THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK AND ACTION SUPPORT PROJECT

The Gambia National Wildlife Management Strategy and Action Plan

Table of content ----------*Page 1*

1. Introduction and Rationale----------3
2. What is Wildlife?----------5
3. Wildlife Management----------5
4. Wildlife Conservation----------7
5. Wildlife Conservation Vs Wildlife Management----------7
   5.1 Wildlife Conservation, Protection and Preservation----------7
   5.2 Wildlife Management: Supervision and Regulation----------8
   5.3 Goal: Biodiversity and Habitat health----------8
   5.4 Strategy: Conservation Vs Sustainable use----------8
      5.4.1 Approach: Long term Vs Adaptation----------9
      5.4.2 Activities: Restoration Vs Population Control----------9
      5.4.3 Scope: Large scale Vs Site specific----------10
      5.4.4 Tools: Legislation Vs Management plans----------10
      5.4.5 Stakeholders: Scientists Vs Resource Managers----------10
      5.4.6 Focus: Survival Vs Balance and use----------11
6. What is a Wildlife Management Strategy and Action Plan?----------11
7. Purpose of a Wildlife Management strategy and Action Plan----------12
   7.1 Key components of a wildlife management plan----------12

8. Purpose of the 2025-2035 national wildlife management Strategy and Action plan--13
9. Vision, Goal and Objective----------15
9.1 Vision----------15
9.2 Goal----------16
9.3 Objective----------17
10. The strategic Pillars----------17
11. The Strategic framework----------19
11.1 Theory of Change (ToC)----------16
12. Pillars and Goals of Wildlife Management----------22
13. PHASE Implementation: 2025-2035----------36
14.Action Plan Matrix----------31
15.Capacity and Training Needs (human capacity)----------32
16.Social and Environmental Safeguards ----------32
17. Indicative budget Considerations (US$, 10 years)----------33
18. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)----------33
19. Expected Outcomes----------34
20. Phased 10 year costed budget for wildlife management----------34
21.Phase-wise Notes----------37
22.Indicative Unit Cost (Examples)----------38
23. Expected Outcome by 2035----------39

1. Introduction and Rationale

The Gambia is a small Sahelian country, almost completely surrounded by Senegal and extending to the Western Coast of Africa between 13° and 14° N. It has a total land area of approximately 10,689 sq. km. According to the 2024 National population and Housing Census, The Gambia's population is estimated at 2.42 million people with a population growth rate of 2.5% per annum (Preliminary 2024 Census report),

Gambia is a Sudano Sahelian type of climate, with a short rainy season from June to October and a long dry season lasting from November to May. The average annual rainfall is 900 mm. Currently there are 22 wildlife Protected Areas, occupying a total area of 76,064 hectares, approximately 6.4% of Gambia's total surface area. Only 0.16% of the terrestrial and inland water is protected while 7.4% of the marine and coastal areas are under formal protection with the goal being set to increase this area to 10% by 2015. Thirty four forest parks totaling 22,239 hectares or 65% were designated as protected forest. Several local community forests also exist covering 18,000 hectares (NBSAP 2015-2020)

Wildlife resources form an important component of the Gambia's biotic assets from both ecological and economic viewpoints. According to available data, there are 117 species of mammals, 47 species of reptiles and 30 species of amphibians making a total of 194 species of wild animals in The Gambia. However, these figures are by and large estimates, the number could be higher than this if detail inventory is undertaken. The Gambia is also endowed with a rich avifauna estimated at a total of over 570 species and one bird species every 21.0 km2. It has no endemic and only 2 species - the puff-back shrike (Dryoscopus gambiensis) and the spurwinged Goose (Plectropterus gambiensis) bear its specific Epithet.

Wildlife and its associated habitat/ecosystem constitute an important and critical component of The Gambia's biodiversity and provides essential **ecosystem services, cultural value, and economic opportunities** (eco-tourism, sustainable

hunting/fishing, job creation , food security, research) maintaining healthy ecosystems, through roles like pollination, & pest control, supporting human well-being both physically and spiritually, essential for ecological balance, nutrient cycling

& seed dispersal, ensuring resilience of ecosystems against climate change and maintaining natural processes that support human life among others. Current challenges include

Habitat loss and fragmentation affecting mammals, birds, reptiles, and]amphibians.

Overexploitation through poaching, hunting, and overfishing.

Human-wildlife conflicts in agricultural and settlement areas e.g. Land Use Change (LUC).

Invasive species and disease outbreaks impacting wildlife populations.

Limited capacity for monitoring, enforcement, and research.

Global warming, the greenhouse effect & pollution

Unplanned infrastructure development, Climate Change & disasters causing wildfires, droughts etc. to mention just a few.

Despite the efforts being made by government, development partners and a whole host of non-state actors to tackle the menace, wildlife and its habitat continue to be threatened, ***under business as usual scenarios***, leading to unprecedented destruction and loss of species and habitats locally, regionally and nationally This current strategy provides a **10-year (2025-2035) roadmap (strategy and Action Plan)** to sustainably manage wildlife populations, protect threatened species and associated habitats, and ensure **ecological and socio-economic resilience**. To ensure complementarity and mutual supportiveness, the roadmap speaks to and is aligned with the green,resilient and recovery focused National Development Project (NDP (2023-2027), the SDGs, AICHI biodiversity targets and the Global Biodiversity Framework 2050, taking into account the four goals for 2050 and 23 targets for 2030.

2.What is Wildlife ?

Wildlife refers to undomesticated animals and uncultivated plant species which can exist in their natural habitat, but has come to include all organisms that grow or live wild in an area without being introduced by humans. Wildlife was also synonymous to game, birds and mammals hunted for sport. Wildlife can be found in all ecosystems, Deserts, plains, grasslands, woodlands, wetlands, forests, and other areas including the most developed urban areas forming distinct groups. While the term in popular culture usually refers to animals that are untouched by human existence, most scientists agree that much wildlife is affected by humans. Some wildlife threaten human safety, health, property and quality of life, but many wild animals have value to humans, whether economic, educational, or sentimental. Humans have historically tended to separate civilization from wildlife in a number of ways, including the legal, social and moral senses. Some animals, however, have adapted to suburban environments. This includes urban wildlife such as feral cats, dogs, mice, and rats. Some religions declare certain animals to be sacred, and in modern times, concern for the natural environment has provoked activists to protest against the exploitation of wildlife for human benefit or entertainment. Notwithstanding the above, Different countries have different legal definitions for wildlife to suit their respective national situations.

3.Wildlife ***Management***

Wildlife management is the process of influencing interactions among wildlife, their habitats, and people to achieve predefined impacts. (Fig 1.1 below)

It encompasses various activities such as wildlife conservation, population control, Gamekeeping, wildlife contraceptive and pest control. The primary goal of wildlife manageement is to maintain and enhance biodiversity, which is crucial for ecosystem health and stability. This involves applying scientific and local knowledge to manage wildlife populations and

habitats, ensuring a balance between conservation and human needs. Wildlife management also addresses human-wildlife conflicts and aims to preserve habitats, which are essential for wildlife survival and ecosystem resilience.

Wildlife management aims to halt the loss in the Earth's biodiversity, by taking into consideration ecological principles such as carrying capacity, disturbance and succession, and environmental conditions such as physical geography, pedology and hydrology

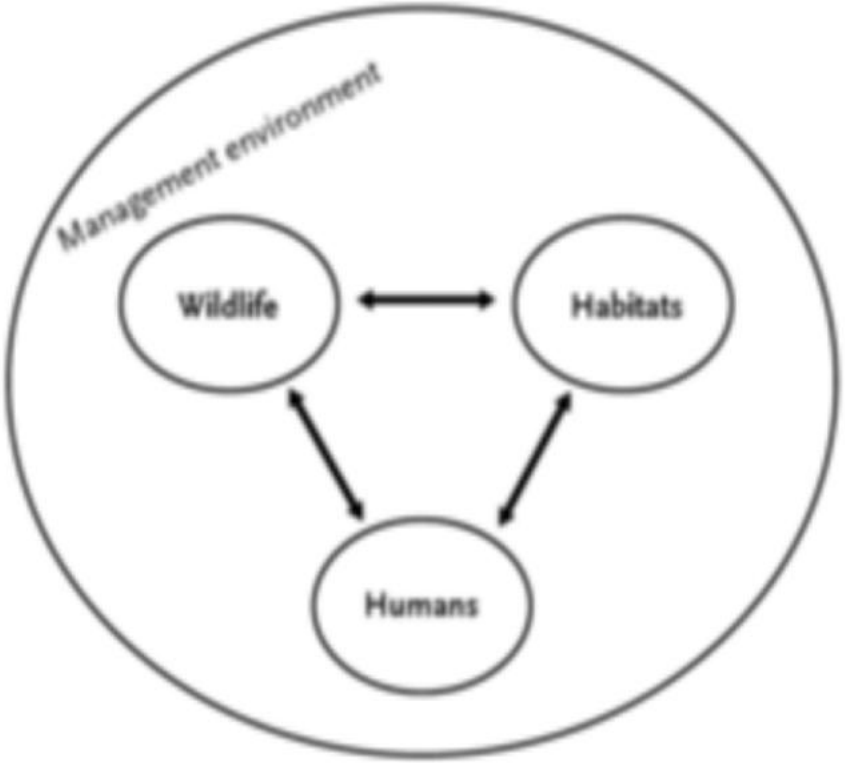


Figure 1.1. Wildlife management triad

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4.Wildlife Conservation

Wildlife conservation focuses on the protection and preservation of animal and plant species and their habitats to ensure biodiversity and ecosystem health. It emphasizes the ethical and legal aspects of conservation

5.Wildlife Conservation Vs Wildlife Management

Wildlife conservation focuses on the protection and preservation of animal and plant species and their habitats to ensure biodiversity and ecosystem health. It emphasizes the ethical and legal aspects of safeguarding endangered species from extinction due to human activities such as habitat destruction and poaching. Wildlife management, on the other hand, involves the practical application of biological and ecological principles to manage wildlife populations and their habitats for various purposes, including hunting, recreation, and ecosystem balance. It encompasses strategies to regulate population sizes, improve habitat quality, and mitigate human-wildlife conflicts. While both fields aim to sustain wildlife, conservation prioritizes long-term species survival, whereas management seeks to balance ecological health with human interests.

5.1 Conservation: Protection and preservation.

Wildlife conservation focuses on protecting endangered species and their habitats from threats like habitat destruction and poaching, ensuring biodiversity is maintained. In contrast, wildlife management encompasses a broader approach that includes regulating animal populations and their interactions with human activities, promoting sustainable use of wildlife resources. You may encounter varied strategies in these fields, with conservation employing techniques like habitat restoration and legal protections, while management often uses hunting regulations and land-use planning. Understanding these differences is crucial for effectively engaging in efforts that balance environmental health with human needs.

5.2 Management: Supervision and regulation.

Wildlife conservation focuses on preserving natural habitats and protecting endangered species from extinction, ensuring biodiversity is maintained for future generations. In contrast, wildlife management involves the strategic regulation of animal populations and their environments to achieve specific objectives, such as sustainable hunting or habitat restoration. While both aim to balance ecological health and human needs, conservation prioritizes long-term species survival, whereas management may include active interventions for population control. Understanding these distinctions can enhance your appreciation and involvement in efforts to safeguard wildlife and their ecosystems.

5.3 Goal: Biodiversity and habitat health.

Wildlife conservation focuses on the protection of natural habitats and the preservation of species, often advocating for the creation of protected areas to maintain biodiversity. In contrast, wildlife management involves the active oversight of animal populations and their habitats to balance ecological health and human interests, often employing strategies such as hunting regulations or habitat restoration. While conservation aims for long-term sustainability and prevention of extinction, management seeks to optimize wildlife populations for coexistence with human activities. Understanding these distinctions can enhance your approach to fostering biodiversity and improving habitat health within your local ecosystem.

5.4 Strategy: Conservation vs. sustainable use.

Wildlife conservation focuses on preserving natural habitats and protecting endangered species from extinction, often emphasizing strict regulations to maintain biodiversity. In contrast, wildlife management employs regulated use of natural resources, promoting a balance between human needs and ecosystem health through practices like regulated hunting or habitat restoration. Effective management strategies can enhance local economies while ensuring species sustainability, allowing you to engage with wildlife without compromising ecological integrity. Understanding these differences is crucial for fostering responsible interactions with nature and supporting long-term ecological resilience.

5.4.1 Approach: Long-term vs. adaptive.

Wildlife conservation focuses on the protection and preservation of endangered species and their habitats, ensuring biodiversity remains intact for future generations. In contrast, wildlife management takes a more adaptive approach, involving the regulation of wildlife populations and habitats to balance ecological health with human interests. While conservation emphasizes long-term strategies such as habitat restoration and legal protections, management often incorporates scientific data and community involvement to respond to immediate challenges. Understanding these differences is essential for effective policies that promote both ecological integrity and sustainable use of natural resources.

5.4.2 Activities: Restoration vs. population control.

Wildlife conservation focuses on protecting and preserving species and their habitats to maintain biodiversity, often emphasizing ecological balance and ethical considerations. In contrast, wildlife management involves active interventions, such as restoration and population control, to regulate animal numbers and mitigate human-wildlife conflicts. For instance, restoration activities might include reforestation to enhance habitats, while population control measures could entail regulated hunting or relocation to reduce overpopulation effects. Understanding these distinctions allows you to appreciate the various strategies employed in preserving ecosystems and promoting sustainable wildlife practices.

5.4.3 Scope: Large-scale vs. site-specific.

Wildlife conservation focuses on protecting entire ecosystems and biodiversity, often addressing issues at a large-scale, ensuring species survival and habitat integrity. In contrast, wildlife management is site-specific, involving targeted strategies to regulate wildlife populations and mitigate human-wildlife conflict within defined areas. Efforts in conservation

may include establishing protected areas and legislation, while management might involve habitat restoration or controlled hunting practices tailored to local conditions. By understanding these distinctions, you can better appreciate the various approaches necessary for sustaining wildlife in an ever-changing environment.

5.4.4 Tools: Legislation vs. management plans.

Wildlife conservation focuses on preserving and protecting endangered species and their habitats, ensuring biodiversity and ecological balance. This approach often involves government legislation that establishes protected areas and regulations limiting human activities detrimental to wildlife. In contrast, wildlife management encompasses the practical application of science and policy to maintain or enhance wildlife populations, often including controlled hunting and habitat manipulation. While conservation aims for long-term ecological preservation, management seeks a sustainable coexistence of human activities and wildlife populations, leading to healthier ecosystems for you and future generations.

5.4.5 Stakeholders: Scientists vs. resource managers.

Scientists focus on wildlife conservation, which emphasizes the protection of endangered species and ecosystems to maintain biodiversity. This approach often involves research and data analysis to understand species' needs and habitats, ensuring their long-term survival. In contrast, resource managers prioritize wildlife management, which encompasses the sustainable use of wildlife populations and their habitats for human benefit, such as hunting and tourism. Understanding these differences is crucial for you, as these stakeholders collaborate to balance ecological health with human activities.

5.4.6 Focus: Survival vs. balance and use.

Wildlife conservation emphasizes the intrinsic value of wildlife and ecosystems, aiming to protect species and their habitats against extinction and degradation. In contrast, wildlife management involves the practical approach of regulating

wildlife populations and their interactions with human environments, focusing on sustainability and balance. You might find that conservation often leads to the establishment of protected areas, while management strategies can include hunting regulations and habitat restoration efforts to support both species and human interests. Understanding this distinction is crucial for effective environmental stewardship and ensuring the long-term viability of natural resources.

NB: While the information presented here is for general use only, the details may not be applicable to all scenarios and circumstances. There are bound to be individual regional and country specific differences.

6.What is a Wildlife Management Strategy and Action plan

A strategy is defined as a plan of action designed to achieve specific goals or objectives. . It involves a detailed planning process that considers various factors influencing an organization's ability to reach its goals. Key components of a strategy include:

- **Resource Allocation**: How resources such as time, talent, and budget are utilized.
- **Long-term Goals**: Determining fundamental long-term organizational goals and developing plans to achieve them.
- **Guiding Decisions**: A strategy outlines the plan of action to guide decision-making processes within an organization. In essence, strategy serves as a blueprint for directing activities and achieving desired outcomes.

7. Purpose of a Wildlife Management Strategy/Plan

A wildlife management plan (WMP) serves as a strategic document that outlines the steps necessary for increasing, preserving, or managing wildlife on a specific property or area. It is crucial for ensuring sustainable development, protecting wildlife habitats, and complying with regulatory requirements. A well-structured WMP can help mitigate the impacts of development projects on wildlife and their habitats.

7.1 Key Components of a Wildlife Management Plan

1. **Conservation Goals**: Define the mission, vision, and objectives of the project. Identify the species or habitats being managed and set both short-term and long-term conservation goals.
2. **Habitat Assessment**: Conduct a thorough assessment of the habitat using tools like Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and satellite imagery. This helps in understanding the current state of the ecosystem and identifying areas that require management.
3. **Management Strategies**: Develop strategies for habitat management, which may include:

- **Vegetation Control**: Preserving native plant species while managing invasive ones.
- **Water Resource Management**: Ensuring clean and accessible water sources for wildlife.
- **Human-Wildlife Coexistence**: Implementing measures to reduce conflicts between people and wildlife.

Regulatory Compliance: Ensure that the plan adheres to local and national conservation laws. This is particularly important for development projects that may impact wildlife habitats.

4. **Monitoring and Evaluation** Establish a system for monitoring wildlife populations and habitat conditions to assess the effectiveness of management strategies and make necessary adjustments.

5. **Developing a Wildlife Management Plan**
6. **Engage Stakeholders**: Involve local communities, Indigenous Peoples, and other stakeholders in the planning process to ensure that the plan reflects diverse perspectives and needs.
7. **Documentation**: Include maps, descriptive documents, and records of progress to provide a clear and comprehensive overview of the management strategies and their implementation.
8. **Review and Revise**: Regularly review the plan to incorporate new data, changing conditions, and feedback from stakeholders to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.
   By following these guidelines, you can create a robust wildlife management plan that effectively addresses conservation needs while promoting sustainable land use and biodiversity protection.

8. PURPOSE and why the National Wildlife Management Strategy & Action Plan (2025-2035)

The Gambia's wildlife and wildlife habitats, are an extremely important economic asset. They are central to our tourism industry that attracts over 206,000 (Gambia Tourism Board 2023) tourists to the Gambia every year. Our network of protected areas, approximately 80km long coastal sandy beaches, the navigable river Gambia & its tributaries, and the riverine mangrove forest, support a diversity of wildlife including a unique and impressive avifauna and as well provide a rich array of natural resources and ecosystem services at the centre of people's livelihoods and sustainable development. The Gambia's economy is to a large extent nature-based channeled through plants & animals, is the engine of our farming and livelihood. The ecological services biodiversity provides daily captures rainfall, regulate river flows, supplies nutrients for crops, fodder for lifestock, controls erosion and cleans the air, water and soils we pollute. These services come free of charge, add substantial economic resources to our local and national economic output. However, increasing human population pressure and poverty, habitat loss, rapid development in key pristine wildlife areas, poaching, insecurity and overutilization of resources has accelerated the decline of wildlife population and habitats. Further, all these factors undermine sustainable development. There is therefore an urgent need to address these threats and emerging challenges

to maintain the Gambia's role as a tourist destination. Gambians must jealously guard the irreplaceably valuable natural resources on which the country's sustainable development depends. The purpose of the National Wildlife Management Strategy & Action Plan is to provide an overarching framework that prioritizes, coordinates, and inspires citizens participation for the transformation of the wildlife sector in The Gambia.

The strategy prescribes principles, objectives, standards, indicators, procedures and incentives for the protection, conservation, and management of wildlife resources.

The Gambia has ecosystems that are unique and exceptional in their own rights. However, all these ecosystems are threatened by degradation and intense pressure from increasing human population, commercial and illegal use, climate change and unplanned infrastructure development

9. Vision, Goal, and Objectives

9.1 Vision: Healthy and resilient wildlife populations contributing to ecosystem integrity, livelihoods, and national well-being..This vision recognizes the essential role of a healthy environment in supporting sustainable development in The Gambia. This vision for development – where economic, social, and ecological development are interlinked and mutually supportive – is central to this National Wildlife Management Strategy & Action Plan 2025-2035. Fig 2



Fig2

9.2 Goal: Ensure the sustainable conservation and management of wildlife species and their habitats, supporting biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human livelihoods and well -being.

9.3 Objectives:

Conserve threatened, endemic, and migratory species.

Strengthen habitat protection and restoration to support wildlife populations.

Reduce human-wildlife conflict and illegal exploitation.

Enhance monitoring, research, and knowledge management of wildlife.

Promote community-based wildlife management and sustainable use.

Build capacity for wildlife management at national, regional, and community levels.

Integrate wildlife conservation into sectoral planning (agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism etc.).

10.The Strategic Pillars/Areas:

In building a Wildlife Management Strategy and Action Plan, The Gambia focuses on (4) four pillars and (7) goals (see table 1 below): .

- ✓ **Resilient Ecosystems (species, habitat, ecosystem conservation)**
- ✓ **All Gambians Engaged (Engage & recognize roles, outreach & awareness activities, conservation education**
- ✓ **Decision- making is based on evidence (Need knowledge, information & human capital for decision making)**

- ✓ **Sustainability & Governance (Finance and governance)**

Pillar 1: Resilient Ecosystems Addresses the prioritization, planning and protection of ecosystems and species. This pillar emphasizes on a comprehensive assessment of the status and conservation priorities for ecosystems and species, development of frameworks for integrated planning, and the effective coordination and implementation of species protection and wildlife security in the country. It includes reducing human wildlife conflict and promoting coexistence.

Pillar 2: Engagement by all Gambians Highlights the need to engage all every citizen in recognizing the value of our wildlife and embracing each and everyone's role in its conservation through appropriate collaborative initiatives. This includes outreach and awareness activities, conservation education and curriculum development, and incentive programmes that enhance access to benefits and promote participation by all Gambians.

Pillar 3: Evidence based decision making Emphasizes the importance of knowledge, information, and human capital for successful conservation. This pillar includes strategies to enhance capacity, develop evidence-based decision support tools for adaptive management, and promote data sharing, use, and integrated cross sectoral and multi-scale planning for conservation and sustainable development.

Pillar 4: Sustainability & Governance Outlines a framework and set of priority actions for ensuring the coordination, effective implementation and sustainability of wildlife conservation in The Gambia. This includes the development of an effective governance structure involving communities, districts & regions, the national government, a conservation fund and innovative funding opportunities based on a comprehensive understanding of the value of wildlife to The Gambia's sustainable development.

11. The Strategy Framework

11.1. Theory of Change

This strategy is a roadmap to addressing Gambia's wildlife management & conservation needs. Building on broad consultations, including with districts, regions, local communities, academia, youth, and the private sector, the Strategy highlights a set of seven (7) key goals for conservation success. These goals, and their associated strategies and activities, are designed to catalyze and consolidate our collective efforts to move us from our current state and downward trajectory, to our desired state where wildlife is healthy, resilient, and valued by all.

Wildlife Management & Conservation Strategy

Pillar	Goals	Current State	Desired State
	Habitats & Ecosystems	* Fragmented *Degraded *Declining	*Connected *Resilient *Functional

Resilient Ecosystems		*Vulnerable	
	Species Conservation	*****Narrow focus *Limited knowledge *Over-utilization *Conflict & poaching	*****Biodiversity *Healthy populations *Coexistence
Engagement by all Gambians	Participation & Awareness	*****Limited information & not accessible *No awareness *****Nobody cares	*****High levels of awareness *Engagement & participation
	Access & Sustainable use	*Limited awareness of opportunities	***** All Gambians are aware of opportunities

		*Overutilization *Conflict & poaching	& have access to benefits
Evidence based decision making	Research & Knowledge	***Uncoordinated *Underfunded *Limited sharing & access	*Coordinated relevant research which supports conservation decision making
	Capacity & Training	*Lack of/weak capacity for nature based opportunities, modelling & planning	*Individuals & institutions implementing effective conservation
Governance & Finance	Governance & Finance	*Little support & Investments	*Financially sustainable *Collaborative *Coordinated

		*Lack of/weak coordination & collaboration	*Effective & harmonized

Table 1: Pillars and Goals

12. (1) Pillar : Resilient Ecosystems

Goal: One (1): Maintain & Improve Habitat & Ecosystem integrity

The aim behind this goal is to maintain & improve habitat and Ecosystem integrity to reduce biodiversity loss, protect ecosystem function, enhance connectivity & increase resilience

Strategy one (1.1): Identify Priority Ecosystems for Conservation Action

This strategy is meant to increase understanding of ecosystem functioning through identification & securing of key conservation areas and ecosystems to focus and enhance the effectiveness of conservation investments and interventions

Strategy Two (1.2): Support integrated data driven land-use planning

The idea here is to support integrated data -driven land-use planning at regional, national, district PA & ecosystem level to enhance the protection of wildlife, ecosystem services & reduce biodiversity loss

Strategy Three (1.3): Protect, rehabilitate, & restore wildlife habitats & their

Connectivity. The objective here is to protect, rehabilitate & restore the connectivity of wildlife habitats, including forests to increase the resilience of key habitats & ecosystems.

<u>Activities:</u> Proposed activities under goal 1, relating to priority actions for conservation actions, integrated data driven land use planning & protection, rehabilitation & restoration wildlife habitats & connectivity

1. Determine and secure minimum viable conservation areas and wildlife dispersal area including critical habitats & migration corridors

2. Develop integrated multi-sectoral ecosystem planning frameworks for landuse planning.

3. Implement management plans in protected areas and ecosystems.

4. Secure existing PAs and effectively manage inactive paper parks.

5. Rehabilitate and restore degraded habitats, protected areas and dispersal areas/implement restoration programmes for degraded habitats.

6. Increase land under effective wildlife conservation & management.

7. Increase extent and management effectiveness of marine and coastal ecosystems under PAs/protection**.**

Goal Two (2).: Enhance species protection & management/Species and Habitat Conservation. This goal is aimed at enhancing species protection and management to ensure healthier, more resilient wildlife *communities and populations***.** **Strategy Two: (2.1**) Conservation of endangered and threatened species . The objective here is to sustain and establish tools for the conservation of wildlife species **Strategy Two: (2.2) :** Reduce poaching, over utilization and illegal wildlife trade. The aim here is to reduce poaching, overutilization and illegal wildlife trade and related impacts. **Strategy Three:**

(2.3): Promote coexistence to reduce human wildlife conflict**.** The purpose is to promote coexistence to reduce human wildlife conflict.

Activities: Proposed activities for goal 2, relating to endangered & threatened species conservation, reduction of poaching, illegal wildlife trade, overutilization, reduction of human wildlife conflict etc.

1. Establish and update a national red list for threatened and endangered species.
2. Establish and implement species-specific conservation and management plans.
3. Assess, monitor and report on status of wildlife and their threats.
4. Develop and implement policy guidelines for species conservation interventions.
5. Implement conservation interventions for priority species.
6. Develop an endangered species act for The Gambia.
7. Increase capacity of law enforcement agencies addressing poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

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9. Modernize wildlife security units for coordination and effectiveness.
10. Develop and implement innovative mitigation initiatives to address human wildlife conflict

11. Implement management approaches that promote co- existence including traditional indigenous knowledge.

12. Provide education materials and extension services on human wildlife conflict mitigation.

13. Implement alternative consolation programmes to mitigate human wildlife conflict.

14. Develop sustainable national compensation scheme for loss of property, livestock and crops.

15. Set up anti-venom centres in relevant priority areas/equip existing facilities to avoid wastage and duplication of efforts.

16. Establish database on causes of human wildlife conflict and mitigation measures.

17. Train and equip wildlife officers and communities in rapid response skills for human wildlife conflict mitigation and management.

18. Update **national Red Lists** for mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish

19. Identify and protect **critical habitats and migration corridors**.

`20. Implement species **restoration programs** for degraded habitats.

2. <u>Pillar Two :</u> Engagement by all Gambians**. Goal Three (3):** Participation and awareness raising to increase the awareness and appreciation of wildlife by all Gambians and motivate them to support & take action that enhances their participation in wildlife management & conservation **Strategy Three (3.1):** Awareness & Understanding **with the aim to** Increase awareness & understanding to enhance appreciation and encourage action by all. **Strategy three(3.2):** Partnership and collaboration. The aim is to forster partnership & collaboration among stakeholders to mainstream conservation actions across all sectors of society**. Strategy three (3.3):**Targeted Education & outreach is to engage the public, youth & communities through targeted education, outreach efforts & stewardship opportunities to enhance participation in

conservation a**ctivities: Proposed activities under pillar two (2) and goal three (3) as it relates to participation, awareness, understanding, partnership, collaboration, education & outreach to enhance participation in conservation efforts:**

1. Introduce curriculum at all levels for comprehensive conservation education.

1. Undertake public outreach, awareness and participation programs to engage all Gambians.
2. Engage the general public to experience Gambia's wildlife and nature.
3. Undertake national competition across all regions to select wildlife species unique to each region
4. Designate natural areas and open green spaces for public use in all major city centres.
5. Mainstream biodiversity in private sector through a Green Business award scheme with special reference to the government's National Development Plan.
6. Establish annual wildlife conservation award scheme to recognize achievements in conservation.
7. Host biennial national wildlife expo and investment forum in partnership with The Gambia Tourism Board (GTB).

9. Engage youth in wildlife conservation and environmental stewardship.

2. **<u>Pillar Two (2):</u>** Access and sustainable use **Goal Four (4):** Access, incentives & sustainable use: This goal aims to provide incentives for access & sustainable use of wildlife resources, while ensuring equitable distribution of benefits. **Strategy Four (4.1):** Access & equitable sharing of benefits. This strategy will develop & implement a clear legal framework for equitable sharing of benefits from wildlife resources and biodiversity. **Strategy Four (4.2):** Innovative & strategic investment for sustainable use. This strategy will develop and promote innovative & strategic investment for the sustainable use of wildlife resources and biodiversity. **Cross Sectoral Strategy Four (4.3):**

Marine & coastal natural resource management. Implementation of this strategy will put emphasis on engaging the public, youth & communities through targeted education, outreach efforts & stewardship opportunities to enhance participation in conservation. **Activities: The proposed activities are for implementing goal four (4) as it relates to access, incentives & sustainable use, equitable sharing, innovation strategic investment & marine and coastal resource management.**

1. Develop and gazette regulations to facilitate equitable and effective benefit sharing for sustainable livelihoods.

2. Develop tax-incentives to promote investments in wildlife conservation.

3. Undertake comprehensive assessment for wildlife utilization opportunities.

4. Develop land based incentives to encourage voluntary conservation.

5. Provide extension services to promote opportunities for wildlife based enterprises.

6. Create opportunities for investment and employment of local communities in biodiversity conservation.

7. Pilot and support sustainable utilization and management of marine and coastal resources.

8. Promote innovative approaches for catalyzing investment in marine and coastal ecosystems

3. Pillar three (3) Evidence-based decision making. **Goal five (5)** Research and knowledge is to ensure evidence-based decision making & adaptive management. **Strategy five (5.1):** Using knowledge for adaptive management: The ultimate aim is to support wildlife conservation & management decision & actions with the best available knowledge derived from natural & social sciences and traditional knowledge. **Strategy five (5.2):** Data & information management systems: These will be developed as part of a bioinformatics platform to ensure data quality, enhance sharing &promote access & use, **Strategy five (5.3):** Strengthen coordination & implementation of research, monitoring, & modelling, Goal five is designed to Strengthen the coordination and implementation of research, monitoring and modelling of ecosystems and wildlife, climate, land use and other scenarios to support effective management. **Activities: the activities presented below relates**

to pillar 3, goal five as it relates to research, knowledge, evidence-based decision making, adaptive management, data & informatics management, coordination, implementation, monitoring & modelling .

1. Establish a wildlife research and innovation hub.
2. Upgrade the wildlife and training institute/school at Kafuta.
3. Conduct priority research to improve wildlife conservation and management.
4. Establish architecture for a data sharing and management framework.
5. Develop capacity to establish and manage data information systems for sharing and access.
6. Make research information available to sectors with direct and indirect impacts on wildlife.
7. Establish a think-tank for an interdisciplinary team of experts to advise on research and cnservation co-ordination.
8. Hold bi-annual conservation conference on wildlife conservation & management .
9. Strengthen public-private partnership in biodiversity research and co-ordination.

Goal six (6): Capacity & Training: Capacity of individuals, institutions & communities. This goal will Build the capacity of individuals, institutions, communities and networks – including equipment and technology – to meet current and emerging challenges in wildlife conservation & management, **Strategy six (6.1):** Identify capacity needs & priorities. Here, attention will be geared towards Conducting an assessment of human resource (training and capacity), infrastructure and equipment needs for prioritizing and coordinating training and capacity development programmes. **Strategy six (6.2):** Coordination of training & capacity development, This strategic action will support the coordination of training and capacity development in wildlife conservation and biodiversity management through the training institute/school and a network and

partnership of institutions and exchange programmes across levels and sectors. **Strategy six (6.3):** Implement relevant, appropriate & dynamic training. Implementation of relevant and dynamic training programmes at multiple levels.

Activities: The proposed activities will identify capacity needs, conduct training, assessments etc

1. Develop capacity building strategy for the Ministry and relevant agencies supporting conservation and management of wildlife.

2. Set up inter-sectoral taskforce to develop a 5-year agenda on research, conservation, management and business opportunities

3. Initiate Initiate a conservation leadership program in collaboration with universities.

4. Strengthen universities (UTG, USET etc) to undertake relevant cutting-edge research through exchange programs with external universities.

5. Develop youth programs for various ages to inspire and equip the next generation of conservation leaders

6. Promote peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing among local communities.

7. Pilot curriculum developed under the strategy.

4. **Pillar four (4):** Sustainability & Governance. **Goal seven (7):** Effective governance & sustainable financing. Under this goal an effective governance structure and sustainable financing **framework to support conservation actions and improve accountability and** transparency on conservation financing will be developed. **Strategy seven (7.1):**Develop effective Implementation frameworks & monitoring structures to ensure review of the legal framework, governance structures and develop mechanisms for effective coordination and monitoring. **Strategy seven (7.2):** COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION. This will ensure the effective coordination and implementation of the strategy at national, regional and

ecosystem level working with national partners and regional governments. **Strategy seven (7.3**): Innovative mechanisms for sustainable financing & distribution of funds. The strategy will Innovate new frontiers for financing the conservation of biodiversity thorough trust fund, insurance scheme and partnering with private sector.

Activities: The activities proposed under this pillar and goal will address sustainability & governance issues as they relate to legal frameworks, governance structures, effective coordination, innovative financing for conservation.

1. Implement and review wildlife related policies, laws, regulations and guidelines.
2. Impl6ment M&E and communication portal to track strategy progress and evaluate impact.
3. Support effective co-ordination and implementation of strategy at national, county and local level.
4. Develop and pilot conservation financing mechanisms.

5.Establish national Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund.

6. Undertake natural capital valuation and map economic flows and values of ecosystem services.

7 Establish and support conservation fund raiser events and campaigns.

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8. Promote alternative and diversification of tourism options for greater conservation value

13. Phased Implementation (2025–2035)

Phase	Years	Key Focus Areas
Phase 1: Foundations	2025 – 2027	Update Red Lists; identify critical habitats; establish community committees; initiate ranger training; start baseline monitoring.
Phase 2: Scaling Up	2028 – 2031	Expand habitat protection; implement anti-poaching measures; develop community-based sustainable use programs; scale monitoring and research.
Phase 3: Consolidation & Sustainability	2032 – 2035	Institutionalize monitoring; ensure sustainable funding; restore degraded habitats; integrate adaptive management and policy coordination; human-wildlife conflict reduction.

14. Action Plan Matrix

Strategic Area	Key Actions	Timeline	Lead Institutions	Partners
Species & Habitat Conservation	Update Red Lists; identify critical habitats; restoration programs	2025 – 2035	Forestry Dept, EPA	UTG, NGOs, CBD Secretariat

Law Enforcement & Anti-Poaching	Ranger training; surveillance; intelligence networks; legal support	2025 – 2035	EPA, Forestry	Police, NGOs, CBOs
Human-Wildlife Conflict	Conflict mitigation plans; fencing; compensation schemes; community engagement	2025 – 2035	Local Gov’t, EPA	NGOs, communities
Research & Monitoring	Wildlife surveys; indicator species monitoring; NBIS reporting	2025 – 2035	EPA, UTG	Universities, CSOs
Community Engagement & Sustainable Use	Co-management committees; eco-tourism; gender-inclusive livelihoods	2025 – 2035	Local Gov’t, EPA	NGOs, private sector
Capacity Development	Training in GIS, population surveys, veterinary care, policy	2025 – 2030	EPA, Forestry	UTG, NGOs
CEPA & Policy Integration	Awareness campaigns; sectoral integration; citizen science	2025 – 2035	EPA, MoBSE	Media, NGOs

15. Capacity & Training Needs (human capacity)

Rangers, eco-guards, and veterinary staff.

Community wildlife monitors and liaison officers.

Police officers for wildlife planning and enforcement.

Research staff for ecological monitoring and species assessments.

CEPA and awareness facilitators for schools and communities.

16. Social & Environmental Safeguards

Free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) for community-managed areas.

Equitable benefit-sharing, particularly for women and youth.

Adaptive management to prevent unintended ecological or social impacts.

Human-wildlife coexistence strategies to safeguard livelihoods.

17. Indicative Budget Considerations (USD, 10 years)

Category	Estimated Cost (10 yrs)	% of Total
Species & Habitat Conservation	$6,000,000	25%
Law Enforcement & Anti-Poaching	$5,000,000	20%
Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation	$2,500,000	10%
Research & Monitoring	$4,000,000	17%
Community Engagement & Sustainable Use	$3,500,000	15%
Capacity Development	$2,000,000	8%
CEPA & Policy Integration	$1,500,000	5%

Contingency/Risk Buffer	$500,000	2%
Total	**$25,000,000**	100%

18. Monitoring & Evaluation

Indicators:

Population trends of key species.

Area of habitats under protection.

Number of rangers trained and operational.

Trend & Number of human-wildlife conflict incidents reduced/increased.

Community participation in co-management and sustainable use.

Reporting: Quarterly , semi annual or Annual progress reports; mid-term review 2030; final evaluation 2035; CBD/GBF reporting.

19. Expected Outcomes

Stabilized or increasing populations of threatened and endemic species.

Improved habitat quality and connectivity.

Reduced poaching and illegal exploitation.

Enhanced community engagement and benefit-sharing.

Strengthened capacity for wildlife management across government and communities.

Integration of wildlife concerns into national and sectoral policies realized.

Resource Mobilization strengthened and realized

South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation achieved/promoted

Research fully funded & evidence-based decision making fully integrated/mainstreamed into development

20. Phased 10-Year Costed Budget for Wildlife Management

Category	Key Activities	Phase 1 (2025 – 2027)	Phase 2 (2028 – 2031)	Phase 3 (2032 – 2035)	Total (USD)	% of Total
1. Species & Habitat Conservation	Update Red Lists; identify critical habitats; habitat restoration; species recovery programs	$1,800,000	$2,100,000	$2,100,000	$6,000,000	24%
2. Law Enforcement & Anti-Poaching	Ranger recruitment/training; patrols; surveillance equipment; intelligence	$1,500,000	$1,700,000	$1,800,000	$5,000,000	20%

	networks; legal enforcement					
3. Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation	Conflict monitoring; fencing/barriers; compensation schemes; community conflict response	$800,000	$850,000	$850,000	$2,500,000	10%
4. Research, Monitoring & Knowledge Management	Wildlife surveys; population monitoring; data analysis; reporting to NBIS; ecological studies	$1,200,000	$1,400,000	$1,400,000	$4,000,000	16%
5. Community Engagement &	Co-management committees; eco-tourism; regulated hunting/fishing; gender-inclusive livelihoods; CEPA	$1,000,000	$1,250,000	$1,250,000	$3,500,000	14%

Sustainable Use						
6. Capacity Development	Training in GIS, population surveys, veterinary care, wildlife management, policy & enforcement	$600,000	$700,000	$700,000	$2,000,000	8%
7. CEPA & Policy Integration	Awareness campaigns; citizen science; integration into sectoral policies; school programs	$400,000	$550,000	$550,000	$1,500,000	6%
8. Contingency / Risk Buffer	Climate impacts, invasive species, disease outbreaks	$200,000	$150,000	$150,000	$500,000	2%
Total		**$7,500,000**	**$8,700,000**	**$8,800,000**	**$25,000,000**	100%

21. Phase-Wise Notes

Phase 1: Foundations (2025–2027) – $7.5M

Update Red Lists, identify critical habitats, and initiate species recovery.

Recruit and train rangers/eco-guards; establish patrol routes and enforcement protocols.

Launch baseline wildlife monitoring programs.

Begin community engagement and co-management committee formation.

Start human-wildlife conflict mitigation pilot projects.

Phase 2: Scaling Up (2028–2031) – $8.7M

Expand habitat restoration and species recovery programs.

Implement anti-poaching strategies with improved intelligence and surveillance.

Scale community-based sustainable use initiatives and eco-tourism programs.

Expand wildlife monitoring and research; integrate data into NBIS.

Strengthen conflict mitigation and compensation schemes.

Phase 3: Consolidation & Sustainability (2032–2035) – $8.8M

Consolidate habitat protection and recovery programs.

Ensure sustainable financing for ranger deployment and community programs.

Integrate adaptive management practices into policy and planning.

Institutionalize community-based monitoring, CEPA, and sustainable wildlife use.

Conduct final evaluations and ensure compliance with CBD/GBF reporting.

22. Indicative Unit Costs / Examples

Ranger salaries, training, and equipment: $50,000–$70,000 per team/year.

Habitat restoration (reforestation, wetland restoration): $50,000–$100,000/site/year.

Species recovery programs (breeding, translocation, monitoring): $100,000/year.

Community-based sustainable use initiatives: $10,000–$25,000/community/year.

CEPA campaigns (schools, radio, social media, citizen science): $150,000–$200,000 per phase.

23. Expected Outcomes by 2035

Stabilized or increasing populations of key wildlife species (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish).

Reduced poaching and illegal exploitation.

Effective co-management and sustainable use by communities in >80% of targeted sites.

Improved habitat quality, connectivity, and ecosystem resilience.

Strengthened institutional, technical and human/ community capacity in wildlife management.

Human-wildlife conflict incidents reduced by 50–70%.

More/Greater win-win South-South and Triangular cooperation agreements implemented successfully