

# GAMBIA

## Ecosystem-based Adaptation 2017-2023

Supported by the  
*Green Climate Fund*



### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Increasing the cash income of 11,550 households by at least USD330 per year in a country where 60% of the population live below the overall poverty line.



Establishing 166 sustainable natural resource-based businesses with a cumulative gross cash return of US\$2.46m. The project aims to create a total of 11,550 jobs in climate-resilient livelihoods.



Rehabilitating 10,400 ha of degraded forest, savanna and mangroves, and an additional 3,000 ha of farmland. In the first two years, 10 million mangrove propagules were planted, which protect coastal villages from storm surges while providing habitat for many fish species.

### PROJECT TITLE:

LARGE-SCALE ECOSYSTEM-BASED  
ADAPTATION IN THE GAMBIA:  
DEVELOPING A CLIMATE-RESILIENT,  
NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED ECONOMY

### EXECUTING ENTITY:



**GOVERNMENT OF GAMBIA:**  
Ministry of Environment, Climate  
Change & Natural Resources  
(MECCNAR)

### KEY TARGETS:

**13,400**

Hectares rehabilitated in degraded forests, wildlife areas and farmland.

**46,200**

Households benefitting from project interventions.

**166**

Natural resource-based enterprises established.

### FUNDING:



### PROJECT PARTNERS:

Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Water, Forest and Wildlife (MoECCWWF); Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA); department of Forestry (DoF); Department of Parks and Wildlife Management (DoPWM); Ministry of Agriculture (MoA); Social Development Fund (SDF); Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI); Department of Community Development (DoCD); National Environment Agency (NEA).

## INTRODUCTION

- Gambia is the smallest country in mainland Africa and takes the shape of a sliver of land 15-80km wide and extending more than 400km from the Atlantic Ocean. One-third of its total land area is below 10 metres above sea-level, and 10-20% of its land is seasonably or diurnally flooded, which makes the Gambian population of 2.1 million extremely vulnerable to climate change and rising seas.
- UN Environment and the government of Gambia have launched the country's largest adaptation project, which aims to develop a sustainable natural resource-based economy.
- The main approaches of the project are to **restore degraded forests and farmland**; establish ecologically **sustainable businesses**; develop **'home-gardens'** to **diversify food and income** sources; and integrate adaptation actions into **four sectoral policies**.

## TECHNOLOGIES & METHODS

- **Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA)** is central to the project's activities. EbA is the tactic of using nature and healthy ecosystems to reduce the impacts of climate change.
- The extensive reforestation is using **multi-purpose plant species** chosen for their provisioning value (wood, fuel, fruits, honey, medicine and fibre) and climate resilience.
- **Enrichment planting** is being used in both farms and natural ecosystems. Such large-scale restoration is strengthening adaptation by reducing soil erosion and increasing groundwater supplies through greater ground infiltration capacity.
- The project is planting millions of mangrove trees. The **mangroves act as buffer zones** protecting villages from storm surges and floods.
- **Rainwater harvesting devices** are being constructed for tree nurseries. Green protection belts will be established to counter evaporation losses.
- The project is creating **fire breaks** around

## CLIMATE IMPACTS

- The consequences of climate change in Gambia are stark. Climate projections point to more erratic rainfall, and droughts and floods have already been intensifying, causing crop yields to fall in many areas.
- The agricultural sector is threatened because it is heavily rain-dependent and employs 44% of the country's workforce, providing two-thirds of household income. Climate predictions for West Africa in 2020 suggest possible reductions of yields by 50% from rainfed agriculture.
- Many households in rural areas of Gambia already experience a "hunger season" between July and September, during which food stocks are low.
- The risk is compounded because falling crop yields are forcing rural households to extract resources unsustainably from forest ecosystems, which degrades ecosystem services. Forest cover in Gambia has shrunk from 80% in the 1940s to around 42% in 2001.

all the restored landscapes to prevent the increasing risk of bushfires in the dry season.

- **Land-use plans** are currently being developed to support transhumance corridors and prevent human-wildlife conflicts.
- The project is establishing **166 natural resource-based businesses**, which will stimulate economic activities for poor communities while creating investments in ecosystem services. A total of \$11.3m will be raised over 20 years for the National Forest Fund from taxes and licensing fees.
- Demonstrations are given to local communities to create **'home-gardens' of herbs, shrubs and trees**. The diversity of plant species in these gardens ensures there is continual agricultural productivity throughout the year, regardless of extreme weather events.
- The project aims to ensure that four sectoral policies (transhumance, migration, agriculture, energy) **integrate adaptation actions into their annual plans** with explicit budget and monitoring structures.

## VIDEOS & STORIES

### Video:

<https://youtu.be/UREBodCAm8>

### Human impact stories:

<http://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/gambia-building-resilience-changing-climate>

<https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/helping-gambian-youth-find-greener-pastures-home>

***"This project is the single-largest natural resource development project ever launched in the history of this country."***

- Lamin Dibba, The Gambia's Minister of Environment

## PROJECT LOCATION



The project is being implemented across four regions of Gambia: Lower River Region; Upper River Region; Central River Region North; and Central River Region South.

## CONTACTS

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