FISHERY COUNTRY PROFILE	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	FID/CP/GAM
PROFIL DE LA PÊCHE PAR PAYS	Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture	
RESUMEN INFORMATIVO SOBRE LA PESCA POR	Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación	December 2007

THE REPUBLIC OF GAMBIA

I. General geographical and economic data

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Area:	10,600 km²
Water area:	2,100 km²
Shelf area:	4,000 sq km²
Length of continental coastline:	Ca 70 km
Population (2006):	1.66 million
GDP at purchaser's value (2006):	510,000,000 $US
GDP per head (year): (2006)	280 $US
Agricultural GDP (2006):	9,741,370 $US
Fisheries GDP (2006):	677,926 $US

II Fisheries Data

2003	Production	Imports	Exports	Total Supply	Per Caput Supply
	tonnes live weight				kg/year
Fish for direct human consumption	36,864	4,003	950	39,917	28.0
Fish for animal feed and other purposes	-	-	-	-	-

Estimated Employment (2006):	
(i) Primary sector (including aquaculture):	6000
(ii) Secondary sector:	32,000
Trade (2006):	
Value of fisheries imports:	365,000 $US
Value of fisheries exports:	919,000 $US

III .Fishery sector structure

1. Overall fishery sector.

The fisheries sector is divided into two (2) sub-sectors: Artisanal Fishery sub-sector and Industrial Fishery sub-sector. The artisanal sub-sector comprises the Marine, Inland. Commercial shrimp aquaculture and small scale aquaculture are practiced along the river.

2. Marine sub-sector

The Industrial Fishery sub-sector is characterized as high capital investments involving the use of industrial fishing vessels and modern on-shore fish processing establishments. Industrial fishing activities are concentrated along the Atlantic coast. The major players in the sub-sector are private Gambian entrepreneurs in partnership with private investors from countries such as Greece, Spain, Italy, China, South Korea and Holland. The Industrial sub-sector provides permanent and part-time employment to between 1,500 to 2,000 people.

There are 20 locally registered fishing companies operating in The Gambia of which 9 operate fish processing establishments and five are certified to export to EU countries. Industrial fishing activities are carried out in coastal and marine waters up to the limits of the EEZ by industrial fishing vessels comprising mainly of fishing trawlers targeting the limited demersal species with preference for cephalopods, shrimps and other high value species (barracuda, groupers, snappers etc). In 2007, a total number of 32 industrial fishing vessels operated in Gambian waters; 15 are shrimp trawlers, 17 for fish\cephalopod trawlers.

The industrial fisheries sub-sector is capital intensive and operates mainly in the coastal waters of the Gambia. Industrial fishing is very limited as almost all establishments are without fishing vessels. Most of fishing vessels operating in our waters are foreign owned which had either enter the fishery through joint venture or through fishing agreements such as the Reciprocal Maritime Fishing Agreement between the Gambia and Senegal or compensatory agreement. These foreign operated vessels do not land their catches in the country but in foreign ports. However, there are plans to construct a Fisheries Port in Banjul under the ADB/BADEA funded artisanal Fisheries Development. Fish production by the sub-sector is recorded by the Fisheries Observer Programme (each vessels carries an observer). Annual industrial production is seen to be declining in recent years.

In 2005, industrial fisheries production was estimated at 4 616.3 tonnes with the bulk (2 221. 4 tonnes) coming from the demersal fishery followed by others and small pelagics with 591 tonnes and 588 tonnes respectively.

The declining trend in volumes and values of exports is mainly as a result of poor performance by fishing companies and also the fact that the exports do not include fish caught in Gambian waters but landed in foreign ports. There are also cases of under reporting of exports across the borders.

I Catch Profile

Fishing sites along the coast are somewhat specialized in certain fisheries operations. For example Gunjur, Tanji, Old Jeshwang and Bakau are more into bonga fishery than other sites. In 2006, Gunjur recorded the highest bonga catch, over 4800 tonnes followed by Tanji with just under 2700 tonnes. Tanji landed more sardinella (both species) than bonga. Sardinella landings for Tanji were estimated at 3400 tonnes.

Total Catches, Effort and Catch Per Effort By Type of Gear Used For the Atlantic Stratum For 2006

Type of Gear Used	Total Catches Kilogram
Encircling Net	15,906,258
Set/Bottom Gill Net	11,138,682
Drift Gill Net	15,150
Stownet	238,442
Hook and Line	170,523
Purse Seine	4,618,191
Other Net	888,650
Total	32,975,896

II. Landing sites

Total Catches for main landing sites 2005 and 2006 for the Atlantic Stratum*

	Total Catches Kilogram		
Stratum/Year	**2005**	**2006**	**Percentage Change %**
Total Atlantic Stratum	**30,168,669**	**32,975,896**	**9.3**
Kartong	510,433	548,853	7.5
Gunjur	8,368,638	9,402,964	12.4
Sanyang	1,714,363	1,648,426	(3.8)
Bato Kunku	327,123	308,607	(5.7)
Tanji	6,454,160	7,334,273	13.6
Brufut	4,412,365	4,957,713	12.4
Bakau	2,903,745	3,226,383	11.1

Old Jeshwang	2,705,782	2,505,354	(7.4)
Banjul	2,428,770	2,728,956	12.4
Barra	343,289	314,367	(8.4)

III. Fishing production means

The Artisanal Fishery sub-sector is characterized as low cost and labour-intensive, and fishing operations involve the use of traditional fishing crafts and less sophisticated fishing gears, methods and techniques and processing technologies than in the industrial fishery sub-sector. Artisanal fishing and related activities are dispersed throughout the country in marine, brackish and freshwater zones. There are approximately 155 artisanal fish landing sites within the country, 10 landing sites along the Atlantic coast and the remaining sites are found along the River Gambia and its tributaries. The sub-sector provides direct and indirect employment to between 25.000 to 30,000 people. The major players are fisherfolks of diverse nationalities: Gambians, Senegalese, Ghanaians, Guineans and Malians

The two most important fishing gears in the artisanal fisheries in the Gambia are encircling/surround gillnet and Set/bottom gillnet. These gears are used in fishing operations all year round and are responsible for most fish caught. Surround gillnet target small pelagic fish, particularly bonga which is an estuarine species while Set/bottom gillnet target a wide range of demersal and sub-demersal fish species.

The total fish landed from both the artisanal and industrial sub-sectors were estimated at nearly 40 000 tonnes in 2006. Out of this, the Artisanal contributed approximately 37 000 tonnes (93 %) with about 3000 tonnes (7%) from the industrial fisheries. Artisanal fishing is a whole year activity with clupeids constituting the bulk of the catch. *Ethmalosa frimbriata* (Bonga/Shad) is the main species landed by the artisanal fishermen (13,187 tonnes or 36%). The Sardinella fishery is becoming very important with landings of the two species, sardinella aurita (round sardinella) and sardinella maderensis (flat sardinella) estimated at 4,940 tonnes (13.4 %) .

IV. Main Resources

The Gambia has a continental shelf area of 4000 sq. km and an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 10,500 sq. km. The marine waters are part of the Sahelian Upwelling Marine Ecoregion (SUME). Seasonal upwellings and fluvial outflows make SUME a highly productive area with rich pelagic and demersal fisheries resources**.** It also contains important habitats for a number of mammals and threatened species including five species of marine turtles and the critically endangered monk seal. Sharks, rays and marine mammals such as the bottlenose dolphin, the Atlantic humpback dolphin, manatees and hippopotamuses are also found here.

The marine waters of The Gambia are believed to be rich in terms of species abundance and diversity. The productivity of these waters is enhanced by the flow of nutrients from the River Gambia (an estuary attracting fish for feeding and spawning). The effect of the up-welling system observed in the Northwest Africa region has significant influence on the abundance and spatio-temporal distribution and recruitment of notably, the small pelagic fishes and aquatic resources in general. The upwelling phenomenon starts at the northern plateau of Senegal in November thus moving south and attaining maximum effect on the Senegambia plateau in March/April. The two opportune natural effects accord the Gambia the status as one of the world richest fishing nations with fish species of economic importance. Worthy of mention here is concern about the health of the demersal fish stocks expressed by many and from many quarters.

The estuarine zone of the River Gambia is also believed to be rich in shrimps, solefish, threadfins and other marine fish species of economic importance. The prolific mangrove vegetation offers good potential for an oyster fishery. The blue card is also believed to be plentiful in this area. The fisheries resources in the freshwater zone are not well known because no studies have as yet been undertaken but there are species of commercial exploitation potential such as the *Clarias spp*. (kono-kono). The vast area of the floodplains of the freshwater zone is also very ideal for the development of commercial aquaculture especially within the rice growing areas.

V. Management applied to main fisheries

The Plan outlined the national policy objectives for the development of the fisheries sector as follows:

- to effect a rational and long-term utilization of the fisheries;
- to improve the nutritional standards of the population;
- to increase employment opportunities in the sector;
- to increase the net foreign exchange earnings and,
- to expand Gambian participation in the sector.

For the attainment of the policy objectives, the Strategic Plan outlined the following strategies:

- to strengthen the operational capacity of the Fisheries Department in terms of basic infrastructure and manpower;
- to expand and strengthen the control, monitoring and surveillance mechanism and its institutional linkages to adequately protect the territorial seas and the land areas of the country;
- to facilitate the provision of ashore facilities such as a fisheries port, ice plants, cold storage facilities and means of fresh fish distribution and marketing etc.
- .to develop the commercial potentials of high value crustaceans and shellfishes such as crabs, oysters and shrimps;

- to intensify human resources development through external and local training programmes for Fisheries Department staff as well as for the various groups of operators within the artisanal and industrial fisheries sub-sectors;
- to regulate fishing methods, gears and fishing intensity to the regenerative capacity of the resource base especially for the commercially attractive demersal fish species, the cephalopods and shrimps that are highly susceptible to depletion;

The Artisanal Fishery is an open-access fishery and entry is unrestricted. A fishing licence and registration scheme for artisanal operators is to be re-introduced shortly. Entry into the Industrial Fishery is controlled and operates on an application/approval system and a licence and registration scheme.

1. Technical measures

There are no closed seasons observed in the fishery of the Gambia. However, in the Inland sector fishermen themselves observed a closed season for the fishing of catfish in the tributaries from November to January every year. No vessels other than canoes shall fish within seven nautical miles of the low water mark. The following restrictions on the use of fishing gear are in use:

a) no trawling shall be undertaken in the waters of the river Gambia;

b) No gill nets shall be set in the waters of the River Gambia within two nautical miles of Dog Island and Fort James Island and

c) No beach seines shall be used in the fisheries waters.

2. Input controls

The fisheries Department since 1996 has been reducing the number of shrimp vessels and every year the number shrimp vessels are between 15-19. The mesh size authorised are 50mm for shrimp vessels and 70mm for fish and cephalopods.

Community participation in fisheries resources management has not been formally provided for in the fisheries legislation and therefore has no legal basis. However, traditional fisheries management systems are in place in certain parts of the country and are known to be quite successful in managing The management of the mudfish fishery of the Central River Division is an example of a very successful traditional fisheries management system that surely guarantees the sustainability of the mudfish resources with social and economic benefits to fishers and their dependents. There are no restrictions on number of boats or fishing trips. However, in some fishing villages fishermen limit the number of canoes for outing especially those targeting the pelagic species Ethmalosa (Bonga). This is mainly for economic reasons rather than as a conservation measure.

3. Output controls:

There is no TAC system applied in the Gambia.

4. Economic incentives taxes on output or inputs

The country has a liberalized economy and a unique geographical location for easy accessibility to European, American and Asian markets by air and sea. Customs and Excise duties are not levied on exports of seafood products, and on the importation of capital equipment and machinery and packaging materials. There is no subsidy on fuel. There are no foreign exchange restrictions.

VI. Fishermen communities

The growth in the numbers of fisherfolk and fishing communities is determined by changes in the components of demographic change (migration, fertility, mortality) and the dynamics in composition of rural livelihoods. Along the coastal areas of the Gambia fisheries is perceived to be a profitable undertaking and non-fisherfolk migrate into coastal communities to make a living in the artisanal fisheries.

In the Gambia major coastal villages has witnessed an influx of families who came to settle permanently. This has resulted in the scarcity of farm land and the people have no alternative but engage in fishing and related activities..

3. Inland sub-sector

The inland comprises Lower River North Bank (LRNB), Lower River South Bank (LRSB), Upper River North Bank (URNB) and Upper River South Bank (URSB). Although the inland is not fully covered during frame surveys, catch and effort data collection is only being “adequately” covered (2006). In 2006, fish production in the inland ranges from 2 506 tonnes for the LRSB, 811.4 tonnes for the URNB to 604 tonnes for the LRNB. The total effort put in by the fishermen in 2006 was estimated at 66 871 fishing trips compared to more productive ACS with 87 400 fishing trips.

The main fishing gears used in the inland sector are bottom set gillnets, traps, loglines, cast nets, and stow nets for shrimp fishing. Shrimp fishing is done mainly along the river Gambia.

4. Recreation sub-sector

In the Gambia sport fishing is practiced mainly by tourists. The fisheries Act 1991 stipulates that a licence should be obtained for sport fishing but at present the operators obtain permission from the Tourism authorities.

5. Aquaculture sub-sector

There is huge potential to develop commercial and small-scale aquaculture. The extensive flood plains in the Central River Division (CRD) are ideal for low cost aquaculture. Private investors can engage in commercial aquaculture and farmers can supplement incomes from farming by engaging in small-scale aquaculture in fish ponds especially in the rice growing areas where feed (rice bran) is available at almost no cost. The Scan Gambia commercial shrimp farming project has been revived under new management and ownership with very encouraging results. The hatchery at Sanyang village and the farms in Pirang village are operating satisfactorily; the waters at both sites have been tested and found to be free from pollution and other forms of contamination. A modern processing factory at the Pirang site is operating satisfactory. Oyster culture using the rack culture has potential for development of an oyster fishery.

IV. Post harvest use

The post-harvest sector is a critical entry point for poverty alleviation in fisheries in the Gambia. It comprises the following activities which are full-time livelihoods in poor communities along the coastline areas and water bodies: handling, trading, processing storing, and marketing of fresh and processed fish. The actors are majority women, (more than 60% of the workforce) and work in several informal private institutions.

Most post harvest actors combine other income generating activities according to the season and many of the post harvest sector workers find seasonal, occasional involvement at different stages of the post harvest chain.

A comprehensive list of Stakeholders in the post harvest fisheries sector include: artisanal fishermen, artisanal fish processors (dryers and smokers), fish unloaders, fish mongers and oyster harvesters.

1. Fish Utilization

The fisheries sector is the main provider of animal protein in the diets of many Gambian households because of the relative availability and affordability of fish compared to meat. National per capita fish consumption is 25 kg compared to the African average of 8.2 kg. Fish and fishery products in the Gambia serve different markets: Domestic rural, urban and regional and international export markets contributes to an increasingly expanding market. Fresh and hot smoked fish products tend to serve the urban markets mainly. Smoked-dry and small quantity of fresh fish serves the rural and regional export markets, while low to medium moisture content hot-smoked fish products serve the domestic urban, European and American markets on small-scale operations.

1. Fish markets

The markets (national or international) are described in terms of the final destination of the fishery products, by geographical location and type of consumers. Fish marketing system in the Gambia is generally rather complex because of the range of different markets served, the assortment of products offered, the large number of different operating capacities and modes. Also, the various direct and indirect linkages between producer and consumer.

Marketing Channels are mostly handled by four types of groups:-

a). Fish brokers (" bana banas") who buy smaller quantities of fish from fishermen at the landing beaches and transport it on bicycles or mobilettes. The scope of operation of this category is usually 2 to 10 miles radius with less than 200 kgs of fish (carried in baskets with ice) per trip. They supply fish to the immediate environment and nearby villages. They also sell to individual consumers en route to the markets.

b) Retailers normally jointly hire Land rovers and trucks, buy 2-3 tons of fish with ice from fishermen at the landing beaches and distributed to inland or neighbouring markets within the urban areas. Retailers display their fish on cement tables provided by markets authorities for sale to consumers or resell to retail buyers.

c) Wholesale traders buy 5-10 tons of fish from fishermen at the landings beaches. They deliver their fish to central points in townships and inland markets. They use insulated trucks for distribution of fresh fish and open trucks for processed products. These are sold mainly to private traders dealing primarily in fresh, smoked and dried small pelagic fish species.

d) Fish marketing is structured according to the basic division in the production sector. The bulk of the catch is marketed fresh, while some are smoked and sundried to be sold.

Estimated Percentage market share of the different fish and fishery products

Market	Products	Estimated share (%)
Urban markets	Fresh Hot smoked Smoked-dry Dried	90% 90% 2-5% 30%
Rural markets	Hot smoked Smoked-dry Dried	7% 35% 30%
Regional Export	Fresh small pelagic Smoked-dry bonga Dried fish	10% 80% 70%
European and American Export	Hot smoked bonga	3%

Source: Njai and Njie,2003

The fishermen seem remarkably homogenous in their habits of selling their catches: 94% of the fishermen sell all or part of their catch to private traders such as wholesalers, retailers, brokers & bana banas); 61% of the fishermen sell their catch on the beach directly to consumers; 75% sell the catch directly to processors; 1% sell their catch at the market and finally 30% sell it through family members (*source: M. Bah, 2003, Costs and Earnings in Artisanal Fisheries in The Gambia).*

The main fish products of the industrial fishing companies are in fresh and frozen forms including frozen crustaceans, finfish fillets and cephalopods. Export destinations are mainly to E.U. countries, Asia and America. Products are packaged and labelled under the brand name of a fishing company and the certification number of the fishing company (which is specific to the company) is also indicated.

V. Fishery sector performance

1. Economic role of fisheries in the national economy

Contribution of fishing to the economy (GDP)

Fishing contributes on average 3% of GDP but this has been fluctuating over the years. In 2001, contribution to GDP dropped significantly and has until now not picked up to the 1998/99 levels. Although this is merely small, great importance is attached to the development of the sector as rain fed agriculture based economy is failing.

Fisheries Contribution to GDP

Year	Fish & Fishery Products (metric Tonnes)	GDP (metric Tonnes)	% of GDP
1996	81,005.00	3,261,207.00	2.5%
1997	89,646.00	3,352,678.00	2.7%
1998	95,130.00	3,198,601.00	3.0%
1999	102,739.00	3,443,300.00	3.0%
2000	88,355.00	3,517,846.00	2.5%
2001	48,495.00	3,800,460.00	1.3%
2002	79,788.00	4,011,451.00	2.0%
2003	82,046.00	4,303,475.00	1.9%
2004	96,814.00	4,381,447.00	2.2%

(source: Central Statistics Department report, 2004)

2. Demand

With further population growth, increasing urbanisation and high cost of other animal proteins the already high demand for fish will continue to rise.

3. Supply

The fisheries sector plays a significant role from a nutritional standpoint, being the main supplier of animal protein in the diets of most Gambians who cannot afford to buy meat. Gross estimated national consumption of fish is about 28 kg per person annually compared to 8.2 kg (Diouf et al.) per average African. However, fish consumption is much higher in the coastal region than in the interior of the country.

The commercial opportunities lie in the domestic and export markets both of which have room to absorb additional quantities/volumes. Per capita fish consumption can increase with increased access to fish by people everywhere in the country guaranteed by the appropriate facilities and services such as insulated/refrigerated vehicles for fish distribution and marketing and cold storage facilities to preserve fish and reduce spoilage and these investments will occur only if investors see a positive return.

4. Trade

Trade in fisheries products has been conducted within the framework of the liberal and free market policy of the Government. Over 90% of industrial production is for export to mainly countries of the European Union (E. U.) such as Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, U. K., Italy and France. Ghana, Nigeria, the U. S. A., Canada and Hong Kong are also major importers of Gambian fishery products.

5. Food Security

Fisheries products in the Gambia are an important source of animal protein for the population. It is more accessible than animal protein in some disadvantaged local communities, especially those near fishing zones.

The artisanal fisheries sub-sector in the Gambia provides over 90% of fish consumed locally in fresh, smoked or dry-salted product forms

6. Employment

It is estimated that the artisanal fisheries sub-sector provides direct and indirect employment to 25-30,000 people and, the industrial fisheries sub-sector provides employment to between 1,500–2,000 people. The livelihoods of an estimated 200,000 people are critically dependent on fisheries and related activities (Mendy, 2003).

Although the fisheries sector is dominated by foreign fishers, its contribution to the GDP is estimated at 2.5 percent (Central Statistics).

7. Rural development

An assessment of the outputs of fisheries development programmes and projects will show that Gambian participation in the fisheries sector has increased considerably and many more Gambian are now deriving their livelihoods from the sector as fishermen, fish processors, fish traders, mechanics, boat builders etc. Petty trading of all sorts of goods, restaurants and canteens, fuel depots are now part of the community fishing centres along the coast; these are economic spin-offs generated by the fisheries sector and benefiting other communities not engaged in fishing and related activities.

VI. Fishery sector development

1.Constraints

Constraints facing fisheries development in the Gambia can be classified under four headings namely, infrastructure, technical, financial and institutional:

Infrastructure constraints

- Absence of a fishing harbour and lack of sufficient Gambian registered coastal trawlers and purse seiners to harvest the resources.
- Lack of adequate infrastructure with appropriate fish handling and storage facilities for the artisanal sub-sector to reduce post harvest losses.
- Fisheries sector remains dominated by foreign nationals.
- Lack of efficient patrol boats and other means of effective monitoring, control and surveillance of the country's territorial waters.

Technical Constraints

- Lack of local personnel with technical competence to man fishing vessels as skippers and engineers.
- Inadequate knowledge of the biology, population dynamics and annual sustainable yield of the inland (riverine) stocks, especially species of high economic importance.

Financial Constraints

- Access to micro-finance facilities for artisanal operators is constrained by high interest rates of loans.
- The industrial sub-sector is constrained by the lack of access to both working capital and long term lending. Prevailing high interest rates at the commercial banks are unfavourably affecting the development of the sector in general.

Institutional Constraints

- Inadequate budgetary provisions limit capacity of the Fisheries Department to carry out research and provide statistics extensively; advance product development and quality control; and mobilize extension staff for monitoring, control and surveillance of artisanal fishing villages and landing sites.
- Insufficient number of trained personnel

2. Development prospects/Strategies

In terms of the biological opportunity, the demersal fish, as stated, are apparently being over-exploited. They require more rigorous management to limit the levels extracted particularly by industrial vessels and allow the artisanal fisheries sub-sector to sustain and increase its contribution to the economy. The potential of the pelagic fish resources remain very important as additional quantities of Bonga fish (Ethmalosa) can be exploited and Sardinella alone offers a virtually untouched maximum sustainable yield (MSY) of 80,000 metric tons per year and other pelagic fish species still offer additional quantities for harvesting.

The fishing communities have registered concern over the observed declining state of fish resources and catches. This is ascribed to increases in fishing intensity and irresponsible fishing practices by the fishing trawlers and foreign artisanal fishermen. PRSP II will focus particular attention to sound monitoring, control and surveillance system to safeguard the fisheries and marine resources. Training of Gambian fishermen will also be intensified to adopt responsible fishing practices.

Strategic Priorities

- Increase Gambian participation in artisanal fisheries through training and provision of fishing gears; to improve fishing techniques;
- Develop on-land preservation and storage facilities for increase production and reduce post harvest losses;
- Systematically reduce the number of licensed foreign trawlers to avoid over exploitation of the demersal resources.
- The use of indiscriminate fishing methods and practices in coastal and inland waters to be strictly prohibited by enforcing the law.
- Fast track the implementation of the fishing harbour project to ensure that all licensed vessels land their catches in the country.
- Provide better incentive packages for industrial fishing companies.
- Create opportunities and promote aquaculture by assisting in the establishment of fish ponds on tidal rice fields along the river;
- Encourage commercial banks and micro finance institutions to provide favourable investment finance to the industrial and artisanal fisheries sub-sectors
- Strengthen the capacity of the Fisheries Department to enable it manage, monitor and coordinate the fishing industry.

2. Research

The Gambia has no Fisheries research institution but the Research and Development Unit of the Fisheries Department collaborates with research institutions in the sub-region and beyond.

The sustainable development of the fisheries sector must rely on a sound research-based management system that recognizes the biological limitations of the resource base. Management actions/measures will be consistent with the optimum exploitation and utilization of the fisheries resources, therefore the need for adequate and up-to-date knowledge on the state of the resources.

Given the fact that the Fisheries Department is lacking in resources (human, financial, material) to undertake scientific research on its own, it is indispensable that collaboration is maintained with the Nansen Programme (Norway/FAO) to obtain information on the pelagic fisheries resources on an annual basis. Another benefit is that the participation of Gambian scientists in the surveys has built local capacity in this important area. The collaborative studies with the IRD of France on the resources of the estuarine area should also continue.

The Fisheries Department collaborated with the Department of Planning to conduct baseline studies and also with the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) to conduct socioeconomic studies on the fisheries sector as well as stock assessment and other biological studies.

5.Education

This concerns institutional strengthening in the form of local and external training programmes for senior and middle level personnel of the Fisheries Department and strengthening the operational capacity of the institution; training of private operators in both sub-sectors in all areas to bring about sustainability and viability of business concerns; establishment and strengthening of fisherfolk organizations; numeracy and literacy; strengthening linkages among and between agencies/institutions; improving the legal framework for fisheries development and management (empowerment and decentralization).

The fishermen training programme as component of past projects trained many young Gambians in various fishing techniques. The Maritime training Institute is also training Gambians as sailors to work on board fishing vessels and merchant vessels. There are plans to in-cooperate fisheries in the university curriculum.

6. Foreign aid

Within the last decade, the Government of The Gambia has implemented and is still implementing projects and programmes that are making significant contributions towards the realization of the sectoral development objectives. The artisanal fisheries development projects in Bakau, Tanji and Gunjur as grant aid from the Government of Japan have transformed small-scale artisanal fishing and related activities into activities that are generating significant economic exchanges and are bringing about social and economic development in fishing communities. Negotiations are at an advance stage with the Government of Japan for the construction a fish market in Brikama Town. This project will improve fish preservation and reduce post harvest losses.

The ADB/BADEA/Gambia Government funded project which is being implemented since 2003 has several important components including: the establishment of a fisheries port in Banjul, a central fish market, a credit programme, scientific research, capacity building, inland fisheries development, and monitoring, control and surveillance.

The Gambia is also benefiting from the FAO Regional Safety at sea project and the Proposed World Bank/Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission Regional Fisheries Project.

The development programmes and projects implemented by Government constitute a series of planned interventions/actions towards the attainment of the national development policy objectives for the fisheries sector viz: generation of employment opportunities; increase domestic fish consumption to improve nutritional status of the population; increase revenue and foreign exchange earnings; increase Gambian participation in the sector, and increase fisheries contribution to GDP and the socioeconomic development of the country.

VII. Fishery sector institutions

The Department of State for Fisheries, Water Resources and National assembly Matters is the highest Government institution responsible for the development and management of Fisheries and water resources sector of The Gambia. The primary role of the Fisheries and Water resources sector is the judicious and sustainable exploitation and utilization of the resources base so as to conserve biological diversity and enhance its productivity to benefit present and future generations of Gambians.

In the execution of its functions, the Department of State is supported by two technical Departments namely: Fisheries Department and Water Resources Department.). These institutions were established by Government to regulate the use of Fisheries and Water resources and assure their effective and efficient management on a sustainable basis. The Department of State has responsibility to make policy pronouncements and the technical Departments have responsibility to implement policies.

The Fisheries Department.

The Fisheries Department is the principal public technical agency for the administration and implementation of the national fisheries policies and management plans within the overall natural resources management mandate of the Department of State for Fisheries, Water Resources and National Assembly Matters has overall responsibility for pronouncement of national fisheries policy. The Fisheries Department has the duties and responsibilities to manage all aspects of fisheries, improve the social and economic conditions of fisherfolk communities through training, improvement and mechanization of fishing crafts, modernization of fishing gears and equipment and fishing techniques, fish distribution, development of industrial fishing, research, fisheries statistical data collection and analysis, conservation and control.

There are many actors and stakeholders in the fisheries and natural resources sector of The Gambia including private operators, Government agencies and institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations, Community Based Organizations, Development partners, Local Government Agencies and Municipalities. A comprehensive list of Stakeholders in the fisheries and natural resources sector include: artisanal fishermen, artisanal fish processors (dryers and smokers), fish dealers, boat builders and fisheries mechanics; fuelwood cutters and sellers etc. from the coastal and inland regions of the country, private entrepreneurs in the industrial fishery sub-sector and fish factory workers, micro finance institutions, Local Government agencies and Municipalities, Village Development Committees and United Nations Agencies and Development partners.

Internet Links to the National fisheries administration and research institutions

gamfish@gamtel.gm

VIII. General legal frameworks

The Fisheries Act 1991 and Fisheries Regulations1995 are the legal instruments for concerted public sector intervention in the fisheries sector. However, a new Fisheries Act 2007 and a draft Fisheries Regulation 2007 will replace the 1991 Act and Regulation 1995. These will be the two legal documents which will provide the framework for harmonizing private and public sector roles in the development of the fisheries sector and also assist the Fisheries Department on the technical aspects of the implementation of the management and development plan. The Fisheries Department is incorporated in the new national legislation relevant sections of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The Gambia also prepared a National Plan of Action against Illegal Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU) in 2004.