooperations, south-south cooperations and farmer based organisations, NGOs, CSOs, and community-based organizations to enable broad-based management, ownership, and sustainability of natural resources.
- iv. **Decentralization:** A uniform and transparent framework for transferring responsibilities, capacities, and resources from the national level to the regions, local government and community levels. This framework is critical to achieving accountability, affordability, and sustainability; and conforms to local government reforms and decentralization policy.
- v. **Community Empowerment and Participation:** Actively engaging communities by eliciting their participation in planning, designing, implementing natural resource programmes, as well as monitoring and evaluation of services intended to satisfy their needs and aspirations.
- vi. **Human Rights-Based Approach:** Safeguard the basic rights of resource-users, while ensuring and safeguarding the integrity of the environment.
- vii. **Equity:** Striving for a balance and fairness for all stakeholders, taking into account the need to address capabilities, responsibilities and disparities, in a way that promotes social cohesion.

3.0 THE POLICY ORIENTATION

3.1 Policy Alignment

This supplementary policy recognises and supports government's strategic shift towards poverty reduction and economic growth, which underpins vision 2020 and the National Development Plan, Local Government Reforms and Decentralisation, and all other macro economic policies and key strategy plans.

The policy aspires for a **green economy** that is more inclusive and achievable to create jobs and generate decent incomes for resource users. The main thrust of the policy is to contribute towards economic growth through the natural capital (i.e. the natural resources subsectors) that is fully developed and sustainably managed and used as sources and enablers of growth driven by government **in Partnership with the Private Sector** through the provision of appropriate institutional supports and services as well as a conducive environment in which to operate. Local communities and civil society will be encouraged to be part of the engine. The policy focus will be to protect and develop the country's natural capital, and strengthen the productive and trade capacities within a green economy, to promote a vibrant private sector participation in improving the agribusiness environment and enhancing competitive eco-tourism.

This policy anchored on partnership with the private sector, both multi and bilateral cooperations, and south-south cooperation, which will be the “locomotive” to pull the market-led economy by employing our gains in agriculture, tourism, processing industry and other services. The key policy alignment is to transform agriculture and natural resource sector to **a modern market-oriented commercial sector with well-integrated value chains** and a viable private sector led agro-processing industry in order to increase agricultural incomes. Our aim to transition to a **green economy** would be addressed through policy harmonization within the ANR sector eliminating conflicts between economic growth, environmental sustainability and social goals.

Given the country's vulnerability to climate change this policy will focus on **adapting and mitigating the effects of climate-related hazards** particularly on the productive sectors and the economic enabling infrastructure. The green growth strategies by adapting to emerging climatic constraints; preserving and enhancing the productive base; while protecting the environment and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from other sectors; and incorporating Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) in our development agenda in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This strategy will lay the foundation for our long term transition to a **green economy**.

The policy initiative emphasize the following priority areas and cross-cutting issues as identified in our consultative forums: combating land degradation; drought and desertification; invasive species (e.g. hippopotanous); wetlands; marine and coastal resources; cross-border conservation of natural resources; climate change. The framework builds upon the related problems of pollution, forests fires, salinization, capacity-building and technology transfer.

3.2 Policy Approach

This policy framework is designed to provide us viable and sustainable natural resource base, which in turn will create sustainable development and growth in the rural economy. In order to advance a viable natural resource management strategy, three levels of policies have to be considered:

- The policy in approach with respect to the governance in place and its strategic linkages, as well as methodologies to discharge the onerous policy responsibilities
- Macro policies which in general terms, guide the conduct in creating the right environment that attract private sector, civil society organisations and communities to engage in viable resource management programmes;

- Micro policies which are specific to the subsectors and various actors in natural resource management, and are designed as a code of guidelines that ensures efficiency and diligence in the attainment of policy objectives.

There is one common feature applicable to all the three policy levels. Policy should not be sacrosanct but flexible and transformable to answer prevailing circumstances and resource demands. For our purpose, we are mainly concerned with institutional/organizational, programme and learning policies that should guide our overall operations in the ANR sector. This supplementary ANR policy framework will be impact oriented, and is informed key government strategies for poverty reduction and growth.

3.3 The Scope

This policy framework will be binding on the ANR sector and implementing agencies where staff are designated as employees, or are working for or representing the relevant ministries in a voluntary or legal capacity. The policy is pro-poor; and will pursue the following strategic areas: Intersectoral partnership and coordination, institutional capacity development, stimulating private sector investment and sustainable employment creation, competitive value chains and market linkages, enhancing research and development, and transboundary resource management.. The main thrust of the policy will be engaging in partnerships and networking in order to strengthen the national resource base.

3.4 Status of the Policy

This policy framework establishes a clear ministerial position on governing Gambia's natural resources. It sets out and defines certain principles to inform decisions; and provides the basis for accountability with consistent benchmarks against which to monitor and assess practice. The framework will become a corporate policy for all the implementing agencies. Once it has been approved by government, all the relevant sectors will then be held to account against the policy framework. It will be both a mandate for action and a tool to the staff accountable for management practice.

3.5 Operation of this Policy

This policy framework will require a coherent and strategic operational approach to promote sustainable natural resource development, management and utilization. This is consistent with our macro economic plans that emphasizes measures to address the challenges of economic growth without losing sight of the long-term environmental, poverty reduction and social development imperatives. Sustainable development is a long-term process, and can only be achieved through investments in the future. Therefore, this framework requires a long-term approach in governing our natural resource base. It is about processes, projects and related activities that are aimed at enlarging our economic prospects through sustainable natural resource management.

The framework assumed that economic growth, income distribution, poverty reduction, social equity and better governance is an integral part of our ANR policy agenda. Therefore, this policy will be operated in harmony with the other components of the wider ANR policy. The operation of this policy framework will be a challenge without support and active participation of the government, representative ministries and their development partners.

Given the vision set out in this supplementary ANR policy, this framework will be implemented through the following strategic objectives and approaches:

- i. **Contextualised and decentralized approach**, building national capacity, and promoting appropriate interventions and ownership among implementing agencies;
- ii. **Enterprise – orientation**, where every subsector and staff should think and act taking into consideration the strategic direction of the overall ANR sector, bearing in mind that agriculture and natural resources are inseparable;
- iii. **Evidence-based and innovative**, harnessing indigenous knowledge, scientific research and technology for resilient and environmentally friendly solutions. Fostering innovations while connecting and collaborating with others should be at the center of our value-addition initiatives;
- iv. **Value-addition**, where all decisions, relationships and actions taken must add value to our work in the subsectors. We should continue to learn about value-additions in our actions and decisions and how this will impact on resource-users; and
- v. **Sustained and systemic approach** among implementing agencies, promoting institutionalisation and coherence of natural resource management strategies.

3.6 Key Strategic Focal Areas for Policy

3.6.1 Intersectoral Partnership and Coordination

Balancing Gambia's natural resource requires the coordinated efforts of a wide range of government ministries and agencies as well as the cooperation of research and training institutions, the media, NGOs and the private sector. Granted, natural resources related services are provided and supported by a multitude of development programmes and partners motivated by a range of different mandates and resources. Support in the subsector is welcoming, but national priorities in balancing the natural resources base must be addressed in an integrated and harmonized manner to ensure positive impacts of the desired synergy for all Gambians. A joint public/private sector/civil society programming in natural resource development will surely boost government's efforts. National intersectoral coordination mechanisms through ANRWG will be reinforced to ensure concerted implementation of a balance protection and conservation interventions in a resolute, efficient, effective and sustainable manner guided by the principles in this policy framework which is a requirement. The relevant ministries will promote this approach to improve coordination of a multi-sectoral response to enable appropriate and timely attention to emerging environmental and climate change issues.

3.6.2 Institutional Capacity development

The relevant ministries of agriculture and natural resources will engage on instructional development and capacity building in all core agencies to enhance their professional and institutional abilities for effective and efficient natural resource management programming. Strengthening the institutional capability, and building staff capacity in the core agencies of the ANR sector as well as local institutional structures e.g. VDCs, Forest Groups, None-Timber Forest Products (NTFP), development interest groups etc. are essential for effective implementation of this policy.

The ANR sector is continually evolving and dynamic, with changes in the availability of resources and steadily increasing demand, placing considerable pressure on service delivery. These challenges have serious implications for the institutions managing the country's natural resources.

The ministries will ensure that the core agencies maintain adequate number of quality and well “motivated” staff at professional and technical level, providing services that will promote positive public attitude towards utilization of natural resources, and ensure the willingness of the local population to be involved in the protection and management of natural resource.

The core agencies will provide strategic framework for programming and policy work based on the larger country context by increasing understanding of micro/macro linkages; clarifying linkages and programme overlaps and synergies between subsectors; and providing the framework for accountability in relation to strategy and overall institutional mandate. The ministries will engage all stakeholders, particularly, the core agencies to mainstream gender and youth into their programmes; while engaging on institutional capacity building of relevant structures down the organizational hierarchy to regional and community levels for the protection and management of the natural resources base.

While natural resource management is the responsibility of the relevant ministries, its success heavily depends on the effectiveness of the core agencies and their decentralized coordinating structures. Leading policy direction and legal frameworks is fundamental to ensure the protection of the dwindling natural resources, but the establishment of professional and effective delivery mechanisms are crucial in natural resources management. Hence, the need to develop a systematic approach relating with regional governance with their resource capabilities are important pillars for successful natural resources management.

Similarly, legal instruments and frameworks would need to be updated or created to cater for the depleting water resources and emerging climate change threats and risks. These will include providing the legal basis for the establishment of the National Water Resources Authority and Climate Change Secretariat, their financing and operations. Also, there is need to review, update and enforce all major water-related national instruments (including ratifying the proposed water bills of Ministry of Water Resources) in order to regulate the indiscriminate borehole drilling and check the dropping underground water tables, and cater for building regulation to prohibit construction activities on natural water-ways and common wetlands.

The government is committed to partnership, alliance building & networking, and engaging on a cooperative working culture and learning from others. It is eager to engage national and international partners and networks in shaping national delivery mechanisms in natural resource management in The Gambia.

3.6.3 Stimulating Private Sector Investment and Sustainable Employment Creation

The Government is eager to build a strong private sector enabling environment through the liberalization of investment regulations and the removal of unnecessary restrictions. The private sector development initiatives (providing appropriate incentives and ushering promotional packages) will help the country reform its investment climate, attract and promote quality investment, and galvanize the growth of small and medium enterprises (SME) that will include None-Timber Forest Products (NFTP). This policy will therefore capitalize on these initiatives to transform agriculture and natural resources into a competitive and efficient sector.

Although this will require substantial efforts and resources, it will create new employment opportunities and output in the natural resources subsectors. Specific areas of focus will include:

- Fiscal incentive system that promotes high technology investment in new products and processes including industrial recycling of human-waste for generation of renewable energy, and market expansion and diversification in the fisheries subsector. The investment package will be attractive to foreign investors, and this will be supplemented with supportive regulatory measures.
- Encourage private sector partnership with local associations of resource-users (e.g. local fishers' associations in fisheries, CBOs in eco-tourism, etc.) in joint-ventures that expand market outlets for their products.

3.6.4 Competitive Value Chains and Market Linkages

Accessing and getting markets to work effectively is an important challenge for natural resource subsectors that must transition from small-scale rural activities to high-productivity commercial enterprises amid poor infrastructure and absence of a business culture. This policy component therefore seeks to improve access to market through increased investment in rural marketing infrastructure such as physical marketplaces (for eco-tourism), storage and processing facilities for fisheries. Labor-saving transitional devices and technologies will be supported to increase productivity and reduce drudgery. Financial services will be promoted; and the skills and knowledge of value-chain actors will be improved in a bid to link them to domestic, regional and international markets. The aim will be to build and commercialize the value chain initiatives using various approaches including cooperative schemes that link private sector and small-scale actors in an effort to increase productivity, food and household incomes. Specific areas of focus will include:

- i. Strengthen cooperative organizations to access services, credit, improved storage and processing facilities and markets;
- ii. Develop a business culture along commodity chains to facilitate value addition and link producers and vendors to input and output markets;
- iii. Develop and improve knowledge of market information systems and quality control measures and standards; and
- iv. Develop appropriate institutional arrangements to extend credit to actors in the subsectors; create awareness among the value chain actors of appropriate financial sources; and establish credit guarantee schemes for producers and cooperative organizations.

If rural roads are rehabilitated and constructed, energy and rural financial services provided, labour - saving intermediate devices and technologies introduced and market enterprises promoted, there would be increased access to credit, and increased facilities for value chain enterprises accessible to entrepreneurs. This would subsequently result in increased food and nutrition security, increased employment and reduced poverty.

3.6.5 Trans-boundary Resource Management

The Gambia's down-stream geographical location and overall policy environment stress the need for the government to take advantage of the benefits of regional integration and make its relationship with the neighbour strategically important for natural resource management and development; and for a variety of other socio-economic issues of mutual concern. To this end, The Gambia Government, through the one time Senegalo-Gambian Secretariat (an inter-ministerial committee headed by the two heads of government being revived), will reinforce bilateral issues on the management and development of joint natural resources. For instance, both The Gambia and Senegal have ratified the Minamata Convention on Mercury; and the convention requires parties to take actions to minimize and where possible stop processes that leads to mercury pollution.

In addition to this international treaty, there is also need for regional collaboration with Senegal in the sustainable management and protection of our natural resources through appropriate technologies and practice.

The integration of energy systems under the umbrella of the West Africa Power Pool Project (WAPP) in general, and The Gambia River Basin Development (OMVG) in particular, is critical for energy sector development in The Gambia. The OMVG Power Program consists of two dams with hydropower plants and 1700 km transmission line is being tapped for Gambia's rural electrification. In the same vein, a bridge is being constructed over the River Gambia, which is a useful parallel development to foster stronger bilateral ties. The Government, through the MECCNAR, and MoFWR will capitalize on these bilateral ties to solicit for regional cooperation with allied organisations; building solidarity in national and international organisations in OMVG countries; and aim at inter-governmental and professional interaction in the management of our natural resources. Thus, they will be sharing skills and experiences; mobilizing and combining resources to develop a common approach to transboundary natural resource management.

3.6.6 Enhancing Research and Development

The biggest gap to natural resources development and sustainable use is perhaps limited technology generation and dissemination, and lack of data and management information undermining capacity and performance in the relevant subsectors. Generation of new knowledge is missing and there is no up to date data on the structure, taxonomic composition and distribution of most of the components of the natural resource base. Likewise, their monitoring and evaluation systems are under developed, impeding effective planning and rational management decision making.

Research for new discoveries, technology generation, dissemination and adoption will be required to overcome the major development constraints in ANR sector. R&D will form one of the thrusts in providing technological possibilities and growth opportunities to sustain and enhance ANR output as well as the contribution to and integration with the rest of the economy. Specific areas for consideration will include:

- i. Engage and collaborate with NARI and other relevant sub-regional research institutions on technology generation and transfer, conservation of genetic materials in order to restore extinct and endangered natural resource species.
- ii. Support research in acquiring base line data through applied forestry research and studies on forest economics – to show forest produce including none-wood forest products consumption trends; wood utilisation and the cross-border trade; explore emerging markets for forest beverages (local tea) and 'green' products; explore economic use of medicinal plants and genetic materials; and engaging local companies in the production of medicinal plants and genetic materials for the pharmaceutical industry.
- iii. Strengthen Water Resources Management Information System (WRMIS) for baseline surveys, and building a robust monitoring and evaluation systems while supporting climate change related research, education and training.

3.6.7 Maintain Environmental Pool Fund

Sound protection and management of environment and natural resources require sustainable financing mechanism. The government's budget is the largest source of funding for protection and conservation of the environment and natural resources. However, the current allocation to the sector is inadequate. In line with Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the subsequent Accra Agenda for Action, the government, through the MECCNAR will maintain then **Environmental Pool Fund**, in which the ministry shall harness and pull-together all environment-related aid/funding from multi- and bi-lateral donors, south-south cooperation, development partners and private sector for outsourcing priority natural resource programming.

The aim is to improve the quality of aid and its impact on the protection and development of our natural resource base by a) strengthening the development strategies and associated operational frameworks (e.g., planning, budgeting, and performance assessment frameworks) of the core agencies; b) increasing alignment of aid with our natural resource priorities, operational systems and procedures while strengthening the capacities of core agencies; c) enhancing mutual accountability (core agencies, partners and donors) to our policies, strategies and performance; and d) eliminating duplication of efforts and rationalising donor activities to make them as cost-effective as possible. The fund will be strategized by means of: i) creating a unit with a funding manager and staff within the ministry for fund management and disbursement based on set guidelines, criteria and standards; ii) outsourcing decentralised programmes while empowering regional administrations for programming; and iii) outsourcing the participation of CBOs & civil society organisation in natural resource programming.

4.0 SUB-SECTOR POLICY GUIDELINES

4.1 Fisheries

4.1.1 Sub-Sector Description

The contribution of the fisheries sector towards the Gross Domestic Products is approximately 2% and The Gambian fish exports from 1997 to 2010 was about 3,563 MT in volumes and GMD100,041,068 value. The Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) of fish in The Gambian waters was estimated to be about 80,000 metric tons when the annual production figures were between 35,000 to 40,000 metric tons. In particular, the sector is the third largest food production sector, after agriculture and livestock; and plays a significant role from a nutritional standpoint, as fish is the main source of animal protein in the diets of most Gambians. The artisanal subsector provides direct and indirect employment to between 25,000 and 30,000 people; and about 2,000 people are presently employed in the industrial sub-sector. It plays an important role in ensuring food security. A large population depends on fisheries both directly and indirectly for livelihood through fishing and linkages to fish processing and trade. The fisheries sector is identified as one with great potential for value addition and provision of rural incomes in the country.

The Gambia's fisheries resources and their ecosystems is deteriorating due to unsustainable fishing practices, habitat destruction, pollution and weak management structures. This is coupled with uncoordinated development approaches, low investment and inadequate aquaculture development, weak linkages between research and management and cross-border conflicts. To reverse this trend and achieve sustainability of fisheries, careful stewardship is required to conserve and protect all aquatic habitats for present and future generations. In this regard, the following policy areas are crucial in the fisheries sub sector.

4.1.2 Policy Guidelines:

Policy Statement 1 : Sustainable management and utilisation of fishery resources will be pursued. The Government continues to give high priority to the development of the fisheries sector because it is not only a source of revenue and foreign exchange earnings for the country but also a receptacle of hope for increasing employment opportunities. The sector is also contributing in improving nutritional dietary in-take of the citizenry, especially in our quest to alleviate poverty and ensure adequate food security.

- a. **Objective:** to increase fish availability all year round through capture and culture fisheries which can be used as a means of food security to improve the nutritional standards of the population
- b. **Policy Strategy:**
 - i. Promote the development of aquaculture (commercial and small-scale);
 - ii. Provide an enabling environment for diversification of artisanal fisheries into the harvesting of unexploited and under exploited stocks;
 - iii. Provide infrastructural facilities and promote sensitization campaigns to increase Gambian participation in marine artisanal fisheries;
 - iv. Develop and implement participatory artisanal fisheries management systems and,
 - v. Regulate bivalves harvesting in collaboration with relevant institutions and organizations.

Policy Statement 2 : Monitoring, Control and Surveillance systems on fisheries resources shall be strengthened. The benefits from fisheries resources can only be guaranteed if an effective, comprehensive and integrated system of Monitoring Control and Surveillance – (MCS) - is in place. The protection of fisheries resources from IUU fishing cannot be over-emphasized and conservation measures adopted in respect of regeneration, bio-diversity and protection of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) should also be enforced through Monitoring Control and Surveillance operations.

- a. **Objectives:**
 - i. Protection, conservation of the resources and regulation of fishing operations; and,
 - ii. Development of the capacity of relevant national institutions to undertake appropriate MCS of our fisheries waters.
- b. **Strategies**
 - i. Promote participation of fisheries communities in MCS within the artisanal sub-sector;
 - ii. Ensure adequate coverage/reporting and regulation of artisanal fish production and fishing effort;
 - iii. Ensure monitoring of movements of all types of industrial fishing vessels,
 - iv. Use modern technology (such as satellites, coastal radars, aerial surveillance, Vessel Monitoring System etc.) for fisheries protection and regulation;
 - v. Impose strict penalties such as fines, withdrawal of licenses, etc. as a deterrence against harmful fishing practices and IUU fishing;
 - vi. Provide appropriate and adequate support for MCS operations (i.e. suitable patrol boats, communication equipment etc.);

- vii. Improve monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) at sub-regional level, through the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC); and,
- viii. Improve capacity building of MCS unit at the Fisheries Department and Gambia Navy and other relevant institutions.

Policy Statement 3 : Marketing, Processing and Preservation of fish and fisheries products shall be improved. The Gambia Government is determined to ensure that all fish landing sites within the country are provided with the necessary infrastructure facilities, fishing and fish processing related equipment, machinery (ice plant etc.) and means for fish distribution and marketing throughout the country. There is a global recognition of the importance of food safety issues including fish products. Hence, fish quality and value addition means ensuring that fish and fish products are safe for human consumption.

a. Objectives:

- i. To increase the availability of fish and fishery products countrywide for local consumption;
- ii. Increase revenue and foreign exchange earnings into the sector; and,
- iii. Increase employment opportunities by way of creating adequate channels for marketing fish and fishery products locally and abroad.

b. Strategies:

- i. Facilitate the establishment of cold stores in inland, coastal fishing communities and the availability of refrigeration trucks for distribution and marketing of fish and fisheries products-Cold Chain;
- ii. Develop and implement a comprehensive fish inspection and quality control system incorporating HACCP principles in collaboration with the Food Safety and Quality Authority and other relevant institutions;
- iii. Enforce regulations, pertaining to international and national quality standards in fish handling and processing, factory operations, transportation, fishery products and export;
- iv. Sensitization on diversification of packaging methods and transportation of fish and fish products;
- v. Promote the establishment of central fish market infrastructure and shore-based facilities for both artisanal and industrial fisheries (ice making plants, cold rooms etc) at selected sites;
- vi. Ensure Fish Processing Establishments adequately comply with international standards for continued exports to lucrative markets in EU countries, U.S.A. and Asia etc.;
- vii. Facilitate the creating of adequate and acceptable channels of marketing all types of fish and fishery products;
- viii. Create incentives for exporters of fish and fishery products in collaboration with relevant institutions;
- ix. Collaborate with relevant institutions in establishing export and import tariffs for fishery products.

Policy Statement 4 : Capacity building for Fisher folks shall be prioritised in the next five years. The institutional strengthening and capacity building of the Department of Fisheries and other stakeholders in the sector, in particular fishing communities, includes development of adequate human resources and skills and mobilization of appropriate and adequate physical facilities (e.g. various types of equipment) for delivery of various services to the fishing and fishing communities and other stakeholders.

a. Objectives:

- i. Improve capacity of artisanal operators to better manage their undertakings and participate effectively in co-management systems of Community Fisheries Centres and projects;
- ii. Improve the capacity of fisher folks to have an in-depth knowledge of the Fisheries Act and Regulations.

b. Policy Strategies:

- i. Need assessment for training at both the artisanal and industrial sector;
- ii. Establishment of a Training Institute or development of fisheries development modules in existing institutions in country;
- iii. Training in fishing, processing, marketing, book keeping and other related training standards developed by the Fisheries Department;
- iv. Support and facilitate skills development and improved knowledge of women in the fisheries sector and other related sectors;
- v. Promote thematic training workshops and seminars on poverty reduction, fisheries planning, and management and appropriate technologies;
- vi. Promote and support capacity building in the industrial fisheries sub-sector, particularly with regard to improving products quality hygiene and sanitation in fish processing establishments; and,
- vii. Promote fisheries studies in the curricula of Lower Basic, Upper Basic, Secondary and Tertiary institutions. Enforcement of the Fisheries Regulations

4.2 Forestry

4.2.1 Sub-Sector Description

The Gambian vegetation was once described as forest savannah. In 1946, its total cover was 81.2% of the total land area of which 60.1% was closed forest. But, in 1968, The Gambia lost more than 80% of its closed forest and in 1998, the loss increased to 98% leaving thus small patches in few regions such as CRR and LRR. In 1998 the distributions were 41.5% of forest cover and 0.7% of closed forest. These statistics show the extent of the damage that the Gambian forest cover had under gone; subduing thus the country's natural resource in a dreary condition that recalls the need to tackle the plague.

The policy strand of forestry sub-sector for the period 2017/2026 will be improving and maintaining forest resources through greater involvement of the local communities in the effective management of existing natural forest cover. The specific forest policy goal will continue to maintain 30% of the total land area into forest, of which 75% will be sustainably managed under community and private sector participation.

4.2.2 Policy Guidelines:

Policy Statement 1: Institutional Development aligned to the decentralization framework will be emphasised. There is urgent need for a functioning governance structures, legal and policy instruments as well as institutional capacity for judicious implementation and enforcement for effective forest management. The capacity of forestry institutions at the national and regional levels needs to be streamlined and strengthen so as to make them more effective and participatory.

- a. **Objective:** To develop and pursue shared vision and practical steps for building the human resources, structures, procedures and finance which can improve forestry and livelihood.
- b. **Policy strategy:**
 - i. Lobby for Increase government subventions to the sub-sector
 - ii. Promote public - private partnerships for investment in the sub-sector
 - iii. Develop a comprehensive forest financing mechanism for Community forestry expansion;
 - iv. Promote learning opportunities at tertiary level education for example, up-grading Kafuta school to a UTG linked department;
 - v. Install improved systems such as learning groups, exchange working visits for human resource development and will request feed-back on the conducted training and adult education processes;
 - vi. Put in place mechanism to boost information management and communication systems;
 - vii. Undertake staff capacity building and boost dedication through scheme promotion and risk allowances while ensuring effective deployment of staff at country- wide level

Policy Statement 2: Sustainable Forest Management and Utilisation of Forest Resources shall be monitored to ensure that all harvests and transport of forest resources are lawful and based on a sustainable yield as established by regulations. The Gambia's forest resources are being subjected to overwhelming pressure from competing land uses like agriculture, industry, human settlement and development of infrastructure. In addition, extraction of forest products, illegal logging, cutting trees for fuel wood and charcoal and grazing of livestock have also contributed to the degradation of forests. These competing in land uses have adverse environmental effects on long term sustainability of forest ecosystems. Thus, maintaining forest biodiversity safeguards the economic potential of future opportunities for new non-timber products such as food and medicine as well as social sustainability by offering aesthetic, spiritual and recreational settings for people.

- a. **Objective:** to respond to the opportunities of decentralization by supporting the development of effective institutions units at village and district level and gradually devolving control of forest resources to them.
- b. **Policy strategy:**
 - i. To develop management capability and responsibility within forestry staff and local communities for planning and forest management agreements;
 - ii. To develop village and district level institution units for effective forests extension services and micro-enterprises;
 - iii. To develop sensitization programs on Community and Private Forestry;
 - iv. To grant ownership, management rights and responsibilities to empower community users;
 - v. To provide Technical advice and extension support in Community and Private Forestry;
 - vi. To support conversion of potential forest parks to plantations with ecologically valuable and economically viable species and promote private natural/plantation forests in the regions and nationally;
 - vii. To enhance capacity of communities involved in participatory forest management (PFM), in group management and strengthening topics as Forest Policy and Legislations and technical forestry skills;
 - viii. To carry out vigorous campaign on the use of alternative energy sources such as gas, briquettes, improved stoves and solar energy;

- ix. To advocate for greater involvement in the control of bush fires through early control burning activities at community level and provide fire fighting materials and equipments to the ANR sectors while establishing a vigorous restoration strategy whereby cost is attached to land damage;
- x. To campaign for intensified establishment of agro forestry sites and wood lots and, carrying campaign for more awareness on consequences of illegal logging and the role of forests in climate change mitigation;
- xi. To facilitate Community Forest (CF) conflict resolution processes as they emerge; and,
- xii. To enhance patrol men capacity by providing tools, materials and incentives.
- xiii. To promote restoration of degraded mangrove sites through community participation.

Policy Statement 3: Marketing and Income Generation by granting local communities user and management rights, transfer to them control of forest use, and build their capacity for sustainable forest management. Trade is an important driver of economic growth. Forestry resources have great potential to contribute to country's GDP through exportation of forest finished products, collection and processing of Non-Forest Timber Products (NFTP) and ecotourism for income generation and foreign exchange earnings.

a. Objective: Department of forestry will encourage sustainable and rational use of forest resources and the creation of employment through the exportation of forest finished products and non forest timber products.

b. Policy strategy:

- i. To put in place sound cross border trade agreement in line with ECOWAS policy;
- ii. To demand direct payment of dues to forestry department where it exists;
- iii. To negotiate transfer of re- export licensing & permits to forestry department;
- iv. To lobby for regulatory framework to enhance sustainable cross-border trade through limitation of importation on process and semi process logs
- v. To Promote finish products for export thus giving more chance to transfer of technology and creation of employment;
- vi. To ensure creation of multiplier effects on forest resource management and the domestic economy in general through the reactivation of Gambia National Carpentry Association (GNCA) in order to promote Gambian made furniture and entrepreneurship.
- vii. To promote and support processing of non-timber forest products for improved socio-economic
- viii. Support forest based incubation processes e.g. linking forest based enterprises

Policy Statement 4: Cross sectoral linkages, Research and Program Development shall be fully endorsed and executed by all core agencies. Many sectoral policies and laws are not harmonised. The sectoral rather than integrated approach to management of natural resources has proved inadequate in addressing the challenges. In addition, weak enforcement of laws and weak implementation of policies remain a major issue of concern in the ANR sector. Mainstreaming environmental considerations in all sub-sectoral policies, planning and development processes is critical if this Policy is to achieve its goal and objectives. This is attainable through research and program development.

a. Objective: Department of forestry will engage on integrated resource management programming and foster linkages with related Institutions nationally and internationally in order to tap relevant experiences that can help improve quality service delivery.

b. Policy strategy:

- i. To strengthening the institutional capacity of the Forestry Department and Non-State Actors involved in the management and implementation of natural resource programs;
- ii. To avail forestry decentralized structures of the opportunity to access technology transfer while promoting development of indigenous technology in forest resource management; and,
- iii. To promote inter-sectoral linkages for efficient and unified systems for forest resource management through usage of livelihood projects such as women horticultural gardens, bee keeping, ecotourism, mangrove re-plantation, ect..
- iv. To strengthening sectoral collaboration to avoid virgin forest land grapping (for example, with the Nerica rice introduction;

4.3 Environmental Management (NEA)

4.3.1 Sub-Sector Description

The unsustainable utilization of the country’s natural resources became a major course for concern in the 1970s and which also reflected a global trend. This triggered the global discussion on “sustainability” which was described as an economy in equilibrium with basic ecological support systems. In the Gambia, this concern was reechoed in the “Banjul Declaration.” The Banjul Declaration of 1977 was the first policy instrument to focus on the need for environmental conservation. It was perceived that the long-term result of environmental degradation could imply catastrophic implications for human livelihood if the level of degradation went unchecked.

In cognizance of the level of environmental degradation, an Environment Unit was then established in 1982 to coordinate environmental matters and monitor the impact of various projects and to provide advice to government and non-governmental organizations. This is followed by the enactment of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) by government in 1987 and the establishment of the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) to provide the legal framework for environmental planning, management and decision-making, thus culminating in the preparation of the GEAP I, that provided a national framework to address environmental and natural resource management concerns. In 1994, the government set up the National Environment Agency (NEA) to coordinate the implementation of the GEAP which was adopted in 1992.

In this regard, The environmental management policy will be based on sound partnership among the farming community, the private and public sectors in the integration of ANR policy and production systems and effective implementation of the Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP).

4.3.2 Policy Guidelines:

Policy Statement 1: The agency will ensure efficient and effective waste and sewage management. Unsanitary conditions and poor waste management in the GBA and other growth centres around the country side is becoming an alarming concern. Different types of waste pose different problems but in general, failure to manage waste properly exposes urban dwellers to increased risk of infectious diseases and communicable and non-communicable diseases. Thus, adequate policies, strategies and enforcement of legislation on waste and sewage management in The Gambia should be in place.

- a. **Objective:** Minimize the effect of poor waste and sewage management on human health and environment.
- b. **Strategies**
 - i. Advocate for the enactment of the draft waste management Bill
 - ii. Strengthening enforcement of the existing environmental regulations (NEMA, HCPMA, Anti-littering regulation etc.)
 - iii. Establish standard landfills for efficient waste disposal and management
 - iv. Sensitization on waste segregations, provision and use of receptacles, collection points, disposal location and existing regulations
 - v. Enforcement of the ban on plastic bags, as plastic bags pose serious threat to agricultural productivity, livestock and wildlife

Policy Statement 2: The agency shall assume efficient management and control of all hazardous chemicals and pesticides by implementing relevant international instruments through existing laws to minimize their effects on human health. Toxic and hazardous substances are widely used in the Gambia particularly in the agricultural and industrial sectors. Exposure to these substances is likely to produce chronic rather than acute effects. Like most countries in Africa, Gambia is vulnerable to illegal dumping of obsolete and banned toxic and hazardous substances. Thus, implementing various international chemicals instruments through existing laws and policies will help to minimize the use of these hazardous chemicals in the country.

- a. **Objective:** Protect the environment and humans from hazardous chemicals & Persistent Organic Pollutants
- b. **Strategies**
 - i. Monitor and control importation, sale, storage & use of chemicals/pesticides
 - ii. Conduct public awareness campaign on the dangers and safe use of chemicals and pesticide, and promote integrated pest management (IPM) methods among chemical and pesticide users.
 - iii. Encourage the use of biological control measures of pests
 - iv. Safe disposal of obsolete chemicals
 - v. Implementation of MEA such as the Stockholm, Basel, Rotterdam, and Minamata Conventions to deal with both national and transboundary movement, sales and use of banned chemicals

Policy Statement 3: The agency shall intensify the monitoring of sand and gravel mining, and ensure efficient management of Coastal Zones. Gambia's potential of sand and coastal resources is yet to be fully exploited due to lack of adequate geological information on deposits occurrence. The potentials of these resources can be sustainably exploited through countrywide coverage of geological surveys and mineral exploration. However, the indiscriminate increase in mining activity, including quarrying and harvesting of sand, may result in environmental degradation unless measures are taken to guide and control operations in the mining sub-sector.

- a. **Objective**
 - i. Monitor & enforce the use of standard guidelines & safeguards for quarrying
 - ii. Protect & conserve sensitive habitat & infrastructure along the coast zone through ICZM

b. Strategies

- i. Sensitization on guidelines and safeguards;
- ii. Enforcement of standards;
- iii. Assessment and identification of potential graveland sand mining areas;
- iv. Assessment and identification of potential inland sand mining areas to minimize impact on our sensitive coastal areas;
- v. Enactment and operationalization of the Integrated coastal zone management & strategic plans;
- vi. Capacity building for ICZM-WG;
- vii. Promote the use of alternative building materials that requires less sand and gravel.

Policy Statement 4: The agency shall promote and scale up integrated approach to sector coordination and harmonization for sustainable resource utilization and management. There is an urgent need for an integrated approach to planning and sustainable management of Gambia's environment and natural resources. This will strengthen the legal and institutional framework for good governance, effective coordination and management of the environment and natural resources.

a. Objective

- i. Sustainable utilization of available resources
- ii. Identification of key natural resources within specific areas in all regions
- iii. Equitable distribution of the country's resources (human & material)
- iv. Greater engagement of civil society, youths and women in both consultation and implementation processes

b. Strategies

- i. National Inventory and valuation of all natural resources
- ii. Integrated monitoring and evaluation of resource utilization
- iii. Community resource mapping
- iv. Promote the use of GIS, collect earth and Remote Sensing technology in mapping national resources
- v. Effective monitoring on land used land cover changes
- vi. Strengthening Human Resource capacity at all levels
- vii. Capacity building initiatives for youths and women in resource management
- viii. Development of a national programme on environment statistics

4.4 Parks and Wild Life Management

4.4.1 Sub-Sector Description

Since independence, the Gambia has set number of laws governing the conservation, management, and sustainable use of the wildlife populations and habitat. The Banjul Declaration and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1977, the Biodiversity /wildlife Act of 2003 are examples of legislations to regulate the subsector. Conservation measures in The Gambia among others included the establishment and management of protected areas (PAs). The Biodiversity/Wildlife Act, 2003 provides for the establishment of national parks and nature reserve and community wildlife protected areas. A total of twenty-two (22) protected areas have been established until now. A total land area of 94,064 hectares is under formal protection. Even if national parks and reserves can be well protected and managed, in-situ conservation outside national parks and reserves have less protection, staff and budget. Conservation areas represent only 9.4% of the nation's land surface.

Where reserves become habitat islands and can lose some of their original species, many wetland areas of high conservation value sustain high human use and therefore, require conservation action other than protected area status. The parks and wildlife sub-sector policy strand for the period 2017/2026 will be addressing the underlying causes of biodiversity loss through greater and systematic involvement of the population, in particular satellite local communities, in their effective management and the specific parks and wildlife policy goal will continue to be the expansion of protected areas coverage of 10% of total surface area.

4.4.2 Policy Guidelines:

Policy Statement 1: Government, through Parks and Wildlife shall conserve and manage Wildlife in accordance with Gambia's obligations under international conventions and agreements to which Gambia is a party, and consistent with internationally accepted principles of ecologically-based Wildlife management. Wildlife resources contribute directly and indirectly to the local and national economy through employment, revenue generation and wealth creation. Thus, conservation such resources should be a national priority.

- a. Objectives:** The Objectives of this National Policy are:
 - i. To conserve wildlife resources, through protection, research, education, sustainable use and benefit sharing, for the benefit of present and future generation.
 - ii. To ensure sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits, arising from the direct and indirect use of wildlife resources and ecosystems.
 - iii. To conserve native and migratory species and their habitats, so as to maintain the overall species richness and ecological integrity of the country.
 - iv. To encourage the development of biological repositories, for the purposes of conservation education and science.
 - v. To encourage the private sector and communities to join as a full partners in all aspects of the wildlife-conservation process.
 - vi. To mitigate human-wildlife conflict and enhance sustainable interface initiatives

- b. Policy Strategy:**
 - i. raising awareness,
 - ii. exploration of conflict resolution programs;
 - iii. propose alternative livelihood to agriculture, manage hunting and relocation programs of vermin species;
 - iv. conduct periodic Wildlife inventory and strengthen the Research and Development Unit of the Department.

Policy Statement 2: Government, through Parks and Wildlife will ensure efficient management of Protected Areas in accordance with internationally accepted standards; and conserve, and by Regulation, control trade in Wildlife.

- a. Objectives:**
 - i. To develop national strategies, plans and programmes for wildlife conservation, in line with appropriate national and international standards.
 - ii. To regulate the importation of alien organisms, including genetically-modified organisms.
 - iii. Prepare and implement species recovery plan for all endangered species and related habitats.

- iv. To encourage and enable the sustainable development of communities living around protected areas and receive direct benefits from the management of protected areas.
- v. To facilitate eco-tourism in protected areas to provides benefits to local people.

b. Policy Strategy:

- i. Establishment of protected areas in all landscapes and seascapes;
- ii. prepare and implement species and protected area management plans;
- iii. strengthen Ecotourism Unit to galvanize revenue generation;
- iv. Provide management tools (guns, bicycles, motorbikes,...) for park management.
- v. Promote and consolidate transboundary resource management (forest & protected area management)
- vi. Conduct biodiversity impact assessment before any development in protected area
- vii. To ensure sustainable game hunting through designation of proper hunting zones

Policy Statement 3: Solicit Institutional Support for Wildlife Conservation efforts by promoting awareness on the importance of Wildlife Protection in cooperation with other Government agencies and civil society. Institutional support in wildlife conservation is very crucial for judicious implementation and enforcement for effective parks and wildlife management. The capacity of DPWM institutions at the national and regional levels needs to be streamlined and strengthen so as to make them more effective and participatory.

a. Objectives:

- i. To provide adequate support to wildlife resource managers, and to establish regional offices for adequate nationwide representation
- ii. To strengthen the R & D unit and promote research and education as valuable contributors to the national effort on wildlife conservation.
- iii. To value the traditional knowledge on genetic resources and incorporate this as appropriate within wildlife-management systems.
- iv. To encourage ex-situ conservation measures, to contribute to wildlife conservation, environmental education and the scientific understanding of the use of biodiversity sustainably.
- v. To explore potential funding opportunities and improving revenue generation

b. Policy Strategy:

- i. Tap international funding opportunities (GEF, GCF, MAVIA);
- ii. promote private sector involvement for re-introduction of lost species in PA's;
- iii. encourage the establishment of private game sanctuaries;
- iv. collect revenues and manage the Biodiversity Trust Fund (BTF);
- v. Prepare and implement local and overseas training plan;
- vi. organized exchange visits; recruit graduates to fill positions;
- vii. Enactment of the biosafety regulation and bill
- viii. Encourage wildlife/game farming

Policy Statement 4: Pursue Inter-sectoral linkages by collaborating with other core agencies in research, training and development providing an opportunity for sector learning and coordination of best practices to offer space for new initiatives and innovations; and scale up towards achieving a holistice approach to agriculture and natural resource management.

An integrated approach to planning and sustainable management of Gambia's environment and natural resources is key in the ANR sector. This is attainable through proper inter- sectoral linkages for effective coordination and management of the environment and natural resources.

a. Objectives:

- i. To monitor and maintain consistency between the national wildlife policy and other sectoral and inter-sectoral policies.
- ii. To strengthen existing collaboration ventures through the ANRWG and other relevant national and multi-sectoral platforms
- iii. To promote co-operation among stakeholders through participatory decision making at all levels.

b. Policy strategies: This can be achieved through the following interventions

- i. Empowering the site Management Committees;
- ii. Awareness raising and sensitization using local administrators;
- iii. Women empowerment for livelihood (oyster culture, village banking, vegetable garden, beekeeping etc...),
- iv. Better coordination of the ANRWG and other similar platform;
- v. Encourage inter-sectoral collaboration on shared issues.

4.5 Water Resources and Climate Change

4.5.1 Sub-Sector Description

First and foremost, there exists no single, efficient and strong national authority with the clear mandate and powers to lead the regulation of the nation's water resources. The legacy of sectoral management characterised by little or no reform in the last thirty years can be seen. There are several overlaps of powers / authority / responsibility between various institutions in the management of water resources as well as omissions of relevant legislations. It is no exaggeration to state that the current legislation (National Water Resources Council Act), more than thirty years old is conspicuously out of touch with changing national and global circumstances. However, self retirement and effective demise of cross sectoral bodies such as National Water Resources Council and Water Resources Committee leaves the Department of Water Resources as the de facto surviving institution established under the NWRC Act to manage the water resources yet without enough legal instruments. DWR only undertakes irregular measurements of few variables to give the status of water resources

The challenges associated with the provision and management of basic water needs in The Gambia varies widely, particularly with respect to potable supplies, where the urban, peri-urban and rural sectors impose quite different and often incompatible demands. Water resources management has a major impact on sustainable management of the natural environment, which in The Gambia is highly dependant on The Gambia River. Future upstream initiatives and management of the catchment will have measurable impacts on the lower reaches of the river. Thus, availability of water resources and management instruments are crucial to the attainment of goals on poverty, hunger and environmental sustainability. This unquestionable significance of water resources is however hampered by several issues ranging from threat to its availability and quality to inadequate legal and institutional management framework. Yet climate change impacts have also arisen to add more stress.

To address these concerns and adjust to conflicting demands, this Policy has established a set of clear policy area and objectives, institutional responsibilities, management rules and consultation parameters with all relevant stakeholders for protection and sustainable utilization of our water resources.

4.5.2 Policy Guidelines:

Policy Statement 1: Legal and Institutional Framework Transformation shall be prioritised.

The implications for setting up new institutions include some structural development and capacity building of required staff. There is a need for legal and institutional transformation to effectively handle all water and meteorological related issues in the country.

- a. **Objectives:** To build a better legal and administrative structure that will regulate and manage the sustainable utilization of water resources and coordinate all related policies
- b. **Policy Strategies:** This can be achieved through the following interventions:
 - i. Finalise the regulative framework so that the new legislations are fully operational. These include The Gambia Water Bill (2014), National Water Resources Management Authority Bill, Gambia Meteorological Authority Bill, Water Use Regulations Act, Drillers' Licence and Borehole Construction Regulations. And to upgrade the Rural Water Supply Division into a fully fledged Department
 - ii. Provide modalities for effective coordination in water sector. These include working procedures between authorities and their respective boards and the establishment of collaborate technical committees across all sectors (NAWEC, NEA, PURA, LGAs, Ministries, etc)
 - iii. Introduction of new management tools like water use (abstraction) permits, WASH policy in water supply
 - iv. Ratify the policy directives supporting financial sustainability of the two Authorities by recommending Bills/enactments on financial responsibilities of Government and users

Policy Statement 2: Promote Water Resources Information and Knowledge Sharing among stakeholders and in public. Amidst rising water crisis characterised by fresh water stock depletion and insufficient supplies due to rising demands and climate change impacts, there is a need for proper and timely information sharing across stakeholders and public. A system should be designed to educate the public adequately. Besides, the public will need to be well informed about the developments intended in the policy for the management and development of the water sector.

- a. **Objectives:** To have a well founded knowledge about water resources, quantitatively and qualitatively, as well as transmit information to stakeholders and decision makers adequately.
- b. **Policy Strategies:** The above objective can be achieved through:
 - i. Expanding and improving the monitoring network systems
 - ii. Establishing research and public relations units that will conduct data processing and modelling tasks and inform public on trends
 - iii. Development of a web-based tool, use media outlets
 - iv. Develop a repair and maintenance plan for infrastructure

Policy Statement 3: Transboundary Water Sharing and Collaborative water resource management is a pre-requisite requirement in our regional cooperation. Most of the country's water resources are Transboundary. The River Gambia is shared by four countries. There already exists the River Gambia River Basin Management Organisation. However the OMVG Convention has not been reviewed since 1978. This needs reviewing to incorporate emerging issues like the Sambangalou dam project. The Deep Sandstone Aquifer, the Allahein River and all tributaries flowing into the country are also shared with Senegal. The Gambia is downstream country of the basins and sub-basins placing the country in an unfortunate position and prone to the effects of upstream uses of the water courses.

- a. **Objectives:** To strengthen already existing OMVG and developing joint monitoring organisation to conduct joint monitoring of water courses and building tools that will maintain the integrity of water and uphold the interest of member states especially downstream Gambia.
- b. **Policy Strategies:** This can be achieved by
 - i. Reviewing the OMVG Convention to incorporate emerging challenges
 - ii. Participate proactively in the OMVG business and activities to support the nation's regional and international interests concerning water resources
 - iii. Secure an acceptable solution on the guaranteed low-flow regime after commissioning of the Sambangalou Dam.
 - iv. Establish year-to-year water budget agreement under the auspices of OMVG
 - v. Prepare state of The Gambia Water Reports before the dam is commissioned and thereafter to assess impacts of the dam on downstream Gambia
 - vi. Establish similar management organisations for Allehein River and other sub-basins
 - vii. Ratify the UN 97 Convention

Policy Statement 4: Promote Adaptation efforts and Resilience building and Ecosystem Management in Response to the Emerging Climate Change. Gambia is susceptible to climate-related risks such as droughts/dryspells, sea level rise, rising temperatures and floods which pose a serious threat to the socio-economic development of the country. The existing vulnerability to climate change impacts results from a wide range of factors including livelihood dependency on climate, development level, financial resources and low adaptive capacity. Thus, building climate resilient communities and ecosystem will be crucial for the ANR sector.

- a. **Objectives:**
 - i. Advance the understanding, capacity building, and social empowerment of all Gambians through education, sensitization and training including into the Education Curriculum, so that they can adequately respond to climate change.
 - ii. Ensure adequate climate change research for informed decision making, and promote timely access to climate information and early warning of climate risks and hazards.
 - iii. Put in place sound and equitable adaptation and mitigation measures that promote effective management of ecosystems and biodiversity, reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to achieve sustainable low-carbon socio-economic development.

- iv. Effectively integrate climate change consideration into all sectors and across all scales, through mainstreaming climate risks and opportunities into national and sectoral frameworks, and through effective policy coordination and implementation.
- ii. Build the resilience of communities and the ecosystem through participatory, equitable and pro-poor approaches to climate change that emphasize the meaningful inclusion of vulnerable groups including women.
- iii. Integrate community-based adaptation with ecosystem-based approaches to strengthen people's adaptive capacities and develop more climate-resilient livelihoods, by investing in sustainable natural resource management initiatives.
- iv. Coordinate national and international financial resource mobilization to address climate change by mainstreaming climate finance readiness in sectoral budgets and identifying, developing and promoting innovative financing mechanisms.

b. Strategies:

- i. Contextualized and decentralized: promoting appropriate responses to the risks of climate change and national capacity and ownership;
- ii. Sustained and systemic: promoting institutionalization, mainstreaming and coherence of climate change responses;
- iii. Evidence-based and innovative: harnessing indigenous knowledge, science, research and technology for resilient and environmentally friendly solutions;
- ii. Opportunity-oriented: viewing climate change as not only a threat to humankind, but also as an opportunity for sustainable agriculture, climate investments and innovations, resilient human settlements and clean energy
- iii. Developmental: prioritising responses that also have significant economic growth, job creation, public health, risk management and poverty alleviation benefits; and
- iv. Transformational: favouring climate resilience measures that promote the transition to a lower-carbon, efficient, job-creating, equitable and competitive economy.

PART III: ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION

5.0 Macro Sectoral Framework

The Government of The Gambia confirms its commitment to promoting long term economic and social development to reduce poverty and achieve food and nutrition security, as identified in its key strategy plans. This is confirmed in its strategy for the transformation of agriculture and natural resources as its framework to achieve the overall growth and development objectives in the ANR sector through development of the private sector, supported by an active state, trade openness, and continued maintenance of macroeconomic stability. It will endeavour through the relevant ministries to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in pursuing the implementation of the ANR policy to achieve the desired growth target over the next 10 years.

The agriculture and natural resource ministries are committed to effective sector coordination, and accountability mechanisms and modalities specified in this ANR policy and PAGE II together with all stakeholders. In that respect, it also commits to carry out the necessary policy, institutional and regulatory reforms to improve the policy environment and support the development of the ANR sector and the active engagement of the core agencies and private sector in the implementation of the policy strategies. Government will continue to create an enabling environment to improve access to finance for the private sectors (including farmers) actively engaged in the sector.

5.1 Macro-economic Stabilization Reform Policy

Macroeconomic stability is the cornerstone of any successful effort to increase private sector development and economic growth. The stability depends not only on the macroeconomic management of an economy, but also on the structure of key markets and sectors. To enhance macroeconomic stability, the Gambia is always committed to support macroeconomic policy with structural reforms that strengthen and improve the functioning of these markets and sectors. With the new Gambia, the Government will continue to focus on stabilization and diversification of the economy as well as adopt appropriate fiscal and monetary policies to attract investment.

The Gambia prepared different strategic documents such as Economic Recovery Programme, for the period 1985-1989, then the Program for Sustained Development (PSD) from 1990-1996, followed by the Vision 2020 in 1996, which aims at turning the country into a middle-income country by year 2020. The Government's programme to achieve Vision 2020 included the Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (SPA 1) covering the period and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP I & II) covering the period 2001-2005 and 2007-2011 respectively; Gambia National Agricultural Investment Program (GNAIP) from 2011 to 2015 and many others. The ultimate goal of these strategies was to 1) ensure macroeconomic stability and effective public-sector resource management; 2) promote pro-poor growth and increased employment through private sector led development; and 3) improve provision of basic social services.

These macro-economic stabilization reform policy measures affect wide range of sectors including the Agriculture and Natural Resource sector. This supplementary ANR policy will be orientated to facilitate improved growth performance of the ANR sector. In this regard, it will work to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness of utilization of resources in the sector as demonstrated in line with its broader efforts to strengthen public financial management.

5.2 Supportive Infrastructure and Institutional Services

The comprehensive nature of the environment and the need to integrate environmental considerations in all development planning and activities calls for cooperation and consultation among responsible government agencies and stakeholders at all levels. It is particularly important to recognise the existing institutional mechanisms and be regarded as ways and means by which coordination and cooperation can be enhanced between the many institutions whose mandates relate to the environment, climate change and natural resources. This will be done through strengthening the various core agencies responsible for environmental issues to support their institutions in different areas such as sub-sectoral policy formulation, coordination of intervention activities and to monitor the implementation in relation to other sectoral policies; Strengthen the capacity of ANR management of all stakeholders as the designated national institution responsible for the general supervision and coordination in all matters relating to the environment; and restructure and strengthen the capacity of different ministry's institutions at the national and country levels so as to make them more effective and participatory.

The expected outcome is that all ANR policy programmes are efficiently and effectively supervised and coordinated to ensure achievement of expected results. Main activities will include establishing the infrastructures and operating systems necessary for ANR implementation. Main institutions involved in implementing this component - and the overall ANR- include Relevant Ministers, the Programme Steering Committee (PSC), the Programme Coordination Office (PCO) and Regional, District, Ward and Village Committees. In general, Government will maintain a core of technical Units in the ANR sector capable of delivering regulatory, technical, advocacy, financial, marketing, advisory and supervisory services required to sustain increased production and productivity and other needs in food and agricultural matters in the country. Such services will be crucial to the efforts and overall objective of the sector to transform itself to commercial modern sector.

5.3 Promoting Community Participation in Resource Management

Government is committed to policy of encouraging and supporting all types of reasonable self-help independent producer economic groupings/associations in society in the ANR sector. The main objective of this policy is the continuous facilitation of organizing stakeholders into groups and associations for their empowerment and effective performance in achieving their goals and objectives, and servicing their member groups and associations. Farmers and Community Organizations, Associations and Groups in the ANR sector are sometimes understandably used interchangeably, because they are formed by people who know each other and share common interests and experiences, and are loosely established and fairly democratic. Support to these organisations mainstreamed into the planning and development process of the ANR sector. A Programme to be established for sensitization, awareness and advocacy on various aspects of involvement, performance of, support to, and consultations with various farmers and producers organizations, associations and groups in the ANR sector for establishment of appropriate Legislative Framework for the operations of Farmers and Producers Organizations, Associations and Groups in the ANR sector.

The ANR sector will use farmer-to-farmer training to bring about awareness, technological change and increase the capacity of farming communities to undertake their own development activities. Innovative means will be used to disseminate knowledge and skills, based on soundly traditional values of the community.

Farmers needed support during this process, so well-respected local craftsmen and women to be train to provide advice on various management processes on natural resource management. To improve resilience to ANR management, there should be improved governance for local communities as they can provide governance at the local level and although there may be levels of bias and elite capture, they remain the only channels through which representation of all members is possible. It is also through them that there is a chance of equitable of benefits from natural resources. Through existing local institutions, all community members have a chance to benefit from natural resource management programmes. Market channels also need to be open and diversified and these can be done equitably through existing local institutions. The governments or relevant ministries and other organizations should integrate adaptation to ANR into the policies and programs of all community organizations. They should improve resilience through information, training and technologies provision to local community institutions and strengthen linkages with other community organizations for cross-pollination of ideas and to influence change.

5.4 Cross-cutting Policy Issues

Gender and youth mainstreaming is a cross-cutting development concern and, for that reason, it needs to be addressed using a cross-sectoral approach. In order to realise gender equality and basic human rights, all sectors and actors in development need to address this issue in their area of activity. The Government will continue to create an enabling policy framework to mainstream Gender equity in all programmes and projects of the ANR sector, ensuring recognition of the roles and comparative advantages of women access to essential resources and provision of support appropriate to their needs in their various vocations in the ANR sector.

The Government of the Gambia will strive to improve women's and youth's employable skills and job opportunities by ensuring parity in their education, improve their entrepreneurial skills and opportunities in all productive sectors. This should be coupled with mobilizing resources for gender equality and women's empowerment interventions, and ensure the proper coordination, monitoring and evaluation of women's and youth-related programmes in the ANR sector.

This policy also recommends mainstreaming the teaching of environmental education and resource management on a multidisciplinary basis and integrate it into the ongoing curricula of Schools and colleges and not treat it as a separate or additional subject, though this should also be done at the tertiary level. In addition, the ANR sector has the potential to become a pathway by which The Gambia can reach its long-term development goals, especially as regards reducing poverty and achieving food security. The food security policy will be enhanced through increased domestic production of nutritious and safe food, improved access and enhanced stability of supplies through effective processing, storage and food reserve mechanisms.

6.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Assumptions and Risks

6.1.1 Assumptions

This supplementary ANR policy is based on the following assumptions:

- Economic stability, and continuity of government commitment are ensured.
- High ethical standards of governance and professional conduct are national priority.
- Sector reform efforts will continue, coupled with the expansion of state revenues.
- Resources will be allocated for implementation of the policy.
- Progressive improvement of the national infrastructure, and community participation is ensured.

6.1.2 Risks

Among the many risks to be taken into account while implementing and enforcing the policy are:

- Gambia reverts to another cycle of bad governance;
- Fragmentation and inefficiency prevail;
- External assistance is inadequate to ensure sector performance.
- Powerful internal and external players continue to act in isolation, jeopardizing the application and implementation of this supplementary policy.
- Inadequate monitoring and follow-up resulting in non-adherence to policy provisions, or underutilization of both financial and human resources.
- Proliferating priorities and political pressures compromise the implementation and enforcement of the policy.
- Inadequate implementing capacity slows down operations despite political commitment, support of development partners and availability of resources,
- Inconsistent subsector leadership and decision-making reduces the credibility of the policy,
- High dependency on external aids.

6.2 Institutional Arrangements

The governance approach to the implementation of this supplementary policy is fundamental. The credibility of the policy relies on the legislative coherence, transparent and inclusive decision making, and existence of dedicated core agencies delivering the provisions. There are significant overlaps between the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, and Natural Resources (MECCNAR), and Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources (MoFWR) with regards to governing Climate Change and under the new political dispensation. The policy institution of Climate Change is the MECCNAR, while the technical arms are under the purview of the Department of Water Resources, MoFWR; in which the UNFCCC focal point is located. Policy implementation under this kind of institutional arrangements can be cumbersome with conflicting interests if mandates are not clearly defined.

Internationally, The Gambia is recognised for its commitment to the development and management the natural resources, and domestically the government has put in place measures that demonstrate the political will. These include the formulation of micro-policies of core agencies; the creation of an ANR working group under purview of the MECCNAR; and the various steps in promoting integrated resource management in all subsectors. This Policy will enhance and extend these initiatives.

The Policy creates the enabling environment and provides direction for enhanced coordination and partnership among the ANR subsectors. Creating a strong enabling environment for community-based resource management is a cornerstone of this Policy. The GoTG will initiate a process to identify and act upon key constraints to community-based resource management, including land tenure and access rights.

This Policy advocates that mandates of relevant ministries particularly, Ministry of Environment, and Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources be clarified. It noted that the Ministry of Local Government and Lands, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA) and the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), which is located in the Office of the President, also assumed central roles for natural resource development and management. Regarding mainstreaming into the national development frameworks and policies, natural resource management is fully integrated into all of the five pillars in the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment, PAGE (2012-2015); as well as in all other key development frameworks. Decentralised approaches to planning, implementation and monitoring shall be prioritized in the implementation of this Policy, recognising that ANR functions are likely to be localised, and will need solutions that take local circumstances into account. Institutional arrangements will be established to ensure that mechanisms for devolving management responsibilities under the envisaged sector reforms and decentralisation policies. This calls for strengthening the existing coordinating bodies including the ANR Working Group, National Climate Change Council/Secretariat, etc.

6.3 Legislation

The subsectoral Acts and micropolicies that were created for the judicious management and utilization of the natural resource base need to be updated and/or amended to consolidate the uncoordinated components of service delivery among core agencies. The GoTG through the MECCNAR and MoFWR shall start working with all segments of the executive and judicial branches of government having responsibilities for components of natural resources to build the needed structure that will accommodate such reforms. In order to ensure that the steps involved in such restructuring are aligned with the constitution, the GoTG through the MECCNAR and MoFWR shall elicit the leadership of the Ministry of Justice to approve the enabling legal tools to assure realization of these goals. Also, there are bills on the transformation of the institutional structure for the management and development of water resources, forestry, wildlife, waste management, biosafety, Integrated costal zone management etc, submitted by the MECCNAR pending ratification. This policy recognizes the importance of these bills, and the MoFWR will pursue the ratification processes.

6.4 Resource Implications

The GoTG through the MECCNAR, MoA and MoFWR shall take the lead and ownership in mobilizing funding and ensuring the availability of resources for the effective implementation of this policy. Specifically, the following actions shall be taken:

- Government shall increase the subsector financing to constitute a target of 10-15% of the national budget, with a specific commitment to supporting the implementation of the policy.
- Attention will be paid to increasing the effective absorption of funds allocated to the core agencies. Mechanisms devoted to ensuring long-term funding and elimination of funding-gaps will be introduced.

- Public and private natural resource programs that directly support the achievement of the objectives of the Policy and Plans of core agencies will be prioritized.
- Core agencies will be encouraged to establish Resource Management Trust Fund (similar to Forestry Trust Fund) purposely to support policy implementation and review mechanisms.

6.5 Monitoring, Evaluation and Policy Review

The GoTG, through MECCNAR and MoFWR shall prioritise programme learning and development of its natural resource base. A robust and participatory natural resource monitoring and evaluation system will be developed to undertake regular monitoring and rigorous evaluation of programmes implemented by core agencies. The purpose of this will be to monitor progress towards the delivery of policy objectives, and to identify the impact of implemented actions. The ministries shall design their overarching M&E systems which shall inform monitoring and evaluation processes of the core agencies. Specifically, this M&E system will aim to:

- improve the capacity of M&E unit to develop an effective programme learning system by:
 - establish an appraisal and strategic planning system;
 - develop an effective reporting system to share and spread information on good lessons and practices;
 - document and learn from best practices; while sharing experiences internally and externally.
 - update natural resource inventory and assess the country's sites of high ecological and aesthetic values (fauna and flora) annually.

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8.0 ANNEXES

Annex 1

Mercury pollution in River Gambia

The River Gambia is prone to water pollution by mercury from the gold mining activity in Senegal. Mercury is a hazardous heavy metal that is used in the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining (ASGM). ASGM is the greatest source of mercury pollution in Africa. In the mining of gold, mercury is used because it forms an amalgam with gold. After extracting the gold from the amalgam, the mixed waste containing mercury is often discarded and runs in our water bodies. Once the mercury finds its way to the water bodies, it is converted to methyl mercury, which is the most hazardous form of mercury.

Methyl mercury supports the growth of plankton and other smaller water organisms. Smaller fish feed on the mercury contaminated plankton, and bigger fish also feed on the smaller fish. The population at the end of the food chain consume the mercury contaminated fish. So, there is that process of mercury flow from primary origin up through the food chain and bio-accumulate in fatty tissues. This poses serious risk to our water and fisheries resources.

In the recently concluded mercury inventory conducted by the NEA (by using the UNEP mercury toolkit), the activity of ASGM carried out upstream around the Kedugou region in Senegal was identified as one of the potential sources of mercury pollution downstream in The Gambia.

Both The Gambia and Senegal have ratified the Minamata Convention on Mercury; and the convention requires parties to take actions to minimize and where possible stop processes that leads to mercury pollution. In addition to this international treaty, there is also need for regional collaboration with Senegal in the sustainable management and protection of our water bodies through appropriate technologies in the gold mining sector.

Source. Njagga Touray , National Environment Agency