

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF GREAT GREEN WALL FOR THE SAHARA & THE SAHEL INITIATIVE FOR THE GAMBIA



PART I

**STOCK TAKING AND DIAGNOSTICS FOR SLM
UP-SCALING AND MAINSTREAMING**

Acknowledgement

It is undoubtedly evident that the formulation and compilation of the National Action Plan (NAP) for Implementation of the Great Green Wall Initiative is a demanding task. However, the importance of the document is definitely worth undertaking any difficulty encountered during the compilation and adoption of the implementation prescriptions entailed. The compilation processes entails consultative meetings and information triangulation to ascertain accuracy, since Sustainable Land Management practices depends on the authenticity of the information gathered on the Four Areas (**Political, Institutional, Technical and Financial**).

The Consultancy Team is indebted indeed to a large number of people for their contributions towards the development of the NAP all of whom cannot be mentioned by their names because of limitation of space. Our sincere gratitude is being extended to the Ministry of Forestry and the Environment (MoFEN), Heads of Decentralized Departments, Non- Government and Voluntary Organizations at Regional level (Technical Advisory Committees) (TACs) for their invaluable contributions during the series of Regional Consultative Meetings conducted.

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EXECUTIVE SUMARRY

The Gambia Government (GG) recognizes that the health and socio-economic wellbeing of the population are intimately connected to the sustained provision of multiple ecosystem services through sustainable land use practices. Ensuring the sustainable source of resources and income to rural communities, while conserving the nation's ecosystems and natural productive capacity and systems, calls for the integration of ecosystem conservation, sustainable natural resource management and community development. The Gambia Government has therefore, taken the Great Green Wall for Sahara and Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI) at the highest political level, this decision demonstrates the willingness of an ambitious initiative to combat land degradation in the country alongside promotion of collaboration and coordination between sectors to enable optimal use of available resources.

The development of the National Action Plan (NAP) for Implementation of Great Green Wall for Sahara and Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI) in The Gambia, is by necessity, cross-sectoral in design, and throughout its development has involved the full participation of Natural Resource Sector Departments and Agencies, Non- Government Organizations (NGOs), Local Communities and their Local Authorities.

Part one of the National Action Plan describes the main bottlenecks (from the technical, ecosystems, policy, institutional and financial perspectives) and opportunities for Sustainable Land Management up-scaling and mainstreaming. Priority areas of intervention to effectively rehabilitate degraded lands, reclaim desertified lands and reverse land degradation, particularly through the removal of all barriers (political, legal, institutional, financial and technical) that limit the consideration of Sustainable Land Management at all levels are elaborated.

Part two point to a number of underlying strategies to be followed on a pilot phase to fight against desertification, climate changes and loss of biological diversity for enhanced rural livelihoods in the Northern Regions of The Gambia. Lessons learnt during the implementation of the pilot will logically influence the up-scaling of the initiative to other Regions of The Gambia. The strategies described in this report are summarized as follows along with cost estimates:

- Strategy for Institutional Strengthening for supporting and coordinating Stakeholder efforts in Sustainable Land Management in the 3 Regions of The Gambia;
- Strategy for Community Based Natural Resources Management;
- Strategy on Cross-cutting Activities; and
- Strategy for Project Management.

The Ministry of Forestry and Environment (MoFEN) and the planning team emphasized that a partnership of the Gambia Government, donors, development agencies, NGOs (local and International) and the local communities are essential for the proposed effort to succeed.

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List Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	African Development Bank
ADWAC	Association for the Development of Women and Children
ANR	Agriculture and Natural Resource
ANRE	Agriculture, Natural Resource and Environment
AU	African Union
AVSU	Agency for Village Support
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CU	Concern Universal
DAS	Department of Agricultural Services
DLS	Department of Livestock Services
DOA	Department of Agriculture
DOC	Department of Cooperation
DOP	Department of Planning
DPWM	Department of Parks and Wildlife Management
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EE&C	Environmental Education and Communication
EIA	Environment Impact Assessment
ESMP	Environment and Social Management Plan
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFHC	Freedom From Hunger Campaign

GALDEP	Gambia Lowland Agriculture Development Project
GAMBIS	Gambia Biodiversity Management and Institutional Strengthening Project
GDP	Gross- Domestic Product
GEAPP	Gambia Emergency Agricultural Production Project
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GG	Gambia Government
GGWSSI	Great Green Wall for Sahel and Sahara Initiative
GM	Global Mechanism
Ha	Hectare
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
LGA	Local Government Authority
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoFEA	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
MoFEN	Ministry of Forestry and the Environment
MoLGL	Ministry of Local Government and Lands
MTR	Mid- Term Review
NAP	National Action Plan
NARI	National Agriculture Research Institute
NATC	Njawara Agricultural Training Centre
NBR	North Bank Region
NEA	National Environment Agency
NEMA	National Environment Management Act

NEMC	National Environment Management Committee
NFP	National Forest Programme Facility
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PAGE	Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment
PIWAMP	Participatory Integrated Watershed Management Project
SJFFP	Saint Joseph Family Farm Project
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SWMU	Soil and Water Management Unit
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
WB	World Bank
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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Background

The development of National Action Plan for the implementation of the Great Green Wall is a participatory process that aims primarily at reaching a national consensus on the following:

- The concept of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI); the vision that all stakeholders have on its implementation and on the means to mobilize to this effect;
- Priority areas of intervention to effectively rehabilitate degraded lands, reclaim desertified lands and reverse land degradation, particularly through the removal of all barriers (political, legal, institutional, financial and technical) that limit the consideration of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) as a major component of the development plans, including the local level;
- Roles and responsibilities of each actor in the implementation of selected measures, and
- Monitoring / evaluation mechanisms and tools that are appropriate and relevant to measure progresses made and identify corrective measures.

This process is articulated around five logical steps (FAO, TerrAfrica country support tools, January 2008): that would build on existing processes and methodologies at community level. The logical steps are as follows:

The first step targets Commitment and Partnerships; second step pursues Stocktaking and Diagnostics, targeting the main bottlenecks (from the technical, ecosystems, policy, institutional and financial perspectives) and opportunities for SLM up-scaling and mainstreaming; third step describes the Programming and Identification of the Investment Framework; step four (Investment Formulation and Costing) assembles activities and investments according to four main components, namely i) supporting on-the-ground activities for SLM scaling-up, ii) creating a conducive environment for the upscaling of SLM, iii) strengthening commercial and advisory services for SLM, and iv) developing SLM monitoring and evaluation as well as knowledge management and information dissemination systems and the fifth step addresses Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation. As far as possible, these would build on existing processes and methodologies at country level.

The terms of reference for the national consultancy is to help The Gambia carry out Step 2 of the planning process (inventory and analysis of constraints and opportunities) and to develop a strategy note indicating the methodological approach (roadmap) regarding the national context, as well as identifying the main investment priorities for the implementation of the GGWSSI (areas of intervention and priority actions).

The overall objective of the study is to undertake a stocktaking and diagnostics analysis on SLM constraints and opportunities, and to propose a national strategy for the implementation of the GGWSSI. The study is to take into account identified priorities in the NAP-CCD and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) National Investment Plan.

The study aims also to guide the promotion of national ownership of the GGWSSI implementation and alignment of development partners to national priorities.

1. Introduction

Sustainable land management is recognized as a potential foundation of poverty reduction and sustainable development. In many cases, achieving sustainable land management or correcting unsustainable land use practices requires broad-based policy reforms that would reach beyond the scope of traditional environmental policy-making, as well as targeted interventions that yield immediate results. Despite the breadth and depth of the challenge faced by most developing countries, the resources invested in implementing policies and programmes for sustainable land management remain insufficient. In fact, the issue of resource mobilization for sustainable land management has been recognized as one of the major hurdles to achieving policy goals in The Gambia. The country has been faced with the challenge of implementing sectoral policies, plans and programmes, including national action programs (NAPs) under the UNCCD, which lacked grounding in broader country frameworks, and therefore went un-implemented.

Degradation of land resources in The Gambia is a function of/or influenced by both human and natural factors. It has reached a critical stage such that the fragile equilibrium between man and nature is increasingly out of balance. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) provides a legal framework for cooperation among stakeholders. These are developing and developed countries, donor agencies, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and communities at the grassroots level. To date, more than 165 countries and institutions are Parties to the Convention.

Given the multitude of problems and constraints to development, UNCCD has singled out Africa to deserve special attention.

Dating back to the Sahelian drought of 1972/1973, desertification has been a major concern in The Gambia. In 1977, The Banjul Declaration articulated the GOTG's commitment to protect The Gambia's flora and fauna. In the ensuing decade, Government employed a series of strategies and activities to deal with the persistent drought conditions. Strategies included actions broadly grouped as: community participation in resource management, institutional strengthening, research and development, extension, environmental education, and direct public investment programmes and projects. Notwithstanding these early efforts in combating desertification, environmental degradation continued at an accelerated pace.

To address the underlying causes of environmental degradation, GOTG enacted the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) in 1987 and adopted the Gambia Environmental Action Plan. Under NEMA, Subsequently, in June 1994 The Gambia signed the Convention and later ratified it in January 1996.

As a result two key institutions were created. The National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) which is responsible for overall environmental policy coordination at the national level, and the National Environment Agency (NEA) based on the recommendations highlighted in the GEAP.,

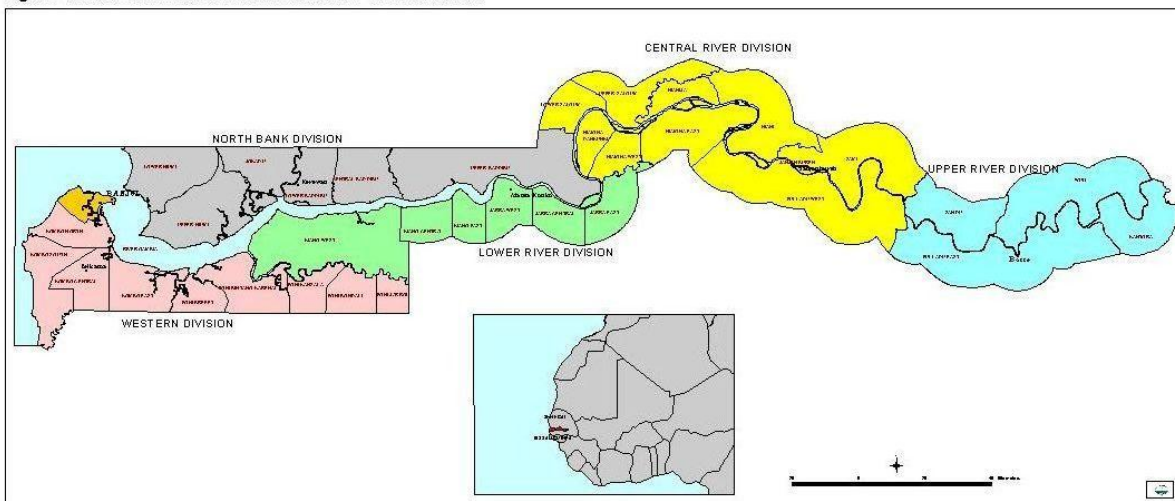
The NEA is mandated to coordinate all environmental related issues in the country and the implementation of the GEAP. The GEAP provides the framework for implementation of the three international natural resource-related conventions. As a result, the NEA subsequently established a number of Working Groups to facilitate its consultation and coordination functions. The Agricultural and Natural Resources (ANR) Working Group was the first to be formed in 1994.

During this same period, an awareness was growing that Government could not protect and manage the country's natural resources without the assistance and support of local communities. The concept of community forest management was developed in response to this realization, with the formal introduction of Community Forestry (CF) at village level in 1991 to compliment state-management efforts. . Eventually both the state- and the community forest management models were merged into one concept, called the Gambian Forest Management Concept (GFMC). This concept, a major breakthrough in sustainable resource management, is currently being implemented throughout the country. The Gambia also adopted the National Forestry Action Plan (NFAP), which is fully committed to further strengthening community involvement and collaborative management of the forest resources.

1.1 Country Profile

The Gambia is a sub-tropical country in West Africa with a total land area of approximately 10,689 km², a population of about 1,400,000 people and a population growth rate of 4.2% per annum (NAPA:2009). The country is divided into six administrative areas: West Coast Region (WCR), North Bank Region (NBR), Central River Region (CRR), Lower River Region (LRR), Upper River Region (URR), and The Greater Banjul Area (GBA). See Figure 1.

Figure 1: ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS OF THE GAMBIA



1.2 Climatic Context

The Gambia lies between latitude 13 and 14 degrees North and 17 and 12 degrees West and it has a total area of 11,000 sq. km. The climate of The Gambia is a Sudano-Sahelian type characterized by a rainy season (June to October) and a dry season (November to May). The average annual rainfall ranges from 850mm to 1,200mm and the average temperatures range from 18 to 33 degrees. The relative humidity is about 68% along the coast and 41% inland during the dry season and generally about 77% throughout the country during the wet season (NAPA: 2009). The country's low elevation put some of the areas such as the capital, Banjul, at significant risk from sea level rise.

1.3 Physical Context

The Gambia has four major landscapes. These are the floodplain, the colluvial slopes, the lower plateau and upper plateau, with different soil types. The national drainage is centered on the River Gambia and its tributaries. The River Gambia, which is over 680 km long, originates from the Fouta Djallon Highlands in Guinea.

The country is divided into four main agro-ecological zones namely Sahelian (70.4 km² or 1%), Sudano-Sahelian (8,035.31 km² or 75%) Sudanian (2,070.37 km² or 19%) and Guinean (506.92 km² or 5%) (FD: 1998). The natural vegetation zone is woodland savannah. The following plant associations can be found in the country:

- Beach sands and coastal scrub,
- Coastal woodland,
- Mangroves,
- Various brackish and freshwater swamps,
- Salty mud flats and salt pans,
- Riverine (gallery) forests and forests on river islands, and
- Savannah woodland, parklands, and bush fallow.

The River Gambia serves as a natural buffer-zone to slow the process of desertification. Thus its geopolitical location in the largely semi-arid Sahel may afford some strategic advantage, but the country is faced with a serious agricultural, food and environmental fragility that makes it highly vulnerable to desertification.

1.4 Economic Context

With a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of US \$ 360, The Gambia ranks among the least developed countries in the world. The economy is characterized by its small size, relatively narrow economic base, low level of literacy, and overall skills. Redistributive trade, agriculture, and tourism make-up the main sectors of the economy. Other areas of the Gambian economy that have been expanding rapidly over the past years are the construction and telecommunication sectors. Trade and re-export are strongly influenced by trans-boundary interactions with Senegal and sub-regional trade relations.

Agriculture plays an important role in the economy contributing about 35% of GDP and provides the main source of income, employment and food supply to over 80% of the population. While groundnut production was previously the major export crop (followed by sesame and cotton), agricultural diversification towards food crops (rice, coarse grains such as millet and sorghum, horticulture) has been promoted by Government and is being increasingly integrated into farmers' strategies in reaction to adverse international trade trends. Horticultural production has steadily increased during the

recent years and already contributes to GDP at the same rate as the livestock sector (about 5%). Agriculture and livestock-production provide income for over 60% of the rural population. Groundnuts and its by-products contribute over 90% of export earnings.

Total arable land is estimated at 558,000ha, with approximately 150,000 ha for groundnut cultivation and 50% for cereals of which, rice accounts for 20%.

Currently, most of the industrial activity in these sectors is limited to groundnut milling, cereal processing, dairy processing, cotton ginning, sesame oil extraction and fish processing. In the livestock and fisheries sub-sectors the production systems are predominantly traditional.

Tourism is an important industry in The Gambia. Between 1965 and 1998, the number of tourists visiting The Gambia has increased from 27,000 to 96,000 but has been on the decline since 1998. Efforts are underway to reverse this negative trend.

1.5 Social Context

The Gambian socio-demographic dynamics combine one of the highest fertility (6.04 Total Fertility Rate) and population growth rates (4.2% annual growth) in the Region, with a low acceptance for modern contraception (7% use rate). The 2013 projected population estimate, using the 2003 census growth rate of 4.2%, figures at roughly 1.2 million persons. The population is expected to reach a total population of over 2.5 million by 2015.

With a population density of 108 persons per km², The Gambia ranks among the four most densely populated countries in Africa, which is clearly one of the most severe factors causing land degradation. Of particular importance is the age structure of the population. It is estimated that 80% of the total population fall into the age bracket of 31 years and below; while 71% are 24 years and younger. With such a youthful population, a natural population momentum or demographic pressure is guaranteed, whereby the population density is certain to increase, regardless of short to medium term efforts to control it. Clearly, the youth will play a key role in determining the success or failure of any development effort. This point is made even clearer when one considers the rate of rural-urban migration which is predominantly the youth.

Women in The Gambia experience significant disparities ranging from life expectancy, educational attainment and income. Economically active Gambian women are commonly engaged in those sectors where incomes are low, such as lowland crop production and petty trading. According to the 1993 Household Economic Survey, the average Gambian male has an income nearly four times higher than women.

2. Situation Analysis

2.1 Status and Trends of Desertification/Land Degradation in The Gambia

Described by the Convention as a “*reduction or loss, in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, of the biological or economic productivity and complexity of rain fed cropland, irrigated cropland, or range, pasture, forest and woodlands resulting from land uses or from a process or combination of processes, including processes arising from human activities and habitation patterns*”, desertification must therefore be seen as a global problem requiring local solutions. In general, it is understood as the degradation of dry lands and relates to the loss of physical and economic productivity in arable lands, forests and rangelands. No frequent visitor to The Gambia would fail to observe these processes in the country especially the visible loss of vegetation cover and the increasing signs of soil erosion and salinization over the last two decades.

Most obvious is the degradation of the Gambian forest habitat. About one hundred years ago most of the Gambian land territory was still covered by dense forests. The forests were rich in wildlife and provided the habitat for a variety of large mammals, which are either rare (such as hippopotamus, waterbuck, roan, serval, and caracal) or locally extinct (such as buffalo, giraffe, elephant, lion, etc.). The main causes of the forest destruction are rampant fires, clearing of forests for agricultural production, and commercial fuel wood exploitation. The process of forest deterioration was further accelerated by the decline in the mean annual rainfall.

Land use studies carried out in 1946 and 1993 in relation to the population density concluded that the total forest cover of the Gambian land territory (mangroves excluded) decreased from 81% in 1946 to 41% in 1993 (FD: 1993). This is an alarming development, particularly as regards the decrease in closed woodland. In 1946, 60% of the land was still covered by relatively undisturbed forest. In 1993 this forest type had decreased to a mere 1.1%. Although the forest cover slightly increased by 4% from 1980 to 1993, and despite the fact that The Gambia still has a valuable forestry resource, it is obvious that desertification control in the country stands and falls with the restoration and sustainable management of forest and woodland resources.

Other important factors of desertification and general environmental degradation include: salt water intrusion into the fresh water zone of the river system; salt water seepage into the upper aquifer of the fresh water system in the coastal areas; soil salinisation and erosion, decreasing fertility of the arable land, and finally, migration.

Land use changes between 1980 and 1993 observed by the Forestry Department in a recent monitoring exercise can be summarized as follows:

- The total area under forest increased. This is due to the recovery of former fallow land areas into tree and shrub savannah. All Regions, with the exception of North Bank Region (NBR), registered an increase in tree and shrub savannah.
- Closed and open woodland was reduced by 3.1% per year due to forest degradation and conversion into agricultural land. Most severe degradation can be observed round middle and the eastern part of the country.
- Mangroves suffered a slight but nevertheless alarming decrease in total surface area; the causes are die-backs due to disturbed water exchange, illegal exploitation and conversion of tidal areas into shrimp and fish farms.
- The fallow areas have decreased by almost 4.4% due to conversion into tree and shrub savannah, agriculture with no trees or to a lesser extent into agriculture with trees.
- Agriculture with trees remained relatively unchanged and agriculture with no trees increased by 1.3% per year.

The overall area under rangeland remained stable as well, but considerable changes in plant species composition can be observed. There is a general decrease in species of high palatability, such as *Andropogon* grasses and fodder trees such as *Pterocarpus erinaceus* and *Prosopis africana*.

2.2 Land Degradation and Poverty Nexus/Connections in The Gambia

Desertification is more than just the loss of trees and vegetation. In an even broader sense, the process has been understood by many contributors to the NAP as a social problem in which **Desertification is at the centre of a triangular relationship among people, poverty and food security**. People are the main agents of desertification as they create the main causes and are, at the same time, the main victims of land degradation. Nonetheless, people's actions will also be the determining factor in halting desertification and fostering sustainable development.

From the foregoing analysis of the land use changes above, it could be concluded that virtually all arable lands are cultivated and no arable land is left in reserve and that most suitable agricultural lands are located in the Western portions of the country. When upland agricultural production is factored into the equation, it is clear that the areas most suitable for agricultural production are, for all intents and purposes, already being cultivated to their fullest extent. Areas that are most suitable for agricultural purposes are in fact either settlements or existing forests. The Eastern portion of the country is by and large only marginally suited for agricultural production, hence more area is left uncultivated in these areas.

The steady decrease in the fallow lands poses a serious threat to soil fertility and overall farm income. As observed by the Sectoral Study of Agriculture, Soil and Water Conservation, the fallow period has been reduced to four years on average and to zero in many areas under mono-cropping. At present, 64% of all fields fall under the category of mono-cropping. What is important in the long-run is the vision of the population for the future, their perception of well-being, and quality-of-life in an environment continually subject to change. To this end, communities in all consultations have clearly articulated three observed phenomena of relevance to both immediate and medium term national poverty reduction efforts generally and household food security endeavours in particular:

- Desertification/land degradation is a felt and visible problem threatening the production-base and livelihood of the rural population;
- At the crux of the problem of desertification is a combination of factors, collectively referred to as 'land degradation' - decreasing vegetation cover, uncontrolled bush fires, encroachment of the remaining forests, depletion of soil fertility, and over-exploitation of the rangelands. The severity of these problems are understood to be spatially varied with the Northern Bank of the River Gambia being most severally affected; and,
- Rapid population growth and the related pressure on the arable and non-arable lands are seen as both a cause and hindrance to remedial initiatives.

These phenomena underpinned or are causal factors of the observed staggering revelation of the poverty situation by a 1998 Household Poverty Study and a 1999/2000 Participatory Poverty Assessment (GBOS: 1999/2000). These studies revealed that between 1992 and 1998 the extremely poor increased from 15% to 51% whilst the population of the non-poor declined from 67% to 31%.

3. Major Causes of Desertification/Land Degradation in The Gambia

A multitude of causes and problems contribute to the process of increasing desertification, but zonal and divisional consultations, sectoral studies and previous investigations arrived at the following:

- The extraordinarily high population growth rate of 4.2% per annum at present has by far outweighed all efforts to increase economic growth. This does not only refer to the Gross Domestic Product, but to all economic indicators: National cereal self-sufficiency, for example, has constantly declined from 58% in 1985 to 41% in 1995, with 2012 being the worst.
- The high population growth rate, however, is only partly attributed to domestic fertility. It is noteworthy, especially for the UNCCD partners in developed countries, that an estimated 20% of the present population is migrants from the sub-region in search of better economic opportunities, or refugees from other West African countries torn apart by civil strife. . This, on the other hand means that the degree of pressure on the country's resource-base is increasingly dependent on regional and even international developments, which can only partly be controlled at the national level.
- Unsustainable resource-use pattern has aggravated environmental degradation. Regular bush and forest fires, decreasing fallow-periods in arable lands and overstocking/ imbalanced distribution of animals over the rangelands diminish soil fertility, carrying capacities, and stocking rates.
- Unclear land-tenure systems, being in flux at present, further aggravate the problem. The weak legal and institutional framework in The Gambia has so far counteracted all efforts to effectively address the problems of land degradation and its inappropriate use.
- Given the geographic position of the country, namely bordered on three sides by Senegal, it is impossible to seriously engage in remedial measures against desertification at a purely national level. This is especially true for the sensitive issues of migration and transhumance.

- Unfavourable economic and marketing conditions for agro-products, resulting in an increase in rural poverty that accelerates the demotivation for the care of the diminishing natural resources.

It is indisputable that the nation's resources are at risk of irreversible degradation if current land use practices continue. Initial stages such as changes in the vegetation and reduction in primary productivity of the land can be observed throughout the country. Most obvious is the degradation of the Gambian forest habitat.

3.1 Institutional Responsibilities and Impacts

Sustainable land Management in The Gambia currently cuts across various sectoral departments, including the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management, Forestry, Fisheries, Agriculture, Local Government, Water Resources and others that are established by government to regulate the use of the natural resources and ensure their effective management. These institutions have varied capacities but overall, they lack the required funds to effectively implement their mandates adequately.

3.1.1 Department of Agricultural (DOA)

The DOA is responsible for reducing the deterioration of the country's soil and water resources and to improve agricultural production through conservation practices and crop protection by pest control. The Department has nine technical I service units: Horticulture; Agricultural Engineering; Food and Nutrition Technology; Agric Business; Planning; Communication, Extension and Education; Animal Health and Production; Soil and water Management; . The overall objective of the Department is to minimize the degradation of soil and water resources of the country consistent with increased agricultural production and productivity. However, some of the measures such as expansion of cultivation and intensive use of chemical fertilizer and agricultural machinery employed to achieve this objective may have un-intended, aggravating effects on land degradation and loss of biological complexity. These activities are conducted through the following technical agencies:

3.1.2 Planning Service Unit (PSU)

This sub-sector is responsible for Planning for the sector (responsible for policy advice, preparation of agriculture investment programmes and projects as well as gathering and provision of data on the performance of the Department. It has four sections namely: Programme and Project Development, Policy Analysis and Formulation, National Agricultural Sample Survey/National Agricultural Data Centre, and Monitoring and Evaluation. The Department impacts on desertification and/or its control indirectly through its policy advise, and programme and project recommendation.

3.1.3 Animal Health and Production Service Unit (Department of Livestock ServicesDLS)

The DLS is responsible for, providing veterinary and animal production services. Its mandate is to assist livestock producers individually and collectively in communities to improve livestock production and productivity through the provision of technical advice, control of notifiable diseases, research, veterinary public health services and training. The Department impacts on desertification and/or its control through its influence on the livestock population and its resultant demand for feed. Although the country's livestock population seems to be rather stable during the last 20 years, the changing vegetation cover towards less favourable conditions forces farmers and livestock owners to graze their stock in areas less suitable thus aggravating and accelerating forest and land degradation processes.

3.1.4 Agric-Business Service Unit

The Agric-Business Service Unit is responsible for regulating cooperative development in the country. It registers, promotes and regulates the functions of Cooperative Societies and commodity interest groups. The DOC has three divisions namely: Administration/Directorate, Inspection and Audit, and Extension. The Department's programmes and actions have no direct impact on desertification and/or its control.

3.1.5 National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARI)

The NARI is responsible for research in agriculture and natural resources including livestock, forestry, fisheries and wildlife. The objective of the Institute is to improve agricultural and natural resources production and productivity on a sustainable basis. Thus NARI has an essential role of investigating into all forms and causes of natural resources degradation and finding solutions to halt such processes.

3.1.6 Department of Forestry

The Department of Forestry is responsible for the protection, conservation and development of the country's forest cover. It is the lead government agency in the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). An important area of the current forest policy (2010-2019) ensures the sustainable management of forest resources through the active participation of the rural population who are the immediate stakeholders. The Department has three functional units as follows: Participatory Forest Management Unit, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and Technical Unit. All these units of the Department are preoccupied with the task of improving the

production and productivity of the country's forest cover on a sustainable basis. Thus desertification control is central in the mandate of the Department.

3.1.7 Fisheries Department

Fisheries Department is responsible for planning, management, and development of the fisheries sector. The development of the sector is to be achieved by the sustainable exploitation and utilization of the country's fisheries resources to achieve increased food security, increased employment and enhanced foreign exchange earnings. The Department plays a pivotal role in the management of the resources by providing scientifically based advice on the requisite exploitation rate of the resources. It has four functional units as follows: Administration, Research and Development, Inspectorate, and Extension.

Some of the important development programmes of the Department include provision of credit and infrastructural facilities for the artisanal fishery subsector, technology transfer and training. The rapid development of the artisanal fisheries has had aggravating impact on degradation of the vegetation through cutting of mangroves in oyster harvesting and cutting of trees for boat building and fish smoking. Fish smoking, using fuel wood, has been the cause of untold severe forest degradation among coastal communities. Thus the Department's bid to improve the production and productivity of the nation's fisheries resources has an inadvertent effect of precipitating desertification.

3.1.8 Department of Parks and Wildlife Management (DPWM)

The DPWM is in charge of the conservation, management and development of the wild life resources and protected areas of the country. It is the lead government institution for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Department is actively involved in the protection of species and conservation and preservation of ecological equilibria. To the extent that the Department improves biological productivity and complexity of forests and woodlands of the country through its programmes in conservation, education and extension, park management, surveillance and research/crop assessment control, it contributes directly to the control of desertification.

3.1.9 Department of Water Resources (DWR)

The DWR has a broad mandate encompassing water resources assessment, monitoring and management, and weather and climate observation, recording, assessment and monitoring. It is the lead government institution for the implementation

of the Convention on Climate Change (UNECC). It operates six Divisions: Administration and Directorate; Hydrology; Meteorology; Rural Water Supply; Water Quality and Control; Communications and Data Analysis. Its role in water resources development and management has a direct effect on overall national desertification control efforts. Its weather and climate observation and monitoring activities provide useful strategic planning information to the government and valuable tactical planning information to farmers in their efforts to manage their crop production programmes, minimize the effect of water shortages and adopt other drought mitigation strategies.

3.1.10 National Environment Agency (NEA)

The NEA, which was created in 1993 is mandated, according to the National Environment Management Act (NEMA) to coordinate and implement the Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP) as well as being responsible for all environmentally related issues in the country. It is institutionally supported by eight technical Working Groups in its coordination function comprising of representatives from government agencies, NGOs and private sector enterprises. These working Groups are Agriculture and National Resources (ANR), Environment Information System (EIS), Chemicals and Pesticides Control and Management Board (CPCMB), Environmental Education and Communication (EE&C), Coastal and Marine Environment (C&ME), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Environmental Legislation; and, Environmental Quality Working Groups. These technical Working Groups correspond to the major programmes of the Agency. The environmental Award Scheme (EAS) and Environmental Impact Assessment are two of the Agency's major programmes that affect desertification and/or its control directly and drought mitigation.

3.1.11 Department of Community Development

With a mandate to develop the ability of human beings to meet and deal with their environment, community development was institutionalized in 1963 as a service. The service was expanded to a departmental status in 1977 as the Department of Community Development.

The primary objective of the Department is to enhance and promote the participation of people in charting out their destinies through participatory development process. The Department has seven functional programme areas. These are Appropriate Technology and Development Programme; Development Communication Support Unit; Research, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division; Women's Programme Unit; Day Care Centre Unit; Rural Development Institute; and, Engineering and Construction Unit. In addition to these functional programme areas, the Department has an Urban Community Development Unit, Local Initiative Fund and Skills Development Project.

The Department impacts on desertification and/or its control through mainly its Appropriate Technology and Environment Programme. The programme focuses on the development of; farm implement and machinery, labour and energy saving devices, low cost building materials, pottery ware, animal traction devices, post-harvesters, water lifters and improve sanitary devices.

3.1.12 Department of Energy (DOE)

Established in 1986 through GTZ project assistance, the Department of Energy (DOE) is responsible for monitoring all renewable energy activities in the country. The mandate of the centre includes research, development and promotion of renewable energy technologies in wind, solar and biomass energy. The centre impacts positively on desertification control through its research, development and promotion activities especially the improved cooking stove and alternative cooking fuel programmes.

3.1.13 Non- State Actors

At the national level the NGOs are coordinated by the Non-Governmental Affairs Agency of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and at sectoral level they are coordinated by The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO). A fairly large number of NGOs implement projects in the agriculture and natural resources sector and thus impact on desertification and/or its control. Key among them are: i) Action Aid The Gambia, three of whose seven sectoral programmes – Water, Agriculture and, Environment and Natural Resources – are directly related to desertification and/or its control; ii) Catholic Relief Services (CRS) three of whose four major programme areas – Agriculture, Education and Micro-Finance – impact directly or indirectly on desertification and/or its control; iii) Islamic Relief Association (ISRA) whose main programme, community-base Agriculture and Teaching Islam and the Environment, has a direct impact on desertification and/or its control; iv) Campaign for Development and Solidarity (FORUT) has a farmer training programme in agro-forestry and water resources; v) People In Action which implements projects in tree planting with Villagers; vi) Association for the Development of Women and Children(ADWAC) implements a programme in natural resource management and livelihood improvement at grass-root level; vii) Women In Services, Development, Organization and Management (WISDOM) implements a women training programme in Environmental Protection; viii) Natural Resources Consulting (NACO) implements programmes in natural resource management and training on forest management with government institutions; ix) Future in Our Hands and Stay Green Foundation are also both involved in promoting grass-roots participation in tree planting particularly with women and schools; and, x) Freedom From Hunger Campaign (FFHC) implements a programme in agriculture and natural resource management with mainly women farmers.

3.1.14 Local Government Authorities

The local government administrative structure consists of the Kanifing Municipal Council (KMC), Banjul City Council (BAC) and the six rural Councils and their respective District and village structures collectively known as Local Government Authorities.

The six Area Councils, the Kanifing Municipal Council and the Banjul City Councils are corporate bodies, distinct from that of central government i.e the Republic of The Gambia. These Councils furnish certain administrative, economic and social services in order to satisfy the aspirations of the local communities, consistent with national policies.

The eight councils are empowered to raise local revenue, execute infrastructure and development projects within their jurisdictions and undertake environmental preservation among other functions. It is through the latter function in particular that the councils effect major desertification and/or control activities, although the execution of some infrastructure and development projects may exacerbate desertification through their adverse impact on the land and vegetation. The District Chiefs and the Village Alkalolu which are provided for in the Constitution, are assisted by their respective Authorities in the exercise of their powers which include among others the collection of rates and taxes, promotion of general economic development and, safeguarding the traditions, customs and culture of their jurisdictions. The latter duty of safeguarding the traditions, customs and culture involves land allocation and distribution which impinge on desertification and/or its control.

3.1.15 National and Regional Level Structures

The national and regional level structures have a co-ordinatory function. The National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) has overall responsibility for environmental policy making, coordination at state department level and rule-making which impacts on desertification and/or its control. The National Water Resource Council (NWRC) works within the framework of the mandate of NEMC and is specifically responsible for national water resource development policy. The NEA Working Groups are directly responsible for the coordination of all technical issues relating to the environment within their respective sectors. The ANR Working Group is responsible for the coordination of all natural resources development issues at the sectoral level and therefore, impacts directly on desertification and/or its control. The region Technical Assistance Committee (TAC) is responsible for the coordination of all sectoral programmes and projects within its region. Each TAC has a number of sectoral sub-committees including Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment (ANRE) Sub-Committee. The ANRE Sub-Committee is the organ of the TAC that coordinates all

agriculture, natural resources and the environment sectoral policies, programmes and projects within the region all of which impact directly or indirectly on desertification and/or its control and drought mitigation.

4. National Conservation and Development Objectives

The need for the conservation and sustainable use of biological biodiversity is recognized in the national development agenda. Vision 2020, The Gambia's socio-economic strategy for the period 1996-2020, highlights the need to guarantee a well-balanced ecosystem. One of its long term objectives is "**to conserve and promote the rationale use of the nation's natural resources and the environment for the benefit of the present and future generations in the manner that is consistent with the overall goal of sustainable development**". It calls for the diversification of the agriculture and natural resource base to facilitate the production of a wider range of food and export produce, it furthermore underscores the role of logical and cultural diversity in promoting tourism in The Gambia and offers to put in place appropriate institutional and legal framework that will promote this diversity.

4.1 General Cross-Sectoral Challenges

Sustainable Land management in The Gambia is hampered by several challenges that are common to all the sectors. The major challenges include the following; limited community participation, limited data, low awareness, poor coordination and cooperation, etc;

4.1.1 Limited community Participation:

One of the major challenges in sustainable land management is limited community participation. Most of the SLM activities, undertaken by institutions are still government driven, with little or no community involvement in terms of management responsibility and ownership. There is low participation of LGAs and community base organizations in SLM activities. In addition, there are inadequate resources (financial, human and technical) at the disposal of the communities and as well as incentives for individuals /communities involved in SLM practices.

4.1.2 Inadequate data:

The biggest challenge to the sustainable use of land resources in The Gambia is the limited availability of data and information on the status of land degradation and management practices. This has significantly hampered effective planning and rational decision making. Furthermore, there is no assessment and monitoring system in place.

4.1.3 Low awareness:

The other challenge relates to the lack of awareness of the utility value of natural resources and thus undervaluation of biodiversity in the national accounting system. There is little understanding of the contribution made by natural resources to the social and economic development of the country and the methodologies for determining the economic value of these resources.

4.1.4 Limited overall legal, policy and institutional framework for Sustainable Land Management:

This is another fundamental challenge. There is no single policy and legislation on sustainable land management. Natural resources are managed under several sectoral laws. However, certain key areas such as conservation of genetically important biological resources, control of utilization of resources and others are not covered in the existing sectoral legislation and policy frameworks.

4.1.5 Poor coordination:

Although many institutions are involved in related land resource management activities, there is poor coordination so far as in conservation and utilization of natural resources. Conservation of natural resources is still a piecemeal activity undertaken by the traditional sectoral agencies- wildlife, forestry, fisheries, etc. Each institution seems to follow its own sectoral mandate as a result there is duplication of work and inefficient use of the scarce resources. There is no integrated land use planning or ecosystem approach to conservation.

5. Sector-Specific Policy Goals, Challenges and Strategies

There are several sectoral policy goals and strategies which are relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of land resources. The existing policies and strategies were reviewed and enhanced as part of this strategic action plan. This section outlines some of the existing and proposed strategies to address existing sectoral challenges with the view to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in the different specific sectors.

5.1 Wildlife Management Policy Goals:

To establish National Parks and Nature Reserves covering at least 10% of the national land area for the conservation, protection and management of fauna and flora in a view to improve the management capacity of the Parks and Wildlife Management department and increase revenue generation from wildlife resources;

Challenges

The major challenges in the Wildlife sector include the following;

- ★ increasing population and desertification are currently exerting considerable pressure on the availability of wildlife and maintenance of their natural habitat;
- ★ hunting pressure (poaching) and gradual reduction of vegetation density; and
- ★ clearing, frequent bush fire and drying of streams and other drinking points have significantly contributed to the disappearance of the natural habitats and indigenous traditional wildlife species.
- ★ Lack of a system plan/general management plan for the DPWM;
- ★ No up-to-date checklist of fauna species in The Gambia;
- ★ Outdated Wildlife Act and lack of policy for Wildlife;
- ★ Buffer zone are not demarcated in all protected areas;
- ★ Lack of private initiatives in establishing protected areas;
- ★ Absence of environmental impact assessment.
- ★ Inadequate capacity for the actors.
- ★ Isolated efforts in the implementation of policies and programs
- ★ The pending ANR policy is a serious short coming to SLM.
- ★ Lack of mobility for officers.

Strategies

The following strategies are proposed:

- ✓ Establish an effective wildlife policy and legal framework
- ✓ Expand the wildlife protected area system to 10%
- ✓ Identify, demarcate and promote the protection of natural heritage sites;

- ✓ Develop a biodiversity research, assessment and monitoring programme which will include; carrying out inventories, basic ecological research, socio-economic studies, etc
- ✓ Promote the sustainable utilization and conservation of biodiversity resources Empower local communities to manage parks and reserves and control of wildlife outside Protected Areas
- ✓ Improve access to wildlife resources in and outside protected areas by local communities,
- ✓ researchers and training within the overall framework of the national legislation and international conventions
- ✓ Establish and maintain buffer zones around protected areas
- ✓ Promote environmentally compatible and sustainable land use practices in areas around protected areas
- ✓ Adopt measures for the recovery and re-introduction of threatened species
- ✓ Build the capacity of the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management
- ✓ Design and develop environmental education and extension programs and activities to improve on negative attitude towards wildlife
- ✓ Provide skill and training for the actors
- ✓ Active involvement of TAC and local authority level in the implementation of SLM.

5.2 Forestry Sector Policy Goal

To reserve, maintain, develop and manage forest land resources covering at least 30% of the total land area which is capable of environmental protection through minimizing soil degradation and erosion, maintaining river bank stability, protecting wetland and improving, conserving and preserving biodiversity;

Challenges

- ★ Inadequate number of skilled personnel all have serious implications for the availability of forest products such as fuel wood, wood-based building materials, eco-tourism, soil fertility and protection of the environment in general
- ★ Limited trained staff to expedite forest policy goals and strategies
- ★ Rising forest related inter-intra conflicts
- ★ Weak enforcement of forest laws
- ★ Slow process of transfer of ownership to communities
- ★ Inadequate financial & political support from the central government
- ★ Inadequate research on vegetation and land use changes

- ★ Limited expertise on sustainable land management
- ★ Weak Monitoring systems of forest resource utilization
- ★ High staff attrition rate due low pay scale
- ★ Inadequate participation from the rural people
- ★ Inadequate stakeholder participation both government &NGOs

Inadequate private sector involvement for investment for forest

Strategies

The following strategies are proposed to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity:

- ✓ Adopt measures to address the causes of natural forest loss and degradation.
- ✓ Adopt an ecosystem approach to forest management
- ✓ Promote collaborative forestry management involving local communities
- ✓ Develop and apply incentive measures and methodologies/standard criteria for valuing benefits from the forest biodiversity
- ✓ Adopt economic measures and incentives to promote the conservation and sustainable use of forest resources
- ✓ Harmonise existing laws and policies and develop a policy and legislation on biodiversity
- ✓ Establish and implement measures to control bush fires
- ✓ Improve the forest licensing system
- ✓ Enhance the surveillance of forest parks
- ✓ Promote public education and awareness about sustainable forest management
- ✓ Promote multiple-use forestry, apply better extension methods and intensify community forestry.
- ✓ Restoration of degraded forest areas affected by human encroachment, drought and desertification
- ✓ Provide skill and training for the actors
- ✓ Active involvement of TAC and local authority level in the implementation of SLM.
- ✓ Enhance youth participation in creating woodlots and green belt

5.3 Agriculture Sector Policy Goal

To diversify agricultural production with a view to reduce the vulnerability of the sector to exogenous shocks and minimizing natural resources deterioration and degradation;

Challenges

- ★ Inadequate or no close monitoring on the clearing of virgin and marginal land to augment crop production, especially in environmentally fragile ecologies (particularly in NBR) in conformity with the international conventions, to arrest further degradation.
- ★ Inadequate monitoring systems for the wetlands, especially in relation to the Ramsar Convention.
- ★ Limited study on technical guidelines on the volumes of water that can be safely extracted for irrigation in Greater Banjul.
- ★ Inadequate Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and regular monitoring for value-addition to primary produce for small scale agro-industries
- ★ The overall policy of increasing food production could result in virgin, marginal and fallow lands being put to crop cultivation
- ★ Conversion of fallow lands to crop fields would reduce range lands and stimulated degradation of the remaining range lands and a net loss in flora and fauna.
- ★ Intensification of production will require larger volumes of agro-chemical resulting to serious environmental problems,

- ★ The establishment of small-scale agricultural industries (processing plants, etc.) might result in the generation of waste that could pollute the environment if not disposed of properly.

- ★ Inadequate maintenance of soil fertility and structure
- ★ Increasing food production by using bad farming practices has a negative impact on sustainable land management e.g. the use of heavy machines on the virgin land
- ★ Unpredictability of climatic factors
- ★ Promote planting of tree species along farm boundaries
- ★ Revive mix farming centres to promote sustainable agricultural practices
- ★

Strategies

- ✓ Encourage efficient cotton growing and sesame production.
- ✓ Improve commercial poultry farming.
- ✓ Expand commercial horticulture production.
- ✓ Encourage mobilization of rural savings and harmonize NGO agricultural lending.
- ✓ Introduce and multiply improved varieties of cereals and nuts.

- ✓ A special programme for research on mechanization, sustainable land use practices and soil fertility maintenance should be developed;
- ✓ Establishment of monitoring mechanisms for agricultural practices in ecologically sensitive sites.
- ✓ Promotion and adoption of appropriate agronomic practices
- ✓ Application of appropriate tools for environmental impact assessment and social management plans
- ✓ Shortening fallow periods by practicing organic farming to intensify agriculture without land degradation

5.4 Livestock sector Policy Objectives:

To ensure efficiency and balance between livestock and the fragile environment by embarking on the rational and sustainable exploitation, management and conservation of range resources (grasslands/pastures, soil and water).

Challenges

- ★ High demographic pressures have caused marginal land in “range areas” to be cultivated, thus making less land available for grazing;
- ★ An ever increasing population of cattle is being raised under the traditional extensive system of production
- ★ inadequate and traditionally low input and output husbandry practices especially in cattle;
- ★ The lowlands (ie. the traditional dry season grazing areas) are faring no better as the proliferation of rice projects has caused certain valuable species of fodder to disappear and the surface water retention capacities in certain areas to reduce.
- ★ High increase on livestock population leads to overgrazing which has a negative impact on SLM
- ★ Inadequate control of trans-boundary grazing

Strategies

- ✓ Promotion of livestock fattening schemes and artificial insemination programs.
- ✓ Promotion of active community participation in management and utilization of range resources.
- ✓ Promote involvement of livestock professionals in private sector activities related to development of the industry.
- ✓ Establishing a medium term Master Plan for livestock production directed at increased productivity and competitiveness
- ✓ Promote the management of livestock population
- ✓ Promote appropriate animal husbandry practices
- ✓ Effective control and monitoring of trans-boundary grazing activities

- ✓ Establishment of veterinary pharmaceutical centers
- ✓ Trained farmers on setting up of manure sheds for compost making to supplement chemical fertilizer

5.5 Fisheries Sector Policy Objectives:

To achieve self sufficiency in fish production, create employment and generate revenue for both the government and the local population involved in fisheries activities.

The policy elements given in the strategic plan include the following:

- ensuring the long-term rational utilization of the inland fisheries resources;
- using fish for improving the nutritional standard of the local population;
- increasing Gambian private sector involvement in fisheries; and
- increase employment opportunities and foreign exchange earnings.

Challenges

The major challenges include the following;

- ★ uncontrolled exploitation of the limited demersal fish resources subjected to heavy exploitation.
- ★ Over fishing as a result of the expansion of fishing through the creation of more and stronger fishing centres.
- ★ Fish curing using smoke poses a health hazard for the processors.
- ★ Fish smoking indirectly leads to deforestation and land degradation.
- ★ failure to protect and develop fisheries resources in line with its policy goals
- ★ Unavailability of information on biological characteristics of fish species.
- ★ lack of sufficient personnel, material resources and equipment to effectively implement the policy provisions.
- ★ The disappearance of water bodies or ponds as a result of climate change threatens inland fisheries.

- ★ Inadequate knowledge of the mangroves as breeding and feeding grounds and habitats for juvenile and adult fish,

- ★ Inadequate definition and delimitation of protected areas

- ★ Inadequate knowledge of the potentials of aquaculture.

- ★ Usage of Inappropriate fishing gears (nets)
- ★ Inappropriate cost effective technology for fish processing and preservation

Strategies

- ✓ Develop research capacity of Fisheries Department
- ✓ Conduct studies and inventory on biology, taxonomy and ecology of species
- ✓ Develop and implement a research plan on ecology of mangroves
- ✓ Develop a 5-year master plan for fisheries resources survey to establish reliable biomass estimates
- ✓ Strengthen regional and sub-regional cooperation in fish stock assessment
- ✓ Involve communities in management through publicity, information and education
- ✓ Consolidation of sensitization programmes on sustainable fishing practices
- ✓

5.6 Water Resources Sector Policy Objectives:

provision of safe drinking water supplies; assessment and management of the nation's water resources; water quality monitoring and enhancement; and, production and dissemination of weather and climate information for, inter alia, the enhancement of food security.

Challenges

- ★ The authority to exploit the nation's water resources is vested, in separate Acts (DWR & NAWEC)
- ★ Lack of a Provincial Headquarters to facilitate timely monitoring of the hydrological situation in the eastern half of the country.
- ★ Over exploitation of underground water
- ★ Limited exploitation of Water harvesting technique especially in lowlands

Strategies

- ✓ Improve analysis of climate and hydrological aspects of drought and desertification monitoring;
- ✓ Identify, select and adopt basic software and hardware for the processing of data
- ✓ Formulation, adoption and implementation of appropriate integrated water resources policies
- ✓ Sustainable water harvesting techniques to be intensified for agricultural, livestock purposes etc. (hydrological impact on low land must be considered)

5.7 Environment Agency Sector Policy Objectives:

Control environmental degradation and pollution in both natural and human ecosystems through regulations and applications of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA);

Challenges

- ★ *Co-ordination and Implementation constraints sector related natural resource management endeavours*
- ★ lost considerable political and moral backing that translated into reduced financial and material support over the years.
- ★ Limited integration of environmental considerations into the Macro-economic framework of the country
- ★ Weak Implementation capacity
- ★ Inadequate support systems for environmental management decentralization
- ★ Inadequate capacity for the actors.
- ★ Isolated efforts in the implementation of policies and programs
- ★ The pending ANR policy is a serious short coming to SLM.
- ★ Lack of mobility for officers.

Strategies

- ✓ Assisting and encouraging producers to adopt improved land and natural resource management practices;
- ✓ Promote optimal management of coastal and freshwater resources;
- ✓ Development of effective government and local community partnerships to ensure rational management of natural resources;
- ✓ Establishment of procedures for data collection, analysis, and planning for natural resources management; and
- ✓ Development of local area integrated management plans on natural resource management.
- ✓ Strengthen the SLM platform at both national and local level
- ✓ Mainstreaming SEA at national development plan and strengthening the enforcement of EIA provision in all development projects and programs.
- ✓ Harmonizing national Policies, development projects, and regional policies and programmes to promote regional cooperation.
- ✓ Strengthen Research & Development units of the NR Technical Departments and promote strong cooperation with NARI and the UTG.

5.8 Non-State Actors

Non-state actors collaborate with government institutions and rural communities in sustainable land management practices and various livelihood development initiatives.

Challenges

- ★ limited funding mechanisms to upscale SLM,
- ★ Inadequate technical capacity to implement SLM activities,
- ★ limited involvement in policy-making and
- ★ Inadequate availability of physical resources.

Strategies

- ✓ Promote participatory plan development on SLM
- ✓ Awareness creation on SLM through sensitization
- ✓ Community mobilization and resources to implement SLM
- ✓ Support community initiatives/projects on sustainable land management issues
- ✓ Coordinate capacity building programmes - trainings, exposure/exchange visits
- ✓ Promote sustainable agriculture through trials and demonstrations
- ✓ Conduct participatory research and development
- ✓ Promote gender mainstreaming and programming in SLM
- ✓ Policy Advocacy roles

5.9 Local Government Authorities (LGA)

Perform certain administrative, economic and social services in order to satisfy the aspirations of the local communities, consistent with national policies, laws and decentralization objectives.

Challenges

- ★ Misconception or inadequate understanding of customary land ownership, rights and use
 - ★ Limited awareness on the conditions of customary land tenure
 - ★ Inadequate existence of traditional land boundaries
 - ★ Continuous increase of poverty among rural communities
 - ★ Limited of awareness on sustainable land management practices
 - ★ Limited knowledge of communities and local authorities(chiefs) of the land laws
- Limited consultation and involvement of communities in decision making on sustainable land management Strategies

- ✓ Initiate comprehensive land law review considering statutory and customary ownership patterns
- ✓ Promote comprehensive community sensitization on sustainable land management laws concerning land use and ownership
- ✓ Increase the level of consultation and involvement of village traditional authorities, VDCs, Ward Development Committees and TACs in decision making
- ✓ Discourage land banking to avoid land scarcity in the future

5.10 Legal and Policy Challenges

There is a need to review and mainstream desertification/land degradation control considerations into some existing natural resource-related legislations. Also some socio-economic policies, such as those for urban development, transport, industry, trade and investment, agricultural development and others, which are intended to achieve other benefits including economic growth and improvement in the quality of life, sometimes negatively impact on desertification control and mitigation of drought conditions.

Different components of the natural resources are managed by different institutions and governed by different legislations. Each legislation deals with one resource or particular area e.g. the forest act concerns itself with only forest and not the management of the wildlife or water ecosystems within the forest. Although there have been much efforts at inter-sectoral coordination and cooperation through NEA, there is no well-established mechanism or framework for coordination and cooperation on matters related to desertification/land degradation at the programme and operational levels.

Strategies

There is therefore a need to establish inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms to facilitate joint planning, management and enforcement of legislations, dialogue and conflict resolution among the key actors who will be involved in the implementation of the national action plans on desertification control. At the grassroots level, this will enable the enforcement powers and personnel of the extension services of each sector to be delegated to the other. For example, forest rangers and guards can enforce wildlife legislation and vice versa. Of equally important is the fact that more personnel would be available at the disposal of each of the four program areas of the national action and promote cost-effective extension work and enforcement of the relevant regulation.

6. Ongoing Initiatives on Sustainable Land Management in The Gambia

The Gambia has made visible progress in addressing the causes of land degradation and desertification. In many fields, the country has developed efficient tools to manage its fragile resource base.

Forestry has been in the forefront with providing a legal base for protecting the remaining forests through community participation. Re-institution of community forests and the joint management concept for state forests can be considered as a success-story, enjoying overwhelming local support and wide international recognition. In fact, The Gambia is one of the very few developing countries that have brought the encroachment of forest lands in those areas to a halt where the new approaches are implemented.

The Gambia Environmental Action Plan has greatly contributed to institutional strengthening and the provision of coordination-mechanisms. The National Environment Agency has recently developed detailed procedures, guidelines and regulations for conducting Environmental Impact Assessment in The Gambia. Although not addressing problems at the farm level, the regulatory framework, if enforced, provides a powerful tool to mitigate undesirable environmental developments at the planning stage of larger agricultural and natural-resource management projects.

Soil and water conservation measures have been introduced successfully and the Soil and Water Management Unit has built up capacity to disseminate simple and effective technologies at the national level. The initiative will be continued at a nation-wide scale under the umbrella of the Participatory Water Shed Management Project and Gambia Low Lands Development Project (GALDEP)

The Provision of a conducive environment for community and none state actors participation is a major concern for the sustainable management of natural resources. Decentralization and devolution of power/authority to Local Government Authorities currently ranks high on the national agenda. Substantial support has been extended by the European Union to this process. A draft Local Government Bill has been approved by Cabinet.

However, these achievements are far from coping adequately with the increasing task to safeguard the natural resource base. Reviewing the results of the sectoral Action Plans, the consultative forum has noted with concern that despite of considerable efforts, trials and research in conservation farming, agro-forestry and rangeland management no solutions for immediate and large scale implementation are currently available. The forum further noted that involvement of the private sector is almost

completely lacking while participation at the grassroots level has been insufficient in the past. See Table 1 & 2 below for ongoing initiatives on SLM.

Table1: Sub-Regional Initiatives Relevant for SLM

NO	Involved Countries	Programs	Intervention Area	Status Quo	Project Objectives	Donor Partners
1	Gambia & Senegal	Management of Trans-boundary wetlands	Niumi Biosphere	Under implementation	Protect and manage wetlands for national and international interest	Wetlands International, IUCN , GG, UNESCO, MAB and FIBA
2	Gambia, Senegal, Guinea & Mali	Sustainable management of endemic livestock in west Africa	Range land management, nature and genetic conservation	Under implementation	In-situ conservation of endemic livestock genetic characteristic of livestock	GEF, GG, ADB
3	Gambia & Senegal	Management of trans-boundary biosphere reserves	National parks, nature reserves & forest parks in Niumi, Jokadu and the buffer zones	Under implementation	To protect and conserve larger areas of wetlands and terrestrial forests to enhance livelihoods of resource dependent communities	IUCN , GG, UNESCO & MAB
4	Gambia, Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Niger, S. Leone, Guinea Conakry & Mali	Integrated management of Futa-Djallon Highlands	Integrated management of Natural Resources	Under implementation	Conservation and sustainable management of natural resources for medium and long term for livelihood improvement	AU, FAO, UNEP, UNDP

Table 2 : National Initiative Relevant For SLM

NO	Implementing Institutions	Project Title	Intervention Areas	Status Quo	Donor Partners
1	FAO & MOA	FSCA	Food security and commercialization of agriculture	On going	GG/FAO
2	MOA	LHDP	Livestock and horticultural development	On going	GG/ADB/IFAD
3	MOA	WAPP	Agricultural production	On going	GG/FAO/WB/EU
4	MOA	PIWAMP	Sustainable land management	On going	GG/ADB
5	MOA	GALDEP	Agricultural lowland development	On going	GG/WB
6	DPWM	GAMBIS	Biodiversity management and institutional strengthening	On going	GG/WB/GEF
7	Greentech	Production of Briquettes	Alternative energy	On going	Private funding
8	NATC	GEF	Natural resource management	On going	UNDP/CU
9	FFHC	GEF/UNDP	Natural Resource Management	On going	UNDP
10	CU	GEF/FLEGT	Natural Resource management	On going	UNDP/FAO
11	SJFP	GEF	Natural Resource management	On going	UNDP/CU
12	ADWAC	GEF	Natural Resource management	On going	UNDP/CU
13	DOF & Non- State Actors	NFP	National Forest Program	On going	GG/FAO/Non-State Actors
14	WWF	PRCM/IUCN	Natural Resource management	On going	PRCM/IUCN/ Wetlands

7. Recommendations per Component

Base on the information collected during the regional consultative forum with technical and non-state actors as well as discussion with individuals having stake in the management of land resources, the following recommendations and measures were adopted for up-scaling SLM in the Gambia;

7.1. Field-Level Activities and Program

- ❖ Resource mobilization for strategic interventions.
- ❖ Implementation of the SLM as outlined in the priority investment areas
- ❖ Develop an activity programme for fund raising on SLM
- ❖ Promote Savings and Loan Group Concept on SLM at local level
- ❖ Support stakeholder field visits at national and regional level
- ❖ Promote technology transfer amongst stakeholders

7.2. Conducive Environment for Up-Scaling SLM

- ❖ Mainstreaming SLM strategic issues/activities into the National Strategic Frameworks
- ❖ Mainstreaming SLM strategic elements into PAGE programmatic components
- ❖ Mainstreaming SLM strategic elements into CAADP programmatic components
- ❖ Integrate SLM wholesale as content element of GEAP into PAGE
- ❖ Integrate SLM priority programmatic components into Donors Focal areas
- ❖ Integrate SLM priority investment proposal into the Development Budget
- ❖ Adopt the Institutional and Legal Frameworks for up-scaling SLM
- ❖ Review and Enact the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Policy
- ❖ Adopted ANR policy popularization among stakeholders
- ❖ Establish an account for the Fund which, will be available to implement SLM activities
- ❖ Establish an operational budget for SLM and Fund management/administration

7.3. Strengthening of Roles for SLM

- ❖ Appoint and inaugurate SLM coalition members formally
- ❖ Recruit regional level representatives on SLM programs

- ❖ Formally inform the TACs and ANR sub-committees of the establishment of the SLM coalition
- ❖ Training of staff of relevant institutions, CBOs, NGOs & LGAs on SLM practices
- ❖ Decentralization of SLM implementation at all levels
- ❖ Improve networking and coordination of stakeholder efforts in SLM practices at all levels
- ❖ Develop standard application format for funding Community base SLM projects
- ❖ Approve the application format and publicize it for the benefit of the public
- ❖ Explore the possibility of accessing funds from REDD+ & Clean Development Mechanism
- ❖ Equip and endow the focal point with recurrent budget as operational centre for the coordination of SLM issues
- ❖ Enhance institutional capacity for SLM

7.4. M&E for SLM

- ❖ Designate and assign an M&E officer on SLM
- ❖ Commence data collection on SLM implementation process using the M&E monitoring instrument
- ❖ Establish information and resource centre
- ❖ Monitor the implementation of SLM activities and their impacts
- ❖ Conduction of MTR and ESMP for SLM funded projects and programs
- ❖ Participatory impact monitoring and evaluation

8. Investment Approaches and Categories

In order to attract and guide further investment in SLM, catalytic opportunities must be seized. Investments in the implementation of the national action plan could stimulate and guide larger investments at national level. It is also critical that public sector investments are carefully targeted and structured in order to trigger a wider flow of private sector investments at all levels, from industrial to small scale.

8.1 Priority Areas for investment

Through extensive regional consultations, a number of priority areas for investment have been identified for speedy up-scaling of SLM nationwide.

8.1.1 Human and institutional capacity building

Priority investment areas:

- ✚ Establish functional structures, networks and processes at national level, regional and community levels for improved SLM implementation and accountable governance, with clear cut public, private and civil society sector roles;
- ✚ Build capacity among planners and managers for improved investment planning;
- ✚ Develop integrated public/private investment approaches
- ✚ Improve integration of SLM investments and returns into national accounts and planning processes at all levels of government; and
- ✚ Build capacity and managerial capacity of a diversified service sector.
- ✚ Build capacity of local community on SLM
- ✚ Improve policy and legal framework to promote SLM practices and enhance benefits accruing therefrom.
- ✚ Develop integrated public/private investment approaches
- ✚ Improve integration of SLM investments and returns into national accounts and planning and processes

8.1.2 Learning and exchange knowledge

Priority investment areas:

- ✚ Improve flow of information and best practice lessons across the sectors and between stakeholder groups at local to national level;

- ✚ Implement fast-track projects for transfer and adaptation of existing knowledge and technologies from several sectors and regions for immediate impact;
- ✚ Establish knowledge and learning environment , with clear processes and indicators to monitor performance of sector investments and their socio-economic and environmental implications; and
- ✚ Strengthen capacity and knowledge application in key areas affecting the long-term SLM.
- ✚ Sensitization/awareness creation through workshops, media on sustainable Land management on good and bad practices
- ✚ Strengthen networking between stakeholder groups at both local and national level
- ✚ Training of stakeholders at both community and institutional level on sustainable land management
- ✚ Strengthen, promote and maintain institutional cohesion/ cohesiveness through exchange visits on sustainable Land Management.

8.1.3 Management Tools and Implementation

Priority investment areas:

- ✚ Develop and apply practical approaches to eco-system based collaborative SLM in all major productive sectors;
- ✚ Strengthen capacity of key stakeholder groups to develop and implement plans in all major sectors, integrating local, national and ecosystem wide agencies; and
- ✚ Define and apply best practice in delivering sector management functions, i.e. productivity, resource quality, stakeholder participation, efficiency. Economic output.
- ✚ Review, update and enact ANR Policy
- ✚ Restoration and rehabilitation of degraded lands
- ✚ Encourage establishment of woodlot, orchards, agroforestry sites and plantation
- ✚ Zoning and establishment of permanent cattle tracks
- ✚ Develop comprehensive a Land use map and Plan

8.1.4 Sharing Benefits

Priority investment areas:

- ✦ Strengthen integration of SLM into food security initiatives, including school feeding and rural development programs;
- ✦ Create incentives for communities applying effective SLM activities to stimulate active participation
- ✦ Enhance the participation of civil society organizations in governance and management processes; and
- ✦ Improve understanding of ultimate human development benefits of SLM, develop and implement investment programs that target vulnerable populations.
- ✦ Enhance and encourage non rain-feed agricultural activities e.g. tidal irrigation.
- ✦ Promote women involvement in livestock production practices (small ruminants, poultry) and horticulture on sustainable basis
- ✦ Introduce energy saving devices nationwide e.g. improved cooking stoves, briquettes etc.....
- ✦ Develop women entrepreneurship and managerial skills

9. ROAD MAP/METHODOLOGY FOR SLM IMPLEMENTATION

The Road Map should be understood as the initial step in resource mobilization, which in itself must be seen as an integral continuum of the implementation process of the action plan. The proposed actions within the roadmap include inter alia the wholesale submission of the action plan and its investment plan as content elements of the Program for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) and all other national strategic frameworks. The activities of the Roadmap are categorized into four broad strategic areas of action. These are policy actions, institutional actions, investment actions and monitoring and evaluation actions presented in respective tables below.

Table 3: Policy Actions

Activity	Responsibility	Time Frame	Outputs and requirements
Mainstreaming SLM strategic issues/activities into the National Strategic Frameworks	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA,MOFEA, MOFEN, MOLGL, MOA, TANGO President's Office (Policy Analysis Team)	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Political will and support and GGWSSI NAP fully integrated ◆ Funding SLM Activities at all levels
◆ Consultative meetings with partners	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA,MOFEA, MOFEN, MOLGL, MOA, TANGO President's Office (Policy Analysis Team)	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ National platform established to provide forum ◆ Voluntary partnership agreements concluded
Mainstreaming SLM strategic elements into PAGE programmatic components	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA,MOFEN, MOFEA, MOA	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ SLM fully integrated into PAGE and Functional ◆ SLM Coalition established and functional ◆ Funding GG, AU, UNDP, NGOs
Mainstreaming SLM strategic elements into CAADP programmatic components	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA,MOFEN, MOFEA, MOA & AU Commission	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ SLM fully integrated into CAADP and Functional ◆ SLM Coalition established at regional level and functional ◆ SLM fully integrated into CAADP ◆ Funding African Governments, AU, UNDP, NGOs, ADB & WB
Integrate SLM priority programmatic components into Donors Focal areas	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN,	2012-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ SLM integrated into donor strategic framework through MOU ◆ Funding WB, AU, EU UNDP, IFAD, ADB, FAO, Taiwan,

	GM/UNCCD Focal Point, UNDP		UNEP, USAID ◆ Resource mobilization
Integrate SLM priority investment proposal into the Development Budget	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN, SLM Coalition, NAM Environment sub-committee	2012	◆ Budget line for SLM issues available and accessible
Adopt/Adapt the Institutional and Legal Frameworks for up-scaling SLM	GGWSSI-focal point, MOFEN, MOFEA, MOJ, PMO,	2012	◆ Legal and Institutional frameworks endorsed by cabinet and National Assembly
Review and Enact the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Policy	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEN & ANR Working Group	2012	◆ ANR Policy passed by act of cabinet
Adopted ANR policy popularization among stakeholders	GGWSSI-focal point, ANR Working Group	2013	◆ ANR Policy popularized among stakeholders ◆ Commitment of Non state actors

Table 4: Institutional Actions			
Activity	Responsibility	Time Frame	Outputs and requirements
Appoint and inaugurate SLM coalition members formally	GGWSSI-focal point & MOFEN	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Functional SLM Coalition established ◆ Funding GG, UNDP, AU & NGOs
Base line survey in the regions to establish situational analysis	MOFEN , MOA & ANR working group	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ information on land degradation/Mapping, soil classification and Land Use pattern ◆ Funding from GOTG, UN systems, AU and NGOs
Regional launching of SLM	GGWSSI	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ SLM launched in 6 Regions ◆ Funding - logistics costs, etc
Recruit regional level representatives on SLM programmes	GGWSSI-focal point & MOFEN	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Different levels organs are functional ◆ Funding AU, UNDP, WB, ADB,NGOs
Establishment of regional structures	GGWSSI-focal point SLM Coalition members & MOFEN	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Management committees instituted in 6 Regions
Establishment of coordinating office at regional level	GGWSSI-focal point SLM Coalition members & MOFEN	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Coordination offices established and functional in 6 Regions
Community Sensitization on SLM practices in the	Regional Coordinating	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Farmers and stakeholders in the districts

regions	Office, GGWSSI-focal point SLM Coalition members & MOFEN		sensitized on SLM, ◆ Radio Programmes and district level meetings organized
Training of MDFTs on basic SLM concept and strategies	Regional Coordinating Office, GGWSSI-focal point SLM Coalition members & MOFEN	2013	MDFTS trained on the concept and basic strategies of SLM.
Designate and assign an M&E officer on SLM	GGWSSI-focal point SLM Coalition members & MOFEN	2012	◆ Functional M&E office established
Formally inform the TACs and ANR sub-committees of the establishment of the SLM coalition	GGWSSI-focal point, ANR-working group	2012 – 2013	◆ Consultation at all levels ◆ Funding GG, AU, UNDP, Local Gov. & NGOs
Training of staff of relevant institutions, CBOs, NGOs & LGAs on SLM practices	GGWSSI-focal point, ANR-working group & training institutions	2012-2016	◆ Trained and competent personnel available ◆ Funding GG, NGOs, FAO, AU & UNDP
Decentralization of SLM implementation at all levels	GGWSSI-focal point, ANR-working group & LGAs	2012-2016	◆ SLM decentralized and institutionalized ◆ Funding GG, NGOs, EU, AU, FAO,
Improve networking and coordination of stakeholder efforts in SLM practices at all levels	GGWSSI-focal point, ANR-working group SLM coalition & LGAs	2012-2016	◆ Information sharing mechanisms established ◆ Efforts of stakeholders coordinated to avoid duplication

Table 5: Investment Actions			
Activity	Responsibility	Time Frame	Outputs and requirements
Resource mobilization for strategic interventions.	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN, SLM coalition	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Formalised through signing of MOU with partners ◆ Funding made readily available accessible
Implementation of the SLM as outlined in the priority investment areas	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN, MOA, SLM coalition	2012 – 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Funding made readily available through national budgets ◆ Community projects implemented
Establish an account for the Fund which, will be available to implement SLM activities	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN, MOA, SLM coalition	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ SLM concerns made known and taken up actively by councils ◆ Funding GG, EU, AU, FAO, UNDP
Develop an activity programme for fund raising on SLM	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN, MOA, SLM coalition	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Funding available
Equip and endow the focal point with recurrent budget as operational centre for the coordination of SLM issues	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN, MOA, SLM coalition	2012 – 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Consultation with all relevant stakeholders ◆ Funding readily available ◆ Funding GG, AU, GM/UNCCD, WB, GEF, FAO
Establish an operational budget for SLM and Fund	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA,	2012-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Budget line created

management/administration	MOFEA, MOFEN, MOA, SLM coalition		
Promote Savings and Loan Group Concept on SLM at local level	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN, MOA, SLM coalition, MFI	2012-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Social capital increased ◆ Soft loans readily available to promote SLM good practices
Develop standard application format for funding Community base SLM projects	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN, MOA, SLM coalition, NGOs	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Standard application format developed and adopted
Approve the application format and publicize it for the benefit of the public	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN, MOA, SLM coalition, NGOs	2012-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conclusion of consultation with stakeholders ◆ Funding GG, EU, AU, CILSS, UNDP, FAO, GEF
Explore the possibility of accessing funds from REDD+ & Clean Development mechanism	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, MOFEA, MOFEN, MOA, SLM coalition, NGOs	2012-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conclusion of consultation with stakeholders ◆ Funding GG, EU, AU, CILSS, UNDP, FAO, GEF, GM/UNCCD

Table 6: Information, and Monitoring and Evaluation Action

Activity	Responsibility	Time Frame	Outputs and requirements
Commence data collection on SLM implementation process using the M&E monitoring instrument	M&E Officer, Focal Point	2012-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ M&E reports ◆ Operational facilities available ◆ Funding GG, AU, FAO, CILSS, GEF, GM/UNCCD
Establish information and resource centre	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, NGOs	2012-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Data bank established and accessible ◆ SLM specific indicators implemented ◆ Funding GG, GM/UNCCD, UNDP, NGOs, CILSS,
Monitor the implementation of SLM activities and their impacts	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, Line Departments	2012– 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Progress reports
Support stakeholder field visits at national and regional level	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, Line Departments	2012– 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Field visit reports
Promote technology transfer amongst stakeholders	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, Line Departments	2012– 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Capacities enhanced on SLM practices
Conduction of MTR and ESMP for SLM funded projects and programs	GGWSSI-focal point, NEA, Line Departments	2014 &2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ MT & ESMP reports
Creation of MIS data base	M&E Officer, GGWSSI Focal Point, Line Depts & Communities	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A functional MIS data be Produce

Annexes

Annex 1:

Terms of Reference

For a consultation to support the development

The National Action Plan for implementation of the Great Green Wall initiative.

1. Background

The development of Action Plans for the implementation of the Great Green Wall is a participatory process that aims primarily at reaching a national consensus on the following:

- a) The concept of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI), the vision that all stakeholders have on its implementation and on the means to mobilize to this effect;
- b) Priority areas of intervention to effectively rehabilitate degraded lands, reclaim desertified lands and reverse land degradation, particularly through the removal of all barriers (political, legal, institutional, financial and technical) that limit the consideration of Sustainable Management Lands (TDM) as a major component of the development plans, including at local level;
- c) Roles and responsibilities of each actor in the implementation of selected measures, and
- d) Monitoring / evaluation mechanisms and tools that are appropriate and relevant to measure progresses made and identify corrective measures.

This process is articulated around five logical steps (FAO, TerrAfrica country support tools, January 2008):

1. The first step targets Commitment and Partnerships, describing how to set up a broad based SLM coalition, including the country team and other consultative bodies. Such a coalition will provide the foundation from which other actions on commitment and partnerships can follow. These actions would include the development of a common vision on SLM, ensuring political commitment from the highest level on land degradation and SLM, raising awareness for the need of a programmatic approach to SLM and developing a code of conduct to promote better coordination, harmonization and alignment from all partners engaged.

2. The second step pursues Stocktaking and Diagnostics, targeting the main bottlenecks (from the technical, ecosystems, policy, institutional and financial perspectives) and opportunities for SLM up-scaling and mainstreaming. These analyses would be captured within a wide-ranging Diagnostic Study, performed in consultation with relevant stakeholders. This would logically lead the country team to a Strategy Note that identifies main thrusts, and subsequently to the SLM Investment Framework, the rationale for which will have originated from its responses to bottlenecks and opportunities.
3. The third step describes the Programming and Identification of the Investment Framework. The main thrusts identified by the Diagnostic Study (and captured in the Strategy Note) are assessed against national local development priorities for synergies, gaps, contradictions and links. These actions would be ranked to identify those offering highest synergies and complementarities, producing quick wins and supporting implementation in the right sequence. Prioritisation could be based on criteria that assess actions as technically sound, cost-effective, adequate for each ecosystem, coherent with national or local level priorities, having clearly defined implementation and financing mechanisms, and benefit from the support of local champions.
4. Step four (Investment Formulation and Costing) assembles activities and investments according to four main components, namely i) supporting on-the-ground activities for SLM scaling-up, ii) creating a conducive environment for the upscaling of SLM, iii) strengthening commercial and advisory services for SLM, and iv) developing SLM monitoring and evaluation as well as knowledge management and information dissemination systems. It is at this stage that detailed elaboration of the priority actions is undertaken.
5. The fifth step addresses Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation. As far as possible, these would build on existing processes and methodologies at country level.

These terms of reference are related to the recruitment of a national consultant to help each of the participating countries to carry out Phase 2 of the planning process (inventory and analysis of constraints and opportunities) and to develop a strategy note indicating the methodological approach (roadmap) regarding the national context, as well as identifying the main investment priorities for the implementation of the GGWSSI (areas of intervention and priority actions).

2. Objectives of the consultation

2.1. Overall objective:

The overall objective of the study is to undertake a Stocktaking and Diagnostics analysis on SLM constraints and opportunities, and to propose a national strategy for the implementation of the GGWSSI, taking into account identified priorities in the NAP-CCD and the CAADP national investment plan.

The study aims also at providing guidance on how to promote national ownership of the GGWSSI implementation and alignment of development partners to national priorities.

2.2. Specific objectives

- a) Proceed to a stocktaking analysis of Natural Resources Management in the country, through a systematic review of existing strategies, policies, institutions, programs and projects in the country and :
 - a. Estimate at what extent they contribute or may contribute to the implementation of the GGWSSI;
 - b. Identify key bottlenecks and opportunities to the mainstreaming of SLM activities in national and sectorial programming frameworks;
 - c. Propose the main outlines of a coherent framework which should be the national vision of GGWSSI and strategic directions including actions / operational recommendations to remove barriers.
 - d. Identify actions that could be major reforms to be implemented.
- b) Propose a roadmap / methodological approach for the national implementation of the GGWSSI;
- c) Where appropriate, provide an institutional platform justified by the comparative advantages of each institution and able to drive the GGWSSI agenda and identify the institution that should provide the leadership and the roles of the other institutions, including civil society organizations;
- d) Based on the activities of the Technical and Financial Partners (TFP) and their strategies, provide guidance on how TFP should be organized to support the process.

3. Tasks and duties

The Consultant will have to answer some key questions that determine the successful implementation of the initiative of GMV in the country, including its acceptance by all stakeholders:

- i. What is the current status of Desertification / Land Degradation / Drought (DLDD) in the country and the actions taken and underway to address the phenomenon?¹
- ii. To what extent the establishment of an investment framework or action plan specific to/for the GGWSSI is possible, relevant and desirable, and how this investment framework will help decision makers in mobilizing new and additional resources for SLM activities?
- iii. What is the current mapping of both sectorial and geographical investment and what are the gaps to fill²?
- iv. What is the current situation in terms of availability and adequacy of SLM techniques (assessment against (i) the different agro-ecological zones of the country, (ii) accessibility and use by rural people) and what are the measures that should be taken to ensure “mass use” of best practices and techniques, mainly those which are technically sound, cost-effective and adequate for each ecosystem?
- v. What activities are producing quick wins and are able to improve simultaneously (i) the status of ecosystem health, (ii) the living conditions of rural communities and their resilience to climate change (droughts and floods), (iii) trade and economic infrastructure in rural areas.
- vi. Which are the relevant stakeholders that may be invited to participate in the consultation process towards the adoption and implementation of the GGWSSI national action plan?

4. Deliverables

- a. A concept note describing how the work will be conducted (from signature of contract)
- b. A first draft report (one month after the start of the study) describing the situation and offering a first draft of recommendations. The draft report will include:
 - i. An introduction and analytical description of political barriers, technical, institutional and financial bottlenecks to up scaling SLM practices, mainly in arid areas of the country;
 - ii. Options and recommendations for priority investments (geographical area and type of investments);
 - iii. supporting Mechanisms and measures (Institutional, policies, and financial) that may allow a rapid implementation of proposed options and recommendations;

¹ Before answering this question, it is important to refer to national context and have an appropriate definition of DLDD and SLM

² Assessment against constraints and opportunities of land degradation in the country, health of ecosystems, climate change perspectives, land use regimes, etc.

- iv. Activities that are able to produce quick results, and the conditions of their implementation.
 - v. A Roadmap / methodology for the implementation of the GGWSSI at national level
 - vi. The list of documents that were consulted
 - vii. The list of interviewees and a verbatim exchange
- c. A final report (one week after receiving comments from the National Focal Point of the Great Green Wall and FAO).

5. Consultant Profile

The consultant sought must meet the following criteria:

- Academic Qualification: BAC + 4 at least in social sciences and / or environment;
- Experience of at least 5 years in analytical studies, project management and follow-up evaluation;
- Further qualification: A thorough knowledge of strategy and policy development, strategic and operational planning in Natural resources management;
- Skills:
 - o Have an ability to communicate and especially to discuss with the technical and financial partners and with national institutions (governmental or not) to engage them effectively in the development and implementation of the program;
 - o Produce reports of high quality editorial;
 - Good knowledge of environmental policies and MEAs;
 - o Good knowledge of procedures of Financial and Technical Partners of the country (main agencies of the UN system including UNDP and UNEP, the World Bank, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, bilateral cooperation and others).

6. Duration of the mission

The total duration of the consultation is 30 days including the participation to a validation workshop of the document.

7. Administrative information

7.1 Recruitment process: According to the procedure applied by the FAO office in the country.

7.2 Services provided by the administration

The National Focal Point of the Great Green Wall CCD and the focal point of the consultant will facilitate access to services and those to be encountered. If necessary, they will assist the consultant in gathering information and documentation.

7.3 Budget

Fees: According to the scales of the FAO

Communication costs: Lump sum to be determined in the field according to the policies of FAO.

8. Key documents (depending on the situation in each country):

- The Strategy for Poverty Reduction;
- The National Program for Rural Sector Development;
- Investment Programs in the rural sector (Agriculture, Forestry, Water, Livestock);
- The National Action Programme to combat desertification;
- The national action program to adapt to climate change;
- The national strategy for capacity building for environmental management (ANCR);
- The national strategy for implementation of the UNFCCC;
- The national strategy for sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity;
- The National Public Expenditure Review.

Annex: II

List of interviewees in All the Seven Administrative Regions

Regional Governors

Permanent Secretary MOFEN

Deputy Permanent Secretary Agriculture

Policy Analysis Director Presidents Office

Department of Parks & Wildlife Management officers

University of The Gambia representatives

Regional Community Development Officers

Regional Disaster Management Agency officers

Regional Customs Officers

Regional Water Resources Officers

Regional Education Directorate representatives

Regional Police Commissioners

Regional Representatives National Women's Federation

Wulli & Sandu Development Association (WASDA)

Njawara Agricultural Training Center Representatives

NACOFAG Representatives

KOMFFORA Representatives

ADWAC Representatives

AVISU Representatives

US Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs)

Livestock Owners Association representatives

Cashew Growers Association representatives

Regional Forest Officers

Regional National Environment Officers

Regional Livestock Officers

Regional Agriculture Officers

Chairman Area Councils

Ward Councilors

District Chiefs

All Gambia Forestry Platform Regional Chapter representatives

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PART II

STRATEGY NOTE

STRATEGY NOTE

Sustainable Land Management Pilot Project

The Gambia

Locations of the Action: Northern Regions of The Gambia (Upper River, Central River and North Bank Regions of The Gambia)

Total Indicative Cost of the Action: Gambian Dalasis 17.6 Million (Equivalent in United States Dollar = 640,000)

Total Duration of the Action: Four Years

Sector: Forestry, Agriculture, Environment and Livestock

Implementing Institution: (TBD)

1. Introduction

The ongoing environmental degradation and desertification through deforestation need to be brought to a halt as it causes direct hardship for the rural communities in the Regions. It affects the watershed with regional consequences, as lowering the ground water table or salination of fresh water sources. Degrading soil makes farming difficult and at times impossible. Fresh water shortage and farming failures lead to loss of income and food insecurity among the mainly subsistent farmers. The already existing emigration of youth for better opportunities will not only increase the rural-urban-drift, but also the emigration abroad, contributing to the emigration floods from Sub-Saharan Africa to Europe. The impact of climate change will intensify the situation, if adaptation measures are not undertaken immediately. Additionally, loss of forests and biodiversity, along with its genetic material and its opportunity to serve as a CO₂ sink is a global issue. The Gambia as one of the poorest countries cannot solve these problems, which are partly of external causes regarding climate change, alone and is dependent on external help.

The main conclusions of the workshops (Consultative & National validation) and discussions held centered on benefits that Sustainable Land Management can bring to local people working in partnership with the Private Sector, Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations and development partners. Recognizing that Gambians tend to depend heavily on natural resources, it was emphasized that natural resources development and rehabilitation must restore the connection between communities and the resources. Equally, future development efforts should consider communities as partners in the management of their local land resources.

Most of the participants argued that sector related Departments and Agencies could do better if it consolidates its work on the ground and become strategically focused and complimented with providing adequate resources for SLM implementation. Increased cooperation with related sectors and strengthen strategic alliances to increase coverage alongside impact were emphasized by the Non- State Actors. The outputs of the workshops are developed action plans to implement the GGWSSI, which is captured on Part 1 of the report.

Participants agreed that capacity building programmes to enhance meaningful stakeholder participation in SLM implementation were considered key to successful implementation of the GGWSSI in The Gambia.

In order to achieve the aims and objectives of the National Action Plan (NAP) of The Gambia, the following strategies would have to be pursued in the pilot sites as proposed during the workshops and consultations:

- 1. Strategy for Institutional Strengthening for supporting and coordinating Stakeholder efforts in Sustainable Land Management in the 3 Regions of The Gambia;**
- 2. Strategy for Community Based Natural Resources Management;**
- 3. Strategy on Cross-cutting Activities and**
- 4. Strategy for Project Management**

The strategies above are approximately of equal priority. However, achieving the objectives of some of the strategies will require relatively more efforts than others. According to the perspectives of those involved in the workshops, all future plans, programs and projects in the SLM sector should be directed towards meeting the strategic objectives of the NAP for implementing the GGWSSI in The Gambia.

2. Benefits

The SLM Pilot Projects' main benefit will be in the environment and social sectors, with strong emphasizes and impact on capacity enhancement of actors and gender issues. The Project is expected to halt environmental degradation and the growing threat of desertification in the Northern Regions of The Gambia as a result of continued deforestation and land degradation through empowering communities with the legal security, skills and knowledge necessary to sustainably manage their natural resources and conserve the remaining biodiversity for the productive and protective functions of the ecosystems within the selected village areas.

The projects actions are surely replicable and outcomes extendable to the remaining Four Regions of The Gambia as the same environmental problems and causes apply and objectives are transferable, the Implementing Partner Organization is analogue, the same policies apply and characteristics of Lower River, Upper River, Central River South and West Coast Regions do not differ significantly for project implementation to characteristics found in the Northern Regions of the River Gambia. Partner organizations though are based in northern Regions, which will limit their intervention possibilities according to project support. Nevertheless, materials developed and capacities gained can be transferred by the trained and certified extension officers also to other Regions for implementation and replication, incorporating the experiences gained through the actions in Northern Regions. Internal staff training and common

change of posting will already cause the transfer of skills and knowledge between staff and to the communities of other Regions

The entire project can potentially also be replicated and extended to bordering Regions of Senegal. Extending not only to The Gambia's remaining regions, but also to bordering regions of Senegal, will indeed be vital as environmental problems do not halt at the border and have cross border impact. In order to mitigate the effects of ongoing deforestation, land degradation of pristine natural resources in the south of The Gambia (partly to supply The Gambia, which is suffering from a serious shortage of its own supplies) and to halt the desertification process encroaching from the north of The Gambian border cross border collaboration and project extension would increase effectiveness and sustainability.

3. Objectives

The Development Objectives to improve livelihoods through promotion of Community-Based Natural Resources Management approaches, enabling resources dependent communities to reverse declining Natural Resources productivity and protectively.

The Environmental Objectives to overcome negative impacts of Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD) and the functional integrity of the nations' Biodiversity through up scaling Sustainable Land Management Approaches.

4. Description of Project Components

Component 1:

Institutional Strengthening for supporting and coordinating Stakeholder efforts in Sustainable Land Management in the 3 Regions of The Gambia (Indicative cost of the Action = GMD2.5 Million)

- 1.1 Support in the formation and operation of the Sustainable Land Management Coalition in the 3 Regions
- 1.2 Establishment and operation of 3 Regional SLM Coalitions
- 1.3 Investment Framework formulation on SLM for the 3 Regions
- 1.4 Develop comprehensive Gambia Land Use Map and Plan

- 1.5 Assist in the review, updating and enactment of the Agriculture and Natural Resource Policy in favour of SLM in The Gambia
- 1.6 Build Capacity of Support and Service Providers on SLM in the 3 Regions

Component 2:

Community- Based Natural Resources Management (Indicative cost of the Action = GMD7.5 million)

- 2.1 Capacity Building Programmes for Community- Based Natural Resources Management Planning
- 2.2 Develop and institutionalize Community- Based Natural Resources Implementation Guidelines
- 2.3 Community-Based Natural Resources Management Planning
- 2.4 Creation of Alternative Livelihood Activities through Community- Based Enterprise Development based on Forest, Farm, Livestock and Horticultural Products to ensure food security, addressing poverty and Land Degradation
- 2.5 Rehabilitation of degraded lands and implementation of agro-forestry techniques in the pilot sites
- 2.6 Expansion of primary agro-forestry demonstration sites and creation of satellite sites based on results of the pilot
- 2.7 Capacity Building of Extension officers in Livestock control and management

Component 3:

Strategy on Cross-cutting activities (Indicative cost of the Action = GMD6.3 million)

In support of all the strategies mentioned above, number of cross-cutting activities will also be implemented to strengthen the overall framework for the development of SLM. Some of these activities will include the following areas: land tenure, ownership and land use planning, public management, research, information, education, training, legislation and law enforcement.

Competing use for land include: forestry, agriculture, livestock, urban and infrastructural development. It is obviously accepted that there has been inadequate land use planning in The Gambia, resulting to environmental degradation and conflicts over land use.

The strategy for land tenure, ownership and land use planning will include the following activities:

- i. In collaboration amongst relevant Government Institutions, establish a system for classifying and defining land use and produce maps showing the total forest estate, settlements, farms, water bodies and the allocation of land areas according to this classification;
- ii. Review the existing laws on land tenure and ownership, classify and mapping land by ownership and define ownership and management rights and responsibilities of different land users;
- iii. Develop a process and procedures for managing land use change, so that the suitability of proposals to convert forest or other ecosystems to other uses can be assessed and agreed; and
- iv. Maintain adequate collaboration between Government Institutions with responsibilities for land use and land use planning.

Component 4:

Project Management (Indicative cost of the Action = GMD1.3 Million)

- 3.1 Detailed Planning for Implementation arrangements and Monitoring and Evaluation system
- 3.2 Periodic feedback to Sustainable Land Management Coalition and unit heads of Implementing Partners
- 3.3 Monitor Voluntary Partnership Agreements with Implementing Partners
- 3.4 Participatory Mid- Term Review
- 3.5 Finalize testing of Agro-Forestry practices in the pilot sites and prepare results for publication and national fora
- 3.6 Joint Analysis and dissemination of lessons learnt to key stakeholders at national and sub-regional levels
- 3.7 Compile and submit reports (Quarterly, Mid-Term Review and Project Terminal Report)