

forest resources in The Gambia, including private forests, forest reserves, and plantations. The 1998 Forest Act, which provides the legal framework for the exploitation and management of forest resources, was updated through the Forest Bill 2010. In addition, the Forest Policy (2010-2019) is the regulation and strategy that provides guidelines for sustainable forest management in the country.

• **National Environment Agency (NEA):** NEA is designated as the principal body responsible for the management of the environment and coordination of all activities of the government related to environmental management in The Gambia. It is also empowered to take the lead role in setting environmental quality standards in consultation with government departments and agencies. Promotion of public awareness and investigation and prosecution of infringements relating to environmental quality also form an integral part of the organization's responsibilities. Furthermore, the NEA is assigned, under Section 10 of NEMA (1994) with the technical responsibilities for environmental impact assessments, environmental auditing, and special studies. Other statutes guiding the NEA's work include the Environmental (Prevention of Dumping) Act (1988), the Waste Management Act (1999), and international agreements to which The Gambia is a party.

Policy Context

The Gambia government has for many years pursued the sustainable management of environmental and natural resources. As such, it has various laws such as the National Environment Management Act (NEMA) of 1994, the Hazardous Chemicals Act (1994), the Environmental Quality

Standards (1999), the Biodiversity and Wildlife Act (2003), the Renewable Energy Act (2013), all promulgated to ensure sound environmental and natural resources management in The Gambia. Other laws have also been passed to regulate sectors that have an indirect impact on the environment and natural resources in The Gambia. Among these are the Public Utilities Regulatory Act (2001), the Petroleum Act (2004), the Mines and Quarries Act (2005), the Fisheries Act (2007), the Information and Communications Act (2009), and the Petroleum Products Act (2016).

Many policies, regulations, and programs have also been developed to protect the environment and natural resources in the country and, lately, ensure that the country is resilient to climate change

Strategic Partners

As the lead government institution responsible for environment and natural resources management issues in the country, we equally understand that environment and natural resources issues are very complex, diverse, and cross-cutting in nature. Hence, the Ministry builds partnerships and collaborates with other government institutions, private and non-governmental organizations, and civil society to build synergies as well as unveil opportunities to streamline environment and natural resources considerations into activities and programs of its partners.

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Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resource (MECCNAR)

The Leading National Institution Responsible for Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources Management in The Gambia



Mandate

The Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources (MECCNAR) has the overall responsibility of overseeing and coordinating the development and implementation of policies and programs relevant to environment, climate change, and natural resources management in The Gambia.

Vision

The Gambia's environment and natural resources are sustainably managed for the benefit of all citizens in a coordinated manner

Mission

To ensure that Gambia's environment and natural resources are sustainably managed and conserved for the benefit of all (including future generations), and to increase resilience to climate change.

Our Strategic Objectives

- 1. Strategic Objective 1:** Promote the well-being of Gambians through socially responsive integrated environmental management
- 2. Strategic Objective 2:** Strengthen evidence-based management of natural resources and ecosystems
- 3. Strategic Objective 3:** Address the underlying cause of biodiversity loss by establishing and strengthening a national system of protected areas (forests, wildlife sanctuaries, marine parks, and well-capture zones)
- 4. Strategic Objective 4:** Strengthen institutional leadership capacities in the strategic oversight of

policy and program implementation

- 5. Strategic Objective 5:** Strengthen the institutional framework for environmental coordination and management at local and national levels
- 6. Strategic Objective 6:** Enhance stakeholder participation in natural resources management by promoting public-private partnerships
- 7. Strategic Objective 7:** Mobilize sufficient financial resources for strategic plan implementation
- 8. Strategic Objective 8:** Implement programs and activities in partnership with other government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), as well as civil society, the private sector, and international development partners.

Departments, Units & Agency

MECCNAR has technical departments, units, and an agency under its purview that are charged with specific mandates related to the environment, climate change, and natural resources management:

- Climate Change Secretariat (CCS):** CCS is mandated to work with sectors and institutions on integrating climate change into the national and sub-national plans, including the incorporation of climate change considerations into new and existing policies, in consultation with all sectors. The Secretariat is also responsible for establishing procedures to integrate and mainstream climate change in all relevant national policies and programmes (such as screening programmes and projects, or developing sector-wide guidelines); and procedures for including climate

considerations in government and administrative processes, procedures, and systems (such as budget call circulars, public expenditure reviews, and monitoring processes).

- Central Project Coordinating Unit (CPCU):** CPCU is assigned with the responsibility of coordinating the implementation of projects to enhance effective policy implementation and promote coherence. The CPCU conducts robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of programs and projects executed by MECCNAR and partner institutions in government, civil society, and NGOs, and gathers relevant information on the activities and programs of MECCNAR's partners and their impacts on its mandate, as well as those of its subsidiary Departments and Agencies.

- The Department of Parks and Wildlife Management (DPWM):** DPWM is responsible for regulating the use of biological resources by promoting the protection, management, utilization, and conservation protection of biodiversity resources within and outside protected areas. Toward this end, the DPWM is empowered under the Biodiversity and Wildlife Act 2003 to establish Protected Areas (PAs) and promote ecotourism in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and oversee the management taking into account national, regional and international instruments including the conventions agreements ratified by The Gambia.

- The Department of Forestry (DoF):** DoF is the institution responsible for promoting the rational management of the forest resources of The Gambia. The DoF is also responsible for ensuring the sustainable use and protection of all