

IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION MEMORANDUM (ICM)

***INTEGRATED COASTAL AND MARINE BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT
PROJECT (ICAM)
-THE GAMBIA***

A. BASIC TRUST FUND INFORMATION

Most basic information should be automatically linked to SAP TF Master Data and IBTF

TF Name: Integrated Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Management Project

TF Number: TF051106

Task Team Leader Name/TF Managing Unit: Yves André Prévost

TF Amount (*as committed by donors*): Nine hundred eighty-five thousand, one hundred four United States Dollars (US\$ 985,104)

Recipient of TF funds: *Government of The Gambia*

Type of TF (*Free-standing/ programmatic/ new TF for an ongoing program*): Free standing

Single/Multi Donor: Single

Donors Name: GEF

TF Program Source Code: GEFIA

Purpose of TF (*Co-financing/Investment financing/ Debt Service/ Advisory Activities-Bank/Advisory Activities-Recipient, etc*): Investment Financing

TF Approval/IBTF Clearance Date: 08/01/2002

TF Activation Date: 10/01/2002

TF Closing Date(s): 03/31/2008

Date of ICM Submission to TFO: XX/XX/2008

Cost and Financing Table:

Co-financier	Original	Actual
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GEF	985,104.00	976,928.07	
IBRD/IDA	-	-	
Recipient (in kind)	220,104	175,104	
Other (WWF)	-	65,000.00	
TOTAL	1,205,208	1,217,032	
Allocation Table:			
Expenditure Category	Original GEF Allocation	June 2006 GEF Allocation	November 2007 GEF Allocation
Consultants	510,000	350,000	306,665
Training	70,000	70,000	163,855
Goods	100,000	180,000	180,000
Works	50,000	80,000	46,000
Sub-projects	85,000	85,000	24,000
Operating Costs	170,104	220,104	264,584
TOTAL	985,104	985,104	985,104
Rating Summary			
Category		Rating	
Overall TF Outcome		Moderately Satisfactory	
Overall Risk to Development Outcome		Moderate	
Bank Performance		Satisfactory	
Recipient Performance		Moderately Satisfactory	

B. TRUST FUND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN

1. Original (and Revised) Trust Fund Development Objectives

Goal: To conserve and sustainably manage globally significant biodiversity in coastal, marine and wetland ecosystems in The Gambia.

Objectives: Strengthened coastal and marine protected area system and in-situ conservation of globally significant species and habitats in The Gambia.

2. Original (and Revised) Trust Fund Activities/Components

The Project's three components were not revised and comprised the following:

- (a) **Strengthening of the National Conservation System and Network.** This component aimed to create/re-enforce coastal and marine conservation systems, strengthen conservation area management capacity, promote financial sustainability of conservation area management measures, design and establish a monitoring system for tracking ecosystem and species trends over the long term, and prepare and implement action plans for priority species and locations 'hotspots.'

Specifically, the project aimed to strengthen DPWM's capacity to fulfill its mandate for biodiversity conservation and management at the proposed pilot sites through provision of: (i) basic infrastructure (such as ranger outstations, signs and notice boards, information centers and trails); (ii) equipment (office and field); (iii) additional protected area personnel (wardens, assistant wardens, and rangers – initially to be supported by project funds, but to be transferred to government budget by end of project); (iv) studies of long term financial sustainability options for protected areas (including operationalization of the National Biodiversity Trust Fund); and (v) regional networking.

- (b) **Participatory Conservation Area Management.** This component aimed to design and pilot replicable peri-urban and rural models for participatory biodiversity conservation planning and management activities and to establish site specific monitoring systems. Key activities supported included (i) updating or preparing participatory management plans for the selected pilot sites, (ii) putting in place institutional arrangements for co-management of these sites by government, local communities and other key stakeholders; and (ii) identifying and testing alternative sustainable biodiversity-friendly income generating activities
- (c) **Capacity Building and Awareness Promotion.** This component aimed to strengthen the capacity of DPWM, and to support training and awareness raising activities targeting local resource users, government partners and to a lesser extent the general public. Specific activities included: (i) provision of training, both on the job and targeted to DPWM, relevant local government officials, non-governmental organizations, community based organizations (including ecological and social field surveys, participatory rural appraisal techniques, data collection, species identification and record keeping, and biodiversity/endangered species management; and (ii) development of a public awareness strategy focusing on endangered species and their associated habitats.

3. Outcome Indicators

Three principle indicators were identified for the project development objective, namely:

- (i) Total coastal and marine areas under legal protection increased by 23% by end of project through addition of Tanbi Wetland Complex and Bolong Fenyo sites.
- (ii) Endangered and threatened species conservation action plans developed and under implementation with indicators of change for at least 2 key species; and
- (iii) Participatory management plans prepared and under implementation in at least 2 pilot coastal and marine conservation areas, including one national protected area and one community conservation area.

In addition, the following 8 outcome indicators were identified in the Project Brief:

- (i) Secure/legal protected status for key critical, unique and vulnerable coastal, marine and wetland ecosystems and habitats, including National Park status attributed to Tanbi Wetland Complex and Bao Bolong Wetland Reserve (by end of project) and establishment of permanent or seasonal protection for areas such as key breeding, nursery, feeding grounds for globally significant species.
- (ii) Reduction of human pressure on coastal and marine ecosystems, habitats and endangered and threatened species.
- (iii) Development of community-based integrated management system models, including creating/reinforcing local participatory structures; establishing procedures for the effective participation of local community members in the conservation and sustainable use of coastal, marine and wetland resources; and identifying mechanisms for community benefit sharing.
- (iv) Identification and facilitation of conservation-friendly income generating activities.
- (v) Greater capacity of both government and communities to manage their coastal, marine and wetland resources, with emphasis on protection of critical nursery, breeding, feeding, and refuge habitats for endangered and threatened species, both through provision of infrastructure and equipment as well as through skill building and awareness raising.
- (vi) Stronger linkages with regional conservation networks;
- (vii) Improvement in the knowledge base and understanding of the current status and threats to globally significant coastal and marine ecosystems, habitats and the endangered and threatened species upon which they depend; and
- (viii) An operational national endangered and threatened species monitoring network and related database.

4. Other Significant Changes in Trust Fund Design

Project implementation was intended to start immediately following effectiveness in August 2002, and to end in December 2005 after a total of 40 months. Implementation was to be split into two phases, the first, lasting 2 years, was focused upon two contrasting pilot sites: (i) Tanbi Wetland Complex, a proposed peri-urban National Park, and (ii) Bolong Fenyo, a proposed rural Community Conservation Area. These were selected as priorities based upon ecological value, global significance, degree of urgency,

level of stakeholder interest and funding constraints. Phase II was to be triggered in the third year of implementation, once DPWM had developed sufficient capacity, a participatory management methodology and had identified the endangered species 'hotspots'. This second Phase was to expand activities to at least one further site, Bao Bolong or Niuni National Park.

Some significant deviations from the original plan were experienced, most particularly regarding the implementation schedule, and to a lesser degree touching on geographic scope and funding.

Alteration in start up date: Although the project formally became effective in August 2002, in reality implementation activities only started almost two and a half years later, in April 2005. Startup was delayed to the end of 2003 because Bank rules forbade the provisioning of any project's Special Account until an outstanding balance for a separate trust fund related to the small works project (GamWorks) was reimbursed, hence the launch of the Integrated Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Management Project (ICAM) activities was forced to wait until this issue was resolved with the Gambia's Ministry of Finance. Thereafter, startup beginning in 2004 was delayed because the Government, due to unforeseen budget constraints, was unable to provide the counterpart funds required by the project. The option of closing the project in June 2004 was considered, but was discarded when, after lengthy discussions, WWF agreed to provide the required counterpart funds on behalf of the government. The arrival of the first tranche of WWF funding (\$15,000) was later than expected due to interbank transfer issues, with the funds finally being deposited in March 2005, allowing project activities to start in April 2005.

Reduction of project implementation duration: Given the delay in startup, the project was immediately confronted with the need to obtain a project extension to implement the project beyond the original closing date of December 2005. The Government requested an extension to April 2008, but Bank procedures only allowed for an extension of two years, i.e., to December 2007, which gave only 32 months to implement a project scheduled for 40 months. In October 2007, a second request to extend the project until March 31, 2008, was approved, allowing the project to complete final key activities and to bring the implementation period back to 38 months, still two months short of the original 40 months.

In addition to the above, the active implementation period was further eroded in early 2007, when implementation activities ground to a halt for over three months due to the launch of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS). This World Bank financed initiative, under which all donor-funded project accounts were to be managed using a single system, impeded access to the ICAM funds and the bank statements required for reconciliation and replenishment of the Special Account. As the ICAM project was nearing completion, an exemption from participation in the IFMIS program was negotiated with the government and the Special Account was reactivated. Nevertheless, implementation of field based activities was halted during this period.

Reduced Geographic Scope: It was originally foreseen that the project would include the two priority sites of Tanbi and Bolong Fenyo in the first phase, and then a third site in the second phase. During the initial stakeholder consultations in Bao Bolong, it became clear that deep rooted political tensions regarding property and access rights in the designated area were beyond the scope of the resources available under this GEF project;

and that a much broader rural development project would be required to address these issues. It was therefore decided that the project would focus principally on the Tanbi and Bolong Fenyo sites, although DPWM staff would nevertheless continue to engage with the Bao Bolong stakeholders so as to strengthen stakeholder relations and lay a foundation for the establishment of a national park in the future.

Adjusted Funding Allocation: While not greatly impacting project design, it is worth noting that in 2006 the country financing parameters for the Gambia were revised, and the eligibility framework changed making it then possible to claim 100% of expenditures. The grant agreement was amended accordingly in January 2007. Similarly at closing, the project was almost fully disbursed, having spent US\$976,928.07 (99.17%) of its funds, and only a minor balance of US\$8,175.93 remained. This will be cancelled after July 31, 2008.

More significantly, in terms of project design are the reallocations of funding between expenditure categories. There were two reallocations of funds: one in January 2006 and another one in October 2007. Overall, considerable savings were realized in consultant expenditures, without compromising the activities planned under the original project design. In contrast, expenditures on training, goods and operating costs were appreciably higher. This can be partly attributed to the drastic devaluation of the US dollars relative to local currency over the last two years of the project, plus the high increase in the cost of fuel and energy which significantly inflated costs in local currency, affecting most particularly the cost of work in the field. The subproject grant category was substantially under disbursed vis-à-vis the original plan due to a late start up of the related activities. This delay can be attributed to: (i) the tardy preparation of the Community Participation Manual (a prerequisite for sub-project identification, preparation and financing), which only became available in late 2006 (due to performance problems by the first Community Mobilization Officer who was subsequently replaced), (ii) problems in accessing funding due first to IFMIS and then to the time required for approval of the second reallocation request, and, to a lesser extent, (iii) the reduced geographical focus from three to two areas.

Outsourcing technical studies to WWF. WWF-WARPO was recruited to provide broad-based technical assistance to the project coordinator, as foreseen in the original project design. However, recognizing DPWM's limited capacity and technical experience, instead of contracting the individual technical experts for the highly specialized studies directly as originally planned, it was deemed advantageous to instead procure and contract these via WWF-WARPO thus facilitating DPWM's access to WWF's extensive network of biodiversity specialists, and enhancing quality control.

C. OUTCOME

1. Relevance of TF Objectives, Design and Implementation

The project objectives, design and implementation strategies were consistent with global, regional, national and World Bank Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) priorities in place at the time of preparation and continue to be consistent with those in place today. Both the 1998 and 2003 CASs are designed to support the attainment of the PRSP, The Gambia Incorporated Vision 2020 and the Millennium Development Goal's overarching aim, namely securing a sustainable reduction in the incidence of poverty. The ICAM

project complemented the ongoing Bank program through its linkages with the poverty alleviation agenda in both rural and peri-urban environments and its promotion of sustainable use of natural resources. Additionally, its adoption of participatory implementation approaches to local development and conservation planning and management were well aligned with the PRSP's goal of building capacity of local communities and civil society organizations to play an active role in the development process.

The sectoral focus on participatory conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity, including wetlands of recognized international importance, critical mangrove habitat, fish breeding and nursery areas and endangered/threatened species (turtles, manatees, dolphins), is fully consistent with GEF Strategic Programs, West African regional priorities and strategies identified inter alia by PRCM, and national strategies and programs including the Gambia's Conservation Strategy, Environmental Action Plan and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

2. Achievement of TF Development Objective

The Development Objective of "strengthen the coastal and marine protected area system and in-situ conservation of globally significant species and habitats in The Gambia" is considered to have been successfully achieved by the Project, despite concerns about the sustainability of some of these achievements (discussed in Section D3 below).

Three Key Performance Indicators were identified in the Project brief. The attainment of indicators is presented in the table below.

<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>	<i>Achievements</i>
Total coastal and marine areas under legal protection increased by 23% by end of project through addition of Tanbi Wetland Complex and Bolong Fenyo sites.	Achieved The legally protected coastal and marine area was successfully increased by 25%, through the legal designation of Tanbi as a National Park (6000ha) on March 6, 2008 and Bolong Fenyo as the country's first Community Wildlife Reserve (356 ha) on March 25, 2008.
Endangered and threatened species conservation action plans developed and under implementation with indicators of change for at least 2 key species.	Achieved Three endangered and threatened species conservation action plans were developed and are under implementation: marine turtles, manatees and cetaceans. Their implementation was initiated under the project, and included provision of specialized training to DPWM staff and community volunteers to enable implementation and ongoing monitoring. Since project closure activities have continued to be implemented by community volunteers but to a lesser extent due to budget constraints.
Participatory management plans prepared and under implementation in at least 2 pilot coastal and marine conservation areas, including one national protected area and one community conservation area.	Achieved Participatory management plans are under implementation at Tanbi National Park and Bolong Fenyo Community Wildlife Reserve. These plans were prepared and validated with key stakeholders prior to being adopted.

Eight additional outcomes were highlighted in the project brief:

	<i>Project Outcomes (from project brief)</i>	<i>Achievements</i>
1.	Secure/legal protected status for key critical, unique and vulnerable coastal, marine and wetland ecosystems and habitats, including National Park status attributed to Tanbi Wetland Complex and Bao Bolong Wetland Reserve (by end of project) and establishment of permanent or seasonal protection for areas such as key breeding, nursery, feeding grounds for globally significant species.	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Tanbi Wetlands was designated as Ramsar site in February 2007 and as a National Park in March 2008. Preparatory work included identification of critical areas for globally significant species, which have been taken into account in the park management plans.</p> <p>Establishment of Bao Bolong as a national park was deemed out of reach of the project because of unresolved sociopolitical issues.</p>
2.	Reduction of human pressure on coastal and marine ecosystems, habitats and endangered and threatened species.	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Human pressure on coastal and marine ecosystems is expected to be significantly reduced through the establishment of the Tanbi National Park and the Bolong Fenyo Community Wildlife Reserve, as well as through the implementation of sea turtle, manatee, and dolphin monitoring programs and public awareness initiatives. However, as these areas were only attributed legal protected area status just prior to project completion, it is not yet possible to confirm this effect.</p>
3.	Development of community-based integrated management system models, including creating/reinforcing local participatory structures; establishing procedures for the effective participation of local community members in the conservation and sustainable use of coastal, marine and wetland resources; and identifying mechanisms for community benefit sharing.	<p>Achieved</p> <p>The participatory approaches adopted by the project have strongly fostered ownership and commitment to the protected areas. Building upon existing community structures, Site Management Committees have been established and are active in Tanbi, Bao Bolong, and Bolong Fenyo. Selected by their communities, the members of these committees work closely with DPWM to prepare and ensure implementation of management plans, and to identify community priority sub-projects. Over 20 Community Wardens are active in Tanbi and Bolong Fenyo.</p> <p>In the case of Bolong Fenyo, the project supported the Gunjur Environment Protection and Development Group (GEPADG) in its efforts to establish the Bolong Fenyo Community Wildlife Reserve. Project support led to GEPADG's recognition as a Gambia-based international NGO, as well as thorough consultations with local stakeholders and the establishment of a representative SMC to serve as the protected area's "Board".</p>
4.	Identification and facilitation of conservation-friendly income generating activities.	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>The launch of the identification and implementation processes for community sub-projects was later than expected due to problems in recruitment of the community mobilization officer and in preparation of the sub-project manual. By project close, only a quarter of the anticipated sub-project funding was disbursed. Nevertheless, careful participatory planning processes were conducted with stakeholders in Tanbi, Bao Bolong and Bolong Fenyo leading to the selection of priority sub-projects in each area.</p>

		<p>Three sub-projects were implemented: oyster farming and alternative livelihoods in Tanbi, installation of a hand pump for water in Bao Bolong and bee keeping in Bolong Fenyo. Implementation was achieved effectively for each. DPWM is committed to providing support and monitoring these for at least 12 months beyond project completion to foster their medium to long term sustainability.</p>
5.	<p>Greater capacity of both government and communities to manage their coastal, marine and wetland resources, with emphasis on protection of critical nursery, breeding, feeding, and refuge habitats for endangered and threatened species, both through provision of infrastructure and equipment as well as through skill building and awareness raising.</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Government capacity to act and awareness of the issues has been considerably increased through the project. Two intensive trainings in Protected Area Management were held for staff of Tanbi, Bao Bolong, Bolong Fenyo and DPWM HQ (2005 and 2007). Additionally, training was an integral element of the key consultancies, including <i>inter alia</i> the preparation of the 3 endangered/threatened species action plans, biodiversity database, website design, communication strategy. The project financial officer participated in disbursement and financial management training.</p> <p>Similarly the capacity and awareness of local stakeholders has been increased in Tanbi and Bolong Fenyo, and to some extent in Bao Bolong. Frequent stakeholder meetings were held, with a view to raising awareness, information sharing and soliciting stakeholder collaboration in analysis and implementation of conservation activities. Training and awareness-raising was integral to participation in the endangered/threatened species action plan activities. Community wardens participated in DPWM training programs and the GEPADG's accountant undertook a part-time two year book keeping training.</p> <p>Publication of regular newsletters, as well as special training targeting the media also contributed to broad-based of awareness raising.</p> <p>Physical infrastructure investments were made in Tanbi (observation tower, guard post/welcome center) and DPWM head quarters (renovation of the library and recuperation of project offices). Additionally, office and field equipment was provided for DPWM, park wardens and their teams (including uniforms, binoculars, boots, tents, GPS, telescopes, bird field equipment, etc.) as well as vehicles and a boat.</p>
6.	<p>Stronger linkages with regional conservation networks.</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Stronger linkages were established, facilitated though WWF technical assistance, with regional and international networks for sea turtles, manatees and dolphins. Institutional linkages include WWF-WAMER, PRCM, GIRMaC project-Senegal, University of Exeter and the World Sea Turtle Association.</p>
7.	<p>Improvement in the knowledge base and understanding of the current status and threats to globally significant coastal and marine ecosystems, habitats and the endangered and</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Data has been gathered for sea turtles, manatees and dolphins, and hotspots mapped. Ongoing implementation of the action plans and monitoring and evaluation, will gradually build the knowledge base</p>

	threatened species upon which they depend.	and understanding of ecosystem, habitat and species dynamics, and enable Gambia to strengthen management of its biodiversity and its collaboration in regional programs.
8.	An operational national endangered and threatened species monitoring network and related database.	Achieved. Threatened species databases have been established and are operational for sea turtles, manatees and dolphins. Training has been provided in data input and database management and security. The database is not yet integrated into a single system as it was deemed premature to do so before there was sufficient data gathered to allow species specific conservation objectives to be fully defined.

3. Efficiency

Most of the planned activities were implemented, albeit with delays. Project implementation was not highly efficient due to poor planning, unforeseen counterpart funding constraints, lack of accessibility to funds at times and high increase in operating costs. Procurement processes overall were slower than expected, and activities on the implementation work plans frequently experienced some slippage. Additionally, for reasons beyond the project's control the length of time required to get Cabinet endorsement of the legal status of Tanbi was underestimated. Despite this, and the implementation delays beyond the project team's control mentioned in Section B4, the project did achieve its core objectives and outcomes in 38 months rather than the originally planned 40 months.

Beyond the reallocation of budget indicated in Section A and further discussed in Section B4, data is unavailable for an evaluation of cost efficiency.

Analysis of economic and financial returns is not applicable.

4. Development Impacts, including those that are Unintended/Unrelated to TF Objectives

Two significant unintended outcomes arose as a consequence of the ICAM project. First, the unplanned participation of WWF-WARPO as both co-financier and implementing partner has brought the two institutions closer together and laid the foundation for a longer term partnership. Post project completion, DPWM and WWF are continuing to work in close collaboration on national and regional biodiversity and protected area concerns and are in the process of securing financing for a follow on project, ICAM II. Second, as a result of the investigation of the critical hydrological issues facing Abuko, the project convinced the Gambia Road Authority to relocate the Abuko corridor culvert, thus reestablishing the water flows essential to the ecosystem health of the Abuko-Tanbi complex. Furthermore, as a result of assessment of the other hydrological issues facing Tanbi and Bolong Fenyo, general road construction guidelines were prepared for use by Gambia Road Authority and the National Environmental Agency to ensure that the hydrological needs of protected areas are taken into consideration.

5. Overall TF Outcome

The overall outcome rating for the project is considered to be Moderately Satisfactory. The project objectives remained relevant to the country and regional context and

priorities despite the delayed implementation, and all three key performance indicators were satisfactorily achieved prior to project closure. Although national park status was not attributed to Bao Bolong, it was legally attributed to the Tanbi Wetland complex which was the site in most urgent need of intervention due to the pressures arising from its proximity to Banjul and its surrounding peri-urban areas. Similarly, the establishment of Bolong Fenyoo as the first Community Wildlife Reserve in the country has broken important new ground. The capacity of both the Government and the local stakeholders to protect and manage these areas has been improved, as has the country's linkages to and capacity to participate in regional networks. Nevertheless, the length of time required to legally create these areas was underestimated, resulting in their establishment on the eve of project closure. This makes it difficult to ascertain the concrete impact arising from the legal protection of these areas. In addition, only 25% of the original allocation for subprojects was disbursed, significantly reducing the degree to which alternative biodiversity-friendly income generating activities could be identified and tested.

D. RISK TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

1. Follow-On Results and/or Investment Activities

Activity/Investment:

Recipient/Other Investment; Grant Project/Program; Bank Project; IFC Financial Project/Activity, Other (explain)

The ICAM project has laid the basic foundations for future conservation and management of coastal and marine protected areas and biodiversity in the Gambia on both an institutional and technical level. Nevertheless, there remains a need for significant reinforcement and consolidation of the project's technical/knowledge base and human resource, institutional and financial capacity gains. The government has recently allocated an investment budget to the DPWM over and above the department's operating budget of approximately \$240,000 to implement some of the recommendations identified in the institutional reform study (completed under the project), including contracting new staff and purchasing additional vehicles. Institutional partnerships between DPWM and WWF-WARPO, PRCM and others that have been fostered/catalyzed by the ICAM project, show strong indications of solidifying into durable collaborative relationships. A direct follow-on project, ICAM II, has been designed in partnership by DPWM and WWF-WARPO. The project aims to consolidate and build upon the concrete achievements of ICAM, including the restructuring and strengthening of DPWM, expansion of participatory management approaches to other/new protected areas (both national parks and community based areas), the replication of the Community Wildlife Reserve model elsewhere in the country and region, and the adaptation of the approach to include community fisheries. While funding has yet to be confirmed, a preliminary financing commitment of Euro 700,000 from PRCM has been secured. Additionally the MAVA Foundation has expressed its willingness to match any further supplemental financing to the order of Euro 1 million. The Government plans to request GEF support for participation in regional protected areas program with UNEP as the implementing agency, and GEPADG with assistance

from DPWM is exploring the possibility of financing under the GEF Small Grants Program and elsewhere for ongoing support to Bolong Fenyo.

2. Replicability

The participatory approach to wildlife conservation promoted under the ICAM project was new to The Gambia at the time of project start up. Provision for community participation and community wildlife reserves was first addressed under the Biodiversity and Wildlife Act of 2002, and methodologies and institutional structures for its application had not yet been developed. The ICAM project tested the legal process for establishing protected areas, including preparing the country's first Process Framework to formally address issues of compensation or loss of access/use rights. It also developed and piloted the methodologies for community consultation and active participatory conservation planning and management. By so doing, the project has enabled the DPWM to move from an approach oriented towards communication and information sharing, to a more integrative one in which community and other natural resource users have become active partners in the conservation process. These methodologies and the related institutional structures have been broadly adopted by DPWM and are intended to be applied during the establishment of future protected areas, both national parks and community wildlife reserves. The ICAM II proposal plans not only to replicate the Bolong Fenyo experience elsewhere in The Gambia but to also adapt the approach to the fisheries sector. In addition, the three sub-projects implemented thus far also provide good models for replication elsewhere, and it is expected that if their success proves to be sustained, the approaches will be adopted by other community members.

3. Overall Risk to Development Outcome

The overall risk to development outcome is considered to be Moderate. The project has some significant achievements; however, the sustainability of these is put into question as a consequence of budget limitations. The current Government's annual budget allocations to DPWM are more or less sufficient to cover staff costs, including the 34 new staff taken on under the ICAM project, but are unlikely to stretch to cover investment or specific management activities. Provision is made under the 2002 Biodiversity and Wildlife Act for the establishment of a Biodiversity Trust Fund, through which a portion of DPWM generated revenues (park fees, licenses, etc.) could be retained. A preliminary park revenue generation strategy, including the establishment and funding of this Biodiversity Trust Fund was undertaken by DPWM in early 2008, but its recommendations have not yet been implemented. Nevertheless, the revenue generating potential of the Gambia's protected areas, particularly in terms of attracting tourism is clearly recognized. Tanbi with its rare combination of high biodiversity and ecological interest together with its proximity to the capital and tourism centers could easily be self sustaining. There is, however, a considerable risk that this potential will not be realized in the short term due to the fact that the current capacity of DPWM may be too weak to capitalize on this opportunity. This risk is accentuated by the fact that financing for the follow on ICAM II project, although under discussion, has not yet been secured. The above said, it should be underlined that establishing Tanbi and Bolong Fenyo as protected areas under law is a significant and sustainable achievement, as in so doing the project has avoided having these valuable areas eroded through peri-urban sprawl and unsustainable exploitation.

E. PERFORMANCE

1. Bank

The overall performance of the World Bank supervision team is rated Satisfactory. The Bank carried out an average of 2 technical field supervision missions per year throughout implementation, supplemented by 3 formal virtual missions and regular audio conferences. It was responsive to the borrower's needs and built a solid partnership with the borrower. The regular interactions and concomitant technical assistance helped identify and overcome operational challenges in a timely fashion. There was a high degree of continuity in the task team, with the same Task Team Leader, Technical Specialist, and Operations Analyst in place from the beginning of implementation until the end of the project. The team received support from the regional financial management and procurement specialists. The quality and frequency of supervision activities, particularly during the second half of implementation, was excellent.

2. Recipient (for Recipient-executed TFs only)

Overall performance by the recipient is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. While the project successfully achieved its priority objectives, the efficiency by which the project funds and work program was managed was lower than expected. While not unusual, at the start of activities, the lack of knowledge and/or experience of Bank procedures combined with staffing problems slowed implementation. More significantly, however, initially the PMU was not fully staffed and there was considerable turnover in key positions. It is notable that the project was implemented in its entirety under the auspices of an acting Project Coordinator. Disbursements lagged, and project management was weak.

F. LESSONS LEARNED / RECOMMENDATIONS

- To ensure sustainability of biodiversity and protected area conservation outcomes, a long term engagement is needed.
- Building strong partnerships between the government, local communities and other partners is a key element of protected area conservation.
- Facilitating partnerships between government conservation bodies and locally/regionally based international conservation NGOs can help lay the foundations for long term working relationships, which help promote ongoing capacity building and bring about long term conservation outcomes.
- Activities related to biodiversity conservation should have a practical and realistic time frame. Unlike in Tanbi, the project duration and resources available were inadequate to secure community stakeholder buy-in in Bao Bolong. Adapting the approach to a longer time frame, and focusing on building good relationships with the communities is likely to lead to stronger conservation efforts over the long term than forcing the community dialogue to fit to the timetable of the project.
- A GEF MSP project, such as this one, did not have the resources required to address the underlying lack of capacity and low profile of DPWM. Nevertheless an MSP can and did serve as a catalyst, attaining concrete but limited results and laying the foundations for a follow up operation that will address the long term institutional issues required for sustainable protected area and biodiversity management.

G. ICAM PROCESSING AND COMMENTS

1. Preparation

TTL at Approval: Yves Prévost

TTL at Closing: Yves Prévost

Comment of TTL at Closing:

The project has yielded tangible and long lasting results, most particularly the legal establishment of the Tanbi Wetlands National Park, and the Bolong Fenyo Community Wildlife Reserve. Both represent very significant steps towards biodiversity conservation in The Gambia. The project also yielded baselines for key species that had never been established before.

Sustainability of the project's achievement is contingent on the capacity of DPWM to mobilize additional resources, most particularly through the relationship with WWF that the Task Team helped develop. In-country management capacity and political support to DPWM remains low; despite the fact that there was considerable political support from Minister of MERN for the establishment of Tanbi and Bolong Fenyo.

It is noteworthy that the same team worked on the project in the country and in the Bank from its inception to its closure. This institutional stability and the Bank team's close familiarity with issues, allowed making quick adjustments to circumstances, particularly useful in the last year of implementation, and greatly contributed to the project's achievements.

Prepared by (if other than TTL): Tanya Lisa Yudelman
Date Submitted to Approving Manager: XXX

2. Approval

Manager: Marjory-Anne Bromhead/Herbert Acquay
Date Approved by Manager: XXX
Manager's Comment: XXX

3. TFO Evaluation of ICM Quality

TFO Reviewer: XXX
TFO Rating on the Quality of ICM (*Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory*): XXX
Comment and Justification for Rating Given by TFO: XXX