DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT (DPWM)

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

2026 – 2035

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ACRONYMS

WWF	World Wlidlife Fund
EU	European Union
IFAD	International Fund For Agricultural Development
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
ITFO	Import Trade Financing Operations
BADE	Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DPWM	Department of Parks and Wildlife Management
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GEF	Green Emergency Fund
ICCAs	Indigenous Community Conserve Areas
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDA	International Development Association
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Education Program
UNESCO	United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Agency
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNIDO	United Nations International Development Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Operations Service
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Biodiversity Resource Mobilization Strategy and Action Plan (2025–2035) provides a strategic framework for securing sustainable and diversified financing to support the implementation of The Gambia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). It recognizes that biodiversity is not only an environmental asset but also a foundation for economic development, climate resilience, food security, water security, and community well-being.

The Gambia's ecosystems, including forests, wetlands, mangroves, coastal areas, marine habitats, and savannah landscapes, provide essential services that support agriculture, fisheries, tourism, forestry, and other productive sectors. These ecosystems also contribute to climate regulation, flood control, soil fertility, carbon storage, and the protection of livelihoods. Despite their importance, increasing pressures from habitat degradation, unsustainable resource use, climate change, pollution, and rapid urbanization continue to threaten the country's biodiversity.

A major challenge facing biodiversity conservation in The Gambia is the lack of adequate and predictable financing. Existing funding remains heavily dependent on short-term donor-supported projects, while domestic investment in biodiversity conservation is limited. This has created financing gaps that constrain ecosystem restoration, protected area management, biodiversity monitoring, research, and community-based conservation initiatives.

The Strategy responds to these challenges by promoting a diversified approach to biodiversity financing. It seeks to strengthen domestic resource mobilization, improve access to international environmental and climate finance, encourage private sector participation, and introduce innovative financing mechanisms capable of generating long-term and sustainable funding for biodiversity conservation.

Key financing priorities include increasing public investment in biodiversity, expanding access to international financing opportunities such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF), strengthening partnerships with the private sector, and developing innovative financing instruments such as Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES), biodiversity trust funds, green and blue finance mechanisms, biodiversity certification schemes, and ecosystem-based carbon financing initiatives.

The Strategy further emphasizes the importance of institutional strengthening and effective financial governance. It proposes the establishment of a National Biodiversity Financing Unit to coordinate resource mobilization efforts, support project development, strengthen donor engagement, and improve financial monitoring and reporting. The creation of a National Biodiversity Trust Fund is also proposed to provide a reliable and transparent mechanism for financing conservation and ecosystem restoration over the long term.

Recognizing that financing alone is insufficient, the Strategy places strong emphasis on capacity development. Government institutions, local authorities, civil society organizations, academic institutions, community groups, and private sector actors will require enhanced skills in project preparation, fundraising, environmental economics, financial management, monitoring and evaluation, and biodiversity finance tracking.

Implementation of the Strategy will be carried out in three phases. The first phase (2025–2027) focuses on establishing institutional foundations, conducting financing assessments, and developing investment-ready projects. The second phase (2028–2031) aims to scale up financing mechanisms, strengthen partnerships, and expand resource mobilization efforts. The final phase (2032–2035) focuses on consolidating gains, institutionalizing financing mechanisms, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of biodiversity investments.

This Resource Mobilization Strategy provides a structured and forward-looking framework to diversify and strengthen the funding base. The Strategy focuses on four interrelated priorities: -

I. strengthening government financing and policy alignment;
II. expanding partnerships with international donors and conservation organizations;
III. increasing internally generated revenues from eco-tourism and park services; and
IV. Improving institutional capacity, governance, and financial transparency.

The Strategy emphasizes a shift from ad hoc fundraising to programmatic, predictable, and sustainable financing, supported by improved systems, partnerships, and visibility. Its successful implementation will enable The Gambia to enhance conservation outcomes, expand eco-tourism opportunities, strengthen community livelihoods, and contribute more effectively to The Gambia's national development and climate commitments.

In total, USD1,538,000 would be needed for the financing of priority activities over the period 2026 to 2028, with the government of the Gambia through the allocation from the national budget and internal self-raised revenue collected by the Department to provide USD285,500. Development partners and funding to be raised through a PPP arrangement

will raise USD1,216,500 and USD36,000. A summary of the expected disbursement by the financier over the years 2026 to 2028 is provided in the table below.

By 2035, the Strategy envisions a more resilient biodiversity financing system capable of supporting the full implementation of the NBSAP. Expected results include increased domestic and international investment in biodiversity, operational financing mechanisms, such as PES schemes and trust funds, stronger private-sector engagement, enhanced institutional capacity, and improved transparency and accountability in biodiversity financing.

Ultimately, this Strategy seeks to position biodiversity conservation as a national development priority and to ensure that adequate financial resources are available to safeguard The Gambia's natural capital for present and future generations.

Table 1: Summary of disbursement projection by financier – 2026 to 2028

Financier	Total	Targeted Funding Period		
		Year 2026 USD	Year 2027 USD	Year 2028 USD
Government	285,500.00	45,000.00	130,000.00	110,500.00
Development Partners	1,216,500.00	32,500.00	530,500.00	653,500.00
PPP	36,000.00	-	26,000.00	10,000.00
	1,538,000.00	**77,500.00**	**686,500.00**	**774,000.00**

1. INTRODUCTION

Biodiversity is one of The Gambia's most valuable national assets. The country's forests, wetlands, mangroves, river systems, savannahs, coastal habitats, and marine ecosystems provide essential services that sustain livelihoods, support economic development, and strengthen resilience to climate change. These ecosystems underpin key sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, and water resources, while also contributing to food security, cultural heritage, and human well-being.

Despite its importance, biodiversity in The Gambia continues to face increasing pressure from habitat degradation, unsustainable resource use, pollution, invasive species, climate change, and rapid population growth. These challenges are reducing the ability of ecosystems to provide the services upon which communities and economic sectors depend. Addressing these threats requires not only effective conservation measures but also adequate and sustainable financial resources.

Historically, biodiversity conservation efforts in The Gambia have relied heavily on externally funded projects and short-term donor support. While these investments have generated important conservation gains, they have often lacked the continuity and predictability needed to sustain long-term impacts. Limited domestic investment, fragmented financing mechanisms, and weak coordination among funding actors have further constrained the implementation of biodiversity priorities.

Recognizing these challenges, the Biodiversity Resource Mobilization Strategy and Action Plan (2025–2035) has been developed as a framework for securing the financial resources necessary to implement the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). The Strategy seeks to strengthen domestic resource mobilization, expand access to international financing opportunities, engage the private sector, and promote innovative financing mechanisms that can support biodiversity conservation over the long term.

Ultimately, the Strategy aims to establish a more sustainable, coordinated, and resilient financing system that enables The Gambia to conserve its biodiversity, restore degraded ecosystems, and achieve its national and international environmental commitments.

1.1 Background

Biodiversity forms the foundation of ecological stability and sustainable development in The Gambia. The country's diverse ecosystems support a wide range of economic activities and provide critical ecosystem services, including climate regulation, water management, soil fertility, coastal protection, and carbon sequestration. These natural assets contribute significantly to national development and the livelihoods of rural and urban communities alike.

In The Gambia, there are 22 wildlife protected areas covering a total of 76,064 hectares, approximately 9.4% of the country's total surface area. The total land area for the 8 national parks and reserves is estimated at 89,205.9ha, which are co-managed, and the surrounding communities have permanent representation in decision-making. There are Indigenous Community Conserve Areas (ICCAs) that are purely managed by local people, with technical support from the Department of Parks and Wildlife. The 14-wildlife community protected areas occupied 4,858.1 hectares under the mandate of the Department of Parks and Wildlife[1]

However, biodiversity resources are increasingly under threat. Deforestation, land degradation, wetland loss, unsustainable harvesting of natural resources, pollution, and the

[1] National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), 2015

impacts of climate change are placing growing pressure on ecosystems across the country. As these pressures intensify, ecosystems become less resilient and less able to support both biodiversity and human well-being.

To address these challenges, The Gambia has developed the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2025–2035, which provides a national roadmap for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable use of biological resources. Successful implementation of the NBSAP will require substantial and sustained investment over the coming decade.

Despite the importance of biodiversity to national development, conservation financing remains inadequate. Existing funding is largely dependent on external development partners and on project-based interventions, many of which are short-term. This creates uncertainty for long-term conservation planning and limits institutions' ability to sustain successful initiatives once projects end.

At the same time, biodiversity financing opportunities remain largely underutilized. The private sector, financial institutions, climate finance mechanisms, and innovative financing instruments have significant potential to contribute to biodiversity conservation. However, these opportunities have not yet been fully explored or systematically integrated into national financing frameworks.

The Biodiversity Resource Mobilization Strategy has therefore been developed to address these challenges and opportunities. It provides a framework for diversifying financing sources, strengthening institutional capacity, improving financial coordination, and establishing sustainable mechanisms that can support biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration over the long term.

1.2 Rationale for Biodiversity Resource Mobilization

The development of this Strategy is driven by the growing recognition that biodiversity conservation cannot be achieved without adequate, predictable, and sustainable financing. While biodiversity is central to economic development, climate resilience, and human well-being, investments in conservation have historically fallen short of what is required to effectively manage and restore ecosystems.

A significant biodiversity financing gap exists between current levels of investment and the resources needed to implement the NBSAP. Existing funding remains heavily dependent on donor-supported projects, which are often limited in duration and influenced by external priorities. Although these projects have delivered important outcomes, reliance on short-term funding creates uncertainty and can undermine the sustainability of conservation efforts.

There is also a need to better reflect the economic value of biodiversity within national planning and budgeting processes. Ecosystems provide services that support agriculture, fisheries, tourism, water security, and climate adaptation, yet these contributions are often overlooked in public investment decisions. Strengthening biodiversity financing is therefore not only an environmental priority but also an investment in sustainable development and economic resilience.

The Strategy further recognizes that biodiversity loss carries high social and economic costs. Declining ecosystem health can reduce agricultural productivity, threaten food and water security, increase vulnerability to climate impacts, and undermine livelihood opportunities, particularly in rural and coastal communities. Investing in biodiversity conservation is therefore essential for reducing poverty, strengthening resilience, and supporting inclusive development.

At the same time, new opportunities are emerging to expand biodiversity financing beyond traditional sources. Innovative approaches such as Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES), biodiversity trust funds, biodiversity offsets, green and blue finance instruments, carbon markets, public-private partnerships, and corporate sustainability investments offer promising pathways for generating long-term financial support for conservation.

This Strategy provides a structured framework for mobilizing these resources while strengthening institutional capacity, improving financial governance, and enhancing the country's ability to access international biodiversity and climate finance. By doing so, it seeks to create a more diversified and resilient financing system capable of supporting biodiversity conservation well into the future.

1.3 Linkages with the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)

The Biodiversity Resource Mobilization Strategy and Action Plan is an integral component of The Gambia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2025–2035. While the NBSAP provides the overall framework for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, this Strategy serves as the financing mechanism that supports its implementation.

The NBSAP outlines national priorities for protecting ecosystems, restoring degraded habitats, promoting sustainable resource management, strengthening biodiversity governance, and integrating biodiversity considerations into development planning. Achieving these objectives requires substantial financial resources and effective mechanisms for mobilizing and managing those resources. This Strategy responds directly to that need.

The financing approaches proposed under this Strategy are designed to support all major NBSAP thematic areas, including protected area management, ecosystem restoration, species conservation, biodiversity monitoring, research, community-based conservation,

and sustainable livelihood initiatives. By aligning financial investments with national biodiversity priorities, the Strategy helps ensure that resources are directed toward measurable conservation outcomes.

The Strategy also strengthens the institutional foundations of NBSAP implementation by promoting improved coordination, accountability, and transparency in biodiversity financing. Proposed mechanisms such as biodiversity trust funds, payment for ecosystem services schemes, and integrated biodiversity-climate financing platforms are intended to improve resource allocation and reduce fragmentation across sectors and institutions.

In addition, the Strategy supports the mainstreaming of biodiversity into national development planning and public finance systems. By linking biodiversity outcomes to broader economic and development priorities, it enhances the visibility of biodiversity within government budgeting processes and encourages greater investment across sectors.

Through these contributions, the Resource Mobilization Strategy serves as a practical and operational tool for translating the ambitions of the NBSAP into tangible actions and results.

1.4 National Development and International Policy Context

The Biodiversity Resource Mobilization Strategy has been developed within a broader national, regional, and international policy framework that recognizes the critical role of biodiversity in sustainable development. This alignment ensures that biodiversity financing contributes not only to conservation objectives but also to wider economic, social, and environmental goals.

At the national level, the Strategy supports The Gambia's development aspirations as outlined in the National Development Plan and related sectoral policies. These frameworks emphasize sustainable natural resource management, climate resilience, poverty reduction, food security, and inclusive economic growth. Biodiversity is fundamental to achieving these objectives because healthy ecosystems provide many of the services upon which development depends.

The Strategy also complements national climate change policies and commitments, particularly those related to ecosystem-based adaptation, nature-based solutions, land restoration, and climate resilience. By strengthening the links between biodiversity conservation and climate action, the Strategy creates opportunities to access integrated climate and biodiversity financing while maximizing environmental and socio-economic benefits.

At the regional level, the Strategy aligns with environmental cooperation frameworks within West Africa, including initiatives that promote sustainable management of shared ecosystems, transboundary conservation, coastal resilience, and environmental

governance. These regional commitments provide opportunities for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and joint financing initiatives.

Globally, the Strategy contributes to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). It also supports The Gambia's commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land).

These international frameworks call for increased investment in biodiversity conservation and encourage countries to mobilize resources from a broad range of public and private sources. They also provide access to important financing opportunities through mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Adaptation Fund, and other emerging environmental finance instruments.

By aligning with national priorities and international commitments, the Biodiversity Resource Mobilization Strategy positions The Gambia to attract greater investment, strengthen environmental governance, and secure the financial resources needed to achieve long-term biodiversity conservation and sustainable development outcomes.

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES FOR BIODIVERSITY RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

2.1 Overview

Achieving the goals and targets of The Gambia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) requires a sustainable, diversified, and well-coordinated financing system. Current financing arrangements are insufficient to address the growing challenges of biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation, climate change, and increasing demands on natural resources. There is therefore a need to strengthen resource mobilization efforts and establish innovative financing mechanisms capable of supporting long-term conservation and sustainable development outcomes.

This chapter outlines the strategic priorities and objectives that will guide biodiversity resource mobilization efforts during the period 2025–2035. These priorities are designed to address existing financing gaps, improve coordination among stakeholders, enhance

financial sustainability, and increase investments in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration.

The strategic priorities are aligned with the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, national development priorities, and relevant international environmental commitments.

2.2 Vision

To establish a sustainable, diversified, and resilient biodiversity financing system that secures adequate resources for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity in The Gambia.

2.3 Goal

To mobilize, manage, and effectively utilize financial resources from domestic, international, public, private, and innovative sources to support the implementation of The Gambia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2025–2035).

2.5 Strategic Priority Areas

Priority Area 1: Strengthening Domestic Biodiversity Financing (Target 19)

Long-term biodiversity conservation requires stronger national ownership and increased domestic investment. Efforts under this priority will focus on integrating biodiversity into national development planning and budgeting processes, increasing public expenditure on biodiversity-related programs, and establishing dedicated national financing mechanisms that provide predictable support for conservation initiatives.

Key interventions will include biodiversity budget tagging, mainstreaming biodiversity into sectoral budgets, improving public expenditure tracking, and advocating for increased government allocations to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration.

Priority Area 2: Expanding Access to International Environmental Finance (Targets 19 & 20)

International financing mechanisms remain important sources of support for biodiversity conservation in developing countries. This priority seeks to strengthen The Gambia's ability

to access and effectively utilize funding from global environmental and climate finance mechanisms.

Efforts will focus on improving project development capacity, strengthening fiduciary and safeguard systems, building partnerships with international financing institutions, and increasing the number of investment-ready projects submitted to funding mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), Adaptation Fund, and other international funding windows.

Priority Area 3: Promoting Private Sector Engagement (Targets 19 & 20)

The private sector has significant potential to contribute to biodiversity conservation through investments, partnerships, and sustainable business practices. This priority aims to create an enabling environment that encourages private sector participation in biodiversity financing and natural resource stewardship.

Actions will include developing public-private partnerships, promoting biodiversity-friendly investments, encouraging corporate environmental responsibility initiatives, supporting sustainable value chains, and establishing incentives for businesses that contribute to conservation outcomes.

Priority Area 4: Improving institutional capacity, governance, and financial transparency (Targets 20, 21 & 22)

Robust monitoring and reporting systems are essential for demonstrating results, attracting investment, and ensuring accountability. This priority seeks to strengthen biodiversity finance monitoring, evaluation, learning, and reporting systems.

Actions will focus on developing mechanisms to track biodiversity finance, establishing performance indicators, strengthening financial transparency, documenting lessons learned, and promoting knowledge sharing among stakeholders. Improved reporting will support evidence-based decision-making and enhance confidence among government institutions, donors, investors, and conservation partners.

2.4 Strategic Objectives

The Biodiversity Resource Mobilization Strategy will pursue the following strategic objectives:

2.4.1 Strategic Objective 1:

Strengthen domestic resource mobilization and increase national investment in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration.

2.4.2 Strategic Objective 2:

Enhance access to international biodiversity, climate, and environmental financing mechanisms.

2.4.3 Strategic Objective 3:

Promote private sector participation and investment in biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management.

2.4.4 Strategic Objective 4:

Develop and operationalize innovative financing mechanisms that provide sustainable and long-term support for biodiversity conservation.

2.4.5 Strategic Objective 5:

Strengthen institutional capacity, coordination, and governance for effective biodiversity finance management.

2.4.6 Strategic Objective 6:

Improve biodiversity finance tracking, monitoring, accountability, and reporting systems.

4.6 Expected Outcomes

- By 2035, implementation of these strategic priorities is expected to result in:
- Increased domestic and international investment in biodiversity conservation.
- Improved financial sustainability for biodiversity programmes and projects.
- Stronger private sector engagement in conservation financing.
- Operational innovative financing mechanisms that generate long-term revenue for biodiversity management.
- Enhanced institutional capacity for resource mobilization and financial management.
- Improved transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in biodiversity financing.
- Greater alignment between biodiversity financing and national development priorities.
- Successful implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

These outcomes will contribute to a more resilient biodiversity financing system capable of supporting the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of The Gambia's biodiversity for present and future generations.

2. BIODIVERSITY FINANCING CONTEXT IN THE GAMBIA

2.1 Current Biodiversity Financing Landscape

Biodiversity financing in The Gambia is supported through a combination of domestic public expenditure, development partner assistance, global environmental finance, civil society initiatives, and emerging innovative financing mechanisms. Together, these sources have enabled important investments in protected area management, ecosystem restoration, climate resilience, community-based natural resource management, and environmental governance.

Historically, however, biodiversity conservation has depended heavily on externally financed projects. Development partners, international environmental funds, and conservation organizations have played a central role in supporting biodiversity-related programs across the country. While these investments have generated significant conservation benefits, they have also created a financing system that is largely project-based and dependent on external funding cycles.

Domestic financing remains an important but relatively limited component of the overall biodiversity finance landscape. Public resources are primarily allocated through government institutions responsible for the environment, forestry, wildlife, fisheries, agriculture, and related sectors. However, biodiversity expenditures are often embedded within broader sectoral budgets, making it difficult to clearly identify, monitor, and assess total biodiversity investments.

In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the links between biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable development. This has led to increased integration of biodiversity objectives into climate adaptation, ecosystem restoration, and nature-based development programs. Despite this progress, current financing levels remain insufficient to address the scale of biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation, and restoration needs across the country.

Strengthening biodiversity finance will therefore require a shift towards a more diversified, coordinated, and sustainable financing system that combines domestic resources, international finance, private sector investment, community participation, and innovative financial instruments.

2.2 Existing Funding Sources and Mechanisms

Biodiversity financing in The Gambia is derived from a range of complementary sources. Although these mechanisms have supported important conservation achievements, they remain fragmented and often lack the scale and predictability required for long-term biodiversity management. Understanding these existing financing sources provides a foundation for identifying opportunities to strengthen and diversify future investment.

2.2.1 Public Sector Financing

Public sector financing represents the primary domestic source of biodiversity funding in The Gambia. Government resources are allocated through ministries, departments, and agencies responsible for environmental management, forestry, wildlife conservation, fisheries, agriculture, water resources, tourism, and local government.

These investments support a wide range of activities, including protected area management, environmental monitoring, ecosystem restoration, climate adaptation, environmental education, enforcement of environmental regulations, and community outreach programs. Public financing also contributes to staffing, operational costs, infrastructure maintenance, and institutional administration.

Despite its importance, public financing for biodiversity remains limited relative to national needs. Environmental institutions often operate with constrained budgets and face challenges in maintaining conservation infrastructure, conducting field operations, implementing restoration programs, and strengthening enforcement activities. Furthermore, biodiversity spending is frequently integrated within broader sectoral budgets, making expenditure tracking difficult and limiting visibility of biodiversity investments.

There is therefore a need to strengthen biodiversity mainstreaming within national planning and budgeting processes, increase public investment in environmental management, and establish dedicated financing mechanisms that provide more predictable support for conservation and ecosystem restoration.

2.2.2 Development Partner and Donor Funding

Development partners and international donors remain among the most significant contributors to biodiversity financing in The Gambia. Bilateral agencies, multilateral organizations, international environmental funds, and conservation organizations have provided substantial support for biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable natural resource management.

Donor financing has enabled the implementation of numerous programs focused on protected area management, forest and mangrove restoration, wetland conservation, coastal resilience, sustainable fisheries, wildlife conservation, and environmental governance.

These investments have also supported policy development, institutional strengthening, research, capacity building, and community-based conservation initiatives.

International non-governmental organizations have played an important complementary role by mobilizing financial resources, providing technical expertise, supporting scientific research, and facilitating community engagement. Many donor-supported interventions have promoted sustainable livelihood opportunities such as agroforestry, beekeeping, ecotourism, climate-smart agriculture, and sustainable fisheries management.

DPWM will proactively engage multilateral and bilateral partners whose mandates align with biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable tourism, including UNDP, FAO, UNEP, the European Union, GEF, the World Bank, and bilateral agencies such as USAID, GIZ, JICA, and others.

Engagement will prioritize:

- Program-based and multi-year financing;
- Climate and biodiversity financing windows;
- Regional and transboundary conservation initiatives.

Specifically, the following will be targeted:

a. The African Development Bank

The African Development Bank is one of the key multilateral donors in The Gambia. The Bank's interventions cut across sectors but are mainly in agriculture, governance, and water resources. Through relevant Line Ministries, DPWM intends to further engage the AfDB group to scale up its support for environmental conservation, in line with DPWM's priorities and the Bank's High Fives.

b. Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA)

BADEA was created to strengthen economic, financial, and technical cooperation between the Arab world and Africa. To achieve this, the Bank participates in financing economic development in Africa through priority projects in beneficiary countries, aligned with their development plans. In some instances, these projects are regional in character, benefiting several countries simultaneously and advancing their economic integration. Currently, BADEA is active in education, energy, road infrastructure, capacity building, and microfinance.

c. European Union (EU)

The European Union has been operating mainly in the area of infrastructure, Water Resources, Agriculture, Environment and climate change, and youth employment. Following the change of government and a new dispensation, the EU has renewed its support to The Gambia in the form of budget support and has committed to scaling up support in the areas of infrastructure, agriculture and food security, environment and climate change, water resources, and youth employment.

d. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

IFAD has been operating in this country for several decades. IFAD's interventions are mainly in the agriculture sector and support for microfinance development. Given their significant interventions in the country, the government will enhance its engagement with IFAD to support additional interventions in the relevant activities of DPWM.

e. Islamic Development Bank **(IsDB)**

The Bank finances productive projects and programs in both public and private sectors in member countries. It invests in economic and social infrastructure projects and finances development projects in member countries through a range of Shari'ah-compliant modes, including loans, leasing, installment sales, equity participation, lines of credit, etc. Besides, its trade financing schemes, such as Import Trade Financing Operations (ITFO) promote trade among member countries. IsDB's operations in The Gambia cover projects and interventions in energy, Information Communication Technology (ICT), infrastructure, education, health, water, agriculture, and microfinance.

f. Kuwaiti Fund:

The objective of the Fund is to assist Arab and other developing countries in developing their economies. The types of activities include making loans and providing guarantees, making grants by way of technical assistance, and providing other types of technical assistance. The Fund's operations are primarily focused on agriculture and irrigation, transport and communications, energy, industry, water, and sewage.

g. The United Nations (UN) System:

The UN System has been a long-standing partner of the Government of The Gambia. The UN System comprises different UN Agencies, resident and non-resident, such as the FAO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNECA, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS, WFP, and WHO. The support and

interventions of the UN System span several sectors, including agriculture, education, health, environment and climate change, governance, social protection, child protection, youth empowerment, skills development, women's empowerment, and private sector development, among others. The support of the UN System is delivered through a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) implemented through various country programs.

h. The World Bank

Through International Development Association (IDA) financing, the World Bank supports projects in basic education, community-driven development, public resource management, and agriculture. The Bank's areas of intervention are largely in education, agriculture, infrastructural development, nutrition, and governance.

While donor support has been instrumental in advancing biodiversity conservation, it is often project-based and time-limited. As a result, conservation gains may be difficult to sustain once external funding ends. Strengthening national ownership, improving coordination, and integrating donor investments into long-term national priorities will be essential for enhancing sustainability and impact.

2.2.3 Global Environmental Finance Mechanisms

Global environmental finance mechanisms have become increasingly important sources of funding for biodiversity conservation and climate action in The Gambia. These financing instruments support developing countries in addressing global environmental challenges while contributing to national sustainable development objectives.

Strategic partnerships will be strengthened with international and regional conservation organizations, including WWF, BirdLife International, and WCS. These partnerships may include co-financing arrangements, technical assistance, joint program implementation, and access to global conservation funding networks.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has been a key partner in supporting biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, environmental governance, institutional strengthening, and implementation of national biodiversity priorities. GEF investments have also contributed to biodiversity assessments, environmental reporting obligations, community forestry initiatives, and integrated ecosystem management programs.

Similarly, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) has supported climate adaptation and resilience initiatives that generate important biodiversity co-benefits. Investments in ecosystem-based adaptation, watershed management, mangrove restoration, sustainable land management, and climate-smart agriculture have demonstrated the strong linkages between biodiversity conservation and climate resilience.

Additional support has been accessed through mechanisms such as the Adaptation Fund and other international environmental financing windows. These programs have supported ecosystem restoration, coastal protection, disaster risk reduction, sustainable water management, and community resilience-building initiatives.

Although these financing mechanisms offer significant opportunities, accessing them requires strong institutional capacity, technical expertise, robust project preparation systems, and compliance with complex fiduciary and safeguard requirements. Strengthening national readiness and project development capacity will therefore be critical for increasing access to international environmental finance.

3.2.4 Non-Governmental and Civil Society Contributions

Civil society organizations, community-based organizations, and non-governmental organizations play a vital role in biodiversity conservation across The Gambia. Their contributions extend beyond direct financial support to include technical assistance, advocacy, community mobilization, research, awareness raising, and environmental education.

Many organizations implement projects focused on protected area management, forest conservation, wetland restoration, coastal ecosystem protection, wildlife conservation, climate adaptation, and sustainable livelihoods. Through partnerships with local communities, these organizations help strengthen participatory approaches to natural resource management and promote community ownership of conservation initiatives.

Communities themselves make substantial contributions through voluntary labour, traditional ecological knowledge, local monitoring systems, mangrove restoration activities, tree planting campaigns, and sustainable resource management practices. Although these contributions are often not reflected in formal financial statistics, they represent a significant investment in biodiversity conservation.

Strengthening partnerships among government institutions, civil society organizations, community groups, and development partners will be essential for expanding conservation efforts, improving coordination, and enhancing long-term sustainability.

2.2.5 Emerging Innovative Finance Mechanisms

The Gambia is increasingly exploring innovative financing approaches that can complement traditional funding sources and support long-term biodiversity conservation. While many of these mechanisms remain in their early stages of development, they offer significant opportunities to diversify biodiversity financing and reduce dependence on external project funding.

Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) is among the most promising approaches. PES mechanisms create incentives for individuals and communities to conserve ecosystems by

rewarding them for the environmental services they provide, such as carbon storage, watershed protection, climate regulation, and biodiversity conservation.

Nature-based tourism and ecotourism also present important financing opportunities. The Gambia's internationally recognized birdlife, wetlands, forests, coastal ecosystems, and riverine landscapes offer considerable potential to generate revenue that can be reinvested in conservation and community development.

Private sector engagement is gradually increasing through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and environmental sustainability programs. Businesses are beginning to recognize the importance of healthy ecosystems for long-term economic resilience and corporate reputation. This creates opportunities for stronger partnerships between conservation institutions and the private sector.

Emerging discussions on biodiversity offsets, carbon finance, conservation trust funds, green and blue bonds, environmental levies, and blended finance approaches further highlight the potential for innovative financing. While these mechanisms are not yet fully operational, they represent important opportunities for building a more resilient and diversified biodiversity financing system over the coming decade.

Overall, existing biodiversity financing mechanisms provide a valuable foundation for conservation efforts in The Gambia. However, achieving the objectives of the NBSAP will require greater coordination, increased domestic investment, stronger private sector engagement, expanded access to international finance, and the successful deployment of innovative financing solutions.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY

The objectives of this Strategy are to:

- Secure adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding to support DPWM's core operations, conservation programs, and capital investments;
- Diversify revenue sources to reduce dependence on government subventions and project-based donor funding;
- Strengthen strategic partnerships with development partners, conservation organizations, the private sector, and communities;
- Improve financial governance, transparency, and accountability, in line with public sector standards;
- Enhance DPWM's institutional capacity to design, finance, and implement effective conservation and eco-tourism programs.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

3.2 PESTLE

The PESTLE[2] further informs the RM on how the political dispensation, economic and social conditions, emerging technological changes, legislation, and environmental issues can be exploited to the benefit of the Department and on how they can inform its resource mobilization as avenues for opportunities to be harnessed. The RM strategy recognizes other related policy and legislative frameworks that support the promotion and conservation of our environment, such as the Draft Agriculture and Natural Resources policy [ANR, 2017 – 2026]; The Forest Act [1998]; the National Environmental Management Act [1994]; and the State Lands Regulations [1995]. The strategy is also inspired by and remains strongly aligned to the RF-NDP [2023 – 2027], Climate Change policy, and other national, regional, and global strategy frameworks. Pillar 5 of the RF-NDP prioritizes agriculture, fisheries, natural resources, and environmental and climate change, as clearly indicated under other national policies/strategies and international frameworks, provides an immense opportunity to tap funding from various outcomes 5.3, which emphasizes the attainment of sustainable environmental and natural resource management.

The alignment of the Department's mandate with the key development blueprint and other national policies/strategies and international frameworks provides an immense opportunity for tapping funding from different sources. The aftermath of COVID-19 has witnessed a marked increase in internal travel, leading to more tourists visiting the country. According to statistics from the Gambia Tourism Board, there were 206,836 air arrivals in 2023, a 13% increase from 182,795 in 2022. Traditional and new markets both saw marked increases in arrivals in 2023 compared to 2024. This increasing trend in tourism, with more and more tourists now showing keen interest in eco-tourism, will continue to create immense opportunities for the Department to raise additional self-raised revenue through gate fees and other sources.

The sustainable management of environment and natural resources, as anchored in the RF-NDP under outcome 5.3 will help to promote our protected species, undue human infringement on the national parks thus ensuring the protection of our species of birds and animals which could be an immense source of revenue through levy of gate fees and/or creation of other recreational facilities within the parks such as mini bars for visiting tourists.

The emerging advancement in technology could be leveraged upon by the Department through the creation of 24-hour virtual touch points in the form of a website where visitors can explore the parks to visit, ask questions about the parks, and places of interest to visit,

[2] Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Economical

etc. It can also be harnessed for the digitization of revenue collection, thereby minimizing the associated risks of revenue suppression and reducing the time lag between collection and banking of revenues collected at various wildlife parks across the country.

Unfavorable social conditions, especially the intrusion of the wildlife parks by local communities for a source of livelihood and/or commercial activities, including hunting protected species, felling of trees, and bushfire, could lead to the potential migration of local species into neighboring countries, leading to fewer visitors and, by extension, less income collected in the form of gate fees, etc.

Table 2: Framework for Potential Funding Sources

Strategic Priorities	Potential funding source		
	Government of The Gambia	Development Partners	Public_Private-Partnership (PPP) Arrangements
Strategic Priority 1: Strengthening Domestic Biodiversity Financing ;	xx		
1.1 – Develop Strategic Plan for the Department in alignment with the sector plan and RF- NDP	xx		
1.2 Create and capacities the Planning Department DPWM to enhance budget preparation and execution in line with Program Based Budgeting	xx		
Strategic Priority 2: Expanding Access to International Environmental Finance;			
2.1 Develop and regularly update a donor and partner mapping aligned with DPMW priorities		xx	
2.2 Design and implement PPP model for Eco-Tourism and Park Services			xx
2.3 Strengthen internal capacity for proposal development, negotiations and project management		xx	
Strategic Priority 3: Promoting Private Sector Engagement;			
3.1 Introduce new investment mechanisms to promote private sector investment.	xx		

3.2 – Improvement on the security of private sector investment.		xx	
3.3 – Introduce new species to entise investors into wanting to invest.		xx	
3.4 – Improve visibility through stakeholder engagement – hoteliers, bird watchers, communities etc	xx	xx	
Strategic Priority 4: Improving institutional capacity, governance, and financial transparency;			
4.1 – Purchase vehicles/transport equipment to facilitate park visits and monitoring	xx	xx	
4.2 – Training of staff on Park management, customer care skills, birds/animal species		xx	
4.3 – Introduce digital revenue collection system across major parks using phase approach		xx	

Table 3A: Summary of funding by Financier – Immediate three years

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	FUNDING SOURCE	TARGETED FUNDING PERIOD		
		Year 2026	Year 2037	2028
Strategic Priority 1: Strengthening Domestic Biodiversity Financing ;		**350,000**	**300,000**	**300,000**
	Government	350,000	300,000	300,000
	Donors	-	-	-
	PPP	-	-	-
Strategic Priority 2: Expanding Access to International Environmental Finance;		**41,000**	**41,000**	**58,500**
	Government	-	-	-

	Donors	41,000	15,000	23,500
	PPP	-	26,000	35,000
Strategic Priority 3: Promoting Private Sector Engagement;		**20,000**	**453,000**	**878,500**
	Government	-	31,000	-
	Donors	20,000	422,000	878,500
	PPP	-	-	-
Strategic Priority 4: Improving institutional capacity, governance, and financial transparency;		**75,000**	**176,000**	**230,000**
	Government	-	75,000	80,000
	Donors	75,000	101,000	150,000
	PPP	-	-	-

Table 4B: Summary of funding by Financier – 7 Outer years – 2029 – 2035

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	FUNDING SOURCE	TARGETED FUNDING PERIOD						
		Year 2029	Year 2030	Year 2031	Year 2032	Year 2033	Year 2024	Year 2035
Strategic Priority 1: Strengthening Domestic Biodiversity Financing ;		**450,000**	**525,000**	**600,000**	**675,000**	**750,000**	**825,000**	**925,000**
	Government	250,000	275,000	300,000	325,000	350,000	375,000	400,000

	Donors	150,000	175,000	200,000	225,000	250,000	275,000	300,000
	PPP	50,000	75,000	100,000	125,000	150,000	175,000	225,000
Strategic Priority 2: Expanding Access to International Environmental Finance;		**425,000**	**500,000**	**600,000**	**700,000**	**775,000**	**875,000**	**1,000,000**
	Government	100,000	125,000	150,000	175,000	200,000	225,000	250,000
	Donors	300,000	350,000	400,000	450,000	500,000	550,000	600,000
	PPP	25,000	25,000	50,000	75,000	75,000	100,000	150,000
Strategic Priority 3: Promoting Private Sector Engagement;		**800,000**	**1,000,000**	**1,200,000**	**1,400,000**	**1,600,000**	**1,850,000**	**2,300,000**
	Government	200,000	250,000	300,000	350,000	400,000	450,000	500,000
	Donors	400,000	500,000	600,000	700,000	800,000	900,000	1,000,000
	PPP	200,000	250,000	300,000	350,000	400,000	500,000	800,000
Strategic Priority 4: Improving institutional capacity, governance, and		**525,000**	**600,000**	**850,000**	**725,000**	**750,000**	**825,000**	**950,000**

financial transparency;								
	Government	150,000	175,000	300,000	225,000	250,000	275,000	300,000
	Donors	250,000	275,000	400,000	325,000	350,000	375,000	400,000
	PPP	125,000	150,000	150,000	175,000	150,000	175,000	250,000

The resource mobilisation strategy, for operational reasons, is broken down into four-year cycles running from 2025 to 2028. The next 3 years (2025-2028) will lay the foundation for implementing the strategy and action plan over the remaining 7 years (2029 – 2035). After the government gains the means to mobilise resources, it will have the financial muscle to partly fund the RM strategy and action plan for the next 7 years. Apparently, no project projection is made for 2025 because the RM Strategy was developed towards the tail end of the financial year 2025, when the budgetary provisions to be made in the national budget had already been confirmed. Thus, the 10-year RM Strategy covers the planning cycle 2026 – 2035.

The financial requirements for the Resource Mobilisation Strategy and its associated action plans over the 10-year period total USD 25,000,000 across all strategic priorities. This total reflects the overall investment needed to effectively implement actions to strengthen domestic biodiversity financing, expand access to international environmental finance, promote private-sector engagement, and enhance institutional capacity, governance, and financial transparency.

The distribution of total funding shows a gradual, steady increase over time, indicating a phased approach to implementation. Lower funding requirements in the earlier years transition into progressively higher annual needs as program activities expand, partnerships deepen, and institutional systems are strengthened. This upward trend in total financing

highlights the scaling nature of the strategy, culminating in higher investment levels in the later years to sustain and consolidate long-term biodiversity finance objectives.

7. KEY RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGIES

To operationalize these funding sources, DPWM will pursue the following strategic actions:

- Establish a dedicated Resource Mobilization and Partnerships Unit within DPWM, with clear roles and accountability;
- Develop and regularly update a donor and partner mapping, aligned with DPWM priorities;
- Strengthen internal capacity for proposal development, negotiation, and contract management;
- Design and implement Public–Private Partnership (PPP) models for eco-tourism and park services;
- Introduce digital revenue collection systems across major parks and protected areas;
- Establish a DPWM Conservation Fund to pool donor, private-sector, and eco-tourism revenues for priority investments;
- Enhance DPWM's visibility through targeted communication, advocacy, and branding initiatives.

8. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Implementation of this Strategy will be overseen by DPWM senior management, with operational responsibility assigned to the Resource Mobilization and Partnerships Unit.

Key actions include:

- Development of annual fundraising targets and action plans;
- Regular engagement with donors and partners through structured meetings and briefings;
- Monitoring of financial inflows, funding gaps, and performance against targets;
- Preparation of annual Resource Mobilization and Financial Performance Reports to ensure transparency and accountability.

9. DETAILED BUDGET FRAMEWORK (3-YEAR PROJECTION)

A detailed three-year budget framework will guide implementation of this Strategy. The framework will distinguish between:

- Core operational financing;
- Programme and project funding;
- Capital investments in infrastructure and systems;
- Resource mobilization and partnership development costs.

The budget will be reviewed annually and adjusted based on funding availability, performance, and emerging opportunities.

Table 5: Annex 1: Resource Mobilization Action Plan (2026–2028)

Strategic Area	Key Actions	Responsibility	Timeline
Institutional Capacity	Establish a Resource Mobilization & Partnerships Unit	DPWM Management	Year 1
Institutional Capacity	Train staff in proposal development and partnership management	DPWM / Partners	Year 1–2
Government Financing	Integrate DPWM priorities into national budget and sector plans	DPWM / MoFEA	Annual
Donor Engagement	Develop donor mapping and engagement strategy	Resource Mobilization Unit	Year 1
Donor Engagement	Prepare and submit at least 3 programme-based funding proposals annually	DPWM / Partners	Annual
NGO Partnerships	Formalize partnerships with conservation NGOs	DPWM	Year 1–2
Eco-Tourism Revenue	Review and update park entry and service fee structures	DPWM	Year 1
Eco-Tourism Revenue	Introduce digital payment systems in priority parks	DPWM / ICT Partners	Year 2
Private Sector	Develop PPP guidelines for eco-lodges and park services	DPWM / PPP Unit	Year 2
Community Revenue	Strengthen revenue-sharing mechanisms with communities	DPWM / Communities	Ongoing

Governance	Establish a DPWM Conservation Fund	DPWM / MoFEA	Year 2
Visibility	Develop communication and branding materials	DPWM	Year 1

Table 6: Annex 2: Resource Mobilization Results Framework

Impact

- Improved financial sustainability of DPWM, enabling effective conservation, eco-tourism development, and community-based natural resource management.

Outcomes and Indicators

Outcome	Indicators	Baseline	Targets (2028)
Outcome 1: Diversified funding base	% of budget from non-government sources	Low	≥40%
Outcome 2: Increased internally generated revenue	Annual eco-tourism and user-fee revenue	To be established	≥50% increase
Outcome 3: Strengthened donor partnerships	Number of active multi-year funding agreements	Limited	≥5
Outcome 4: Improved financial governance	Annual financial and RM reports produced	Irregular	Annual
Outcome 5: Enhanced conservation financing	Funds allocated to priority conservation actions	Limited	Increasing annually

Outputs

Output	Output Indicators
Resource Mobilization Unit operational	Unit established and staffed
Donor engagement system in place	Donor mapping and pipeline updated annually
Eco-tourism revenue systems strengthened	Digital payment systems operational
PPP mechanisms established	At least 2 active concessions
Conservation Fund operational	Fund legally established and capitalized

Monitoring and Reporting

Progress will be monitored through:

- Annual Resource Mobilization Plans and Reports
- Financial audits and performance reviews
- Donor and partner progress reviews
- Mid-term and end-term internal assessments

Table 7: Annex 3: Implementation Risks and Mitigation Measures

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Insufficient government funding	Medium	High	Strengthen policy alignment and budget advocacy
Limited internal capacity	Medium	Medium	Targeted training and partnerships
Donor funding volatility	Medium	Medium	Diversification of funding sources
Private-sector reluctance	Medium	Medium	Clear PPP frameworks and incentives
Community resistance	Low–Medium	Medium	Transparent benefit-sharing mechanisms
Weak financial controls	Low	High	Strengthened systems and audits
Climate and environmental shocks	High	High	Diversified revenue streams and climate financing