

SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME
FP6-2004-INCO-DEV-3
PRIORITY A.2.3.: Managing Arid and Semi-arid Ecosystems



National Policies and Strategies on Bioenergy in Africa

Case Study: The Gambia

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COMPETE

**Competence Platform on Energy Crop and Agroforestry
Systems for Arid and Semi-arid Ecosystems - Africa**

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This work has been conducted in the framework of the project COMPETE (Competence Platform on Energy Crop and Agroforestry Systems for Arid and Semi-arid Ecosystems - Africa), co-funded by the European Commission in the 6th Framework Programme – Specific Measures in Support of International Cooperation (Contract No. INCO-CT-2006-032448).

The Competence Platform on Energy Crop and Agroforestry Systems for Arid and Semi-arid Ecosystems – Africa (COMPETE) will establish a **platform for policy dialogue and capacity building** and identify **pathways for the sustainable provision of bioenergy**

- to improve the quality of life and create alternative means of income for the rural population in Africa
- to aid the preservation of intact ecosystems in arid and semi-arid regions in Africa
- to enhance the equitable exchange of knowledge between EU and developing countries

The current document has been elaborated within Work Package 6 on Policy Development of the COMPETE project by the consortium partner WIP Renewable Energies.

The objective of COMPETE Work Package 6 is to coordinate policy research activities in African countries aimed at facilitating the efficient implementation of improved energy crop and agroforestry systems in order to enhance economic productivity and sustain rural and peri-urban livelihoods. It is also aimed at avoiding adverse environmental and social degradation that could arise from faulty policy development and implementation.

Within the context of the COMPETE Work Package 6 current national and international policies and strategies (including national legal and institutional frameworks) are identified addressing the implementation of improved energy crop and agroforestry systems.

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National Policies and Strategies on Bioenergy in The Gambia

Government: Republic
President: Yahia Jammeh (since July 22, 1994)
Capital: Banjul
Largest City: Serrekunda
Area: 11.295km²
Population: 1.688.359 (estimate July 2007)
GDP (PPP) 2005 estimate
- Total: \$3.094 billion (171st)
- Per capita: \$2002 (144th)

1.0 Introduction

The Republic of The Gambia is the smallest country in West Africa. With the exception of the Atlantic Ocean, The Gambia is totally enveloped by Senegal. Fuel wood is the dominant energy resource, accounting for about 81% of the total energy consumed. The fast growing population increases the demand for forest products, in particular fuel wood. Firewood and other products are collected and used by rural households as “free commodities”. The price is determined by the work and the cost involved for collection, processing and transportation.

A report of the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) from 1999 shows that 97.8% of the households, both rural and urban, use wood as primary source of fuel in particular for cooking.

2.0 Bio-Energy Policies, Projects and Initiatives

The Government of The Gambia is encouraging the use of alternative energy sources and currently the utilisation of solar PV equipment is increasing in the country for industrial, commercial and domestic applications. Use of biomass is increasing though confined to agricultural waste such as saw dust, groundnut shells and straw. The government is encouraging renewable forms of energy including solar PV systems, wind energy, biomass and other renewable energy systems and technologies. A draft Energy Sector Regulatory Bill is under revision. In this draft measures are proposed for promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The provision of efficient, reliable and affordable energy that is sustainable and environmentally friendly is the main objective of the government energy policy framework.

According to The Gambia's Vision 2020 Strategy by the Secretary of State for Finance & Economic Affairs efficient, reliable and affordable energy based on the principles of sustainability and environmental protection is the mainstream of government policy.

2.1 Renewable Energy Action Plan

The Renewable Energy Action Plan is implemented by the Energy Division of the government of The Gambia (Office of the President – OP). Others participating actors are the Department of State for Fisheries, Natural Resources and the Environment, the Department of State for Local Government, Local Governments, the Department of State for Finance and Economy Affaires, the Department of State for Agriculture, the National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC), the National Environment Agency (NEA), the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Forestry, the Gambia Renewable Energy Centre (GREC), the Department of Community Development as well as the Multi-Sectoral Utilities Regulatory Agency, Civil Society and Women's Bureau.

In the field of biomass energy the Renewable Energy Action Plan includes the following priorities:

- Promotion of domestic and alternative domestic energy
- Biomass based electricity generation using Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), energy crops, agricultural waste
- Fuel Substitution with Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), carbonized briquette, efficient improved stoves, and gel/ethanol stove promotion
- Promotion of wood plantation

In the general field of renewable Energies the following priorities are highlighted:

- Renewable Energy Research
- Development and promotion
- Capacity Building
- Renewable Energy Studies (e.g. funded by the African Development Bank)

The Government supports these activities and additional funding is provided by the United Nations Systems, the World Bank, African Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, the Bank Arabe de Developpement Économique en Afrique, Germany, UK, USA, Kuwaiti Fund, Japan, Regional and Sub-Regional Organisations and other funding sources.

The objectives of the Renewable Energy Action Plan are:

- Energy security
- Poverty alleviation
- Gender and youth empowerment
- Improved environment
- Employment creation especially for women and youths
- Economic empowerment through increase of rural cash incomes

2.2 Sahel Project to promote renewable energies

The Sahel project to promote renewable energies is led by the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and has the participation of the CILSS member states: Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal. Furthermore, the project is supported by the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the Inter-African Network of NGOs to combat desertification (RIOD), the PERACOD project (Senegal), and the WHO.

The main goal of the project is a guaranteed and sustainable energy supply for the rural population, using renewable energies. It promotes rational use of energy (production, conversion and consumption) and the spread of renewable energies in grass-root communities in the Sahel during 2004-2008 with a further perspective towards 2015.

Results include an increased proportion of renewable energies in CILSS countries, contribution to poverty reduction in rural areas, and increased access to basic social services (drinking water, health, education).

The following funding sources contribute to the success of the Sahel project to promote renewable energies:

- The European Union through phase two of the regional solar programme (EUR 73 million until the end of 2007)
- The Regional Programme for the Promotion of Alternative Domestic Energies in the Sahel – PREDAS (EUR 5,4 million from the European Union and 1,5 million from Germany)
- Complementary financing through NEPAD (USD 6 million), and the Directorate General for International Co-operation, Netherlands (EUR 1,8 million)

3.0 Areas of Legislation and Regulation relevant to Bio-Energy

The government has established the Gambia Renewable Energy Centre (GREC) and seeks to collaborate with interested companies, individuals, development charities, and research entities for the development of renewable energies in The Gambia.

Policy formulation in the energy sector is in the responsibility of several Departments of State and Agencies:

- The National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC)
- The Gambia Divestiture Agency (GDA)
- The Department of State for Trade Industry and Employment (DOSTIE)

The Government of The Gambia welcomes local and foreign interest in the power sector to achieve the following objectives in the short to medium term:

- To reduce the cost of electricity, increase the access and supply reliability of electricity nationwide, and mitigate the environmental impact of the power sector
- To lay down strategies for the electricity sector including the creation of a legal and regulatory framework, the formation of partnerships with the private sector, and the participation of Independent Power Producers (IPP's).

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