

The Gambia



Indicator	Data
Population, 2019 (no.)	2,347,706
Population density, 2018 (people per sq. km of land area)	225.31
Coastal population, 2014 (no.) ¹¹⁶	1,324,214
Share of people living in urban areas, 2019 (%)	61.9
Total MSW generated, 2016 (tons/year) ¹¹⁷	193,440

Socioeconomic Profile

The Gambia is a low-income country in West Africa which, with the exception of the Gulf of Guinea, is bordered by Senegal. The Gambia's economy is dependent on agriculture and tourism, normally accounting for approximately 33 percent and 20 percent of GDP, respectively.¹¹⁸ Administratively, The Gambia is divided into five regions, one municipality, and one city (Banjul)¹¹⁹ and runs a presidential republic system with a parliament.

In 2019, The Gambia had an overall GDP (purchasing power parity) of approximately \$5.2 billion, with a GDP (purchasing power parity) per capita of \$2,223.^{120, 121} With an area of 11,300 km², The Gambia has a population of 2,347,706 (2019) and a population density of 225.31 people per km² (2018).¹²² The population is highly urbanized, with 61.9 percent of Gambians residing in urban areas in 2019.¹²³ Though its coastline measures only 70 km, 1.3 million Gambians resided in coastal areas as of 2014,¹²⁴ most notably in the capital city, Banjul.

Plastic Industry and Ecosystem

In 2018 and 2019, The Gambia had no domestic resin production or conversion. The Gambia is a net importer of plastics. In 2019, 1.6 million kg of plastics were imported into the country, with PE and PVC

¹¹⁶ Jambeck et al., "Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean."

¹¹⁷ Kaza, Silpa, Lisa Yao, Perinaz Bhada-Tata, and Frank Van Woerden. 2018. What a Waste 2.0: A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050. Urban Development Series. Washington, DC: World Bank

¹¹⁸ CIA, *The World Factbook: Gambia, The* (Langley, VA: CIA, 2021), <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/gambia-the/#government>.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ GDP, PPP (constant 2017 international dollars) and GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2017 international dollars).

¹²¹ World Bank Group, "World Development Indicators," 2020.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Jambeck et al., "Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean."

accounting for about 82.6 percent of the imports.¹²⁵ Only 28,039 kg of plastics were exported from The Gambia that same year, 99.9 percent of which consisted of PE.¹²⁶

Solid Waste Management

The Gambia generates 0.41 kg of MSW per capita per day and this amounts to an overall daily MSW generation of approximately 530,000 kg.¹²⁷ It should be noted, however, that about 83.6 percent of MSW generated in The Gambia is inadequately managed.¹²⁸

Plastic waste accounts for 9 percent of MSW arisings in The Gambia¹²⁹ with a daily generation rate of about 74,000 kg.

Legislation, Policies, and Other Initiatives

The government ministry responsible for municipal waste management in The Gambia is the Ministry of Environment.¹³⁰ Waste management in The Gambia is driven by the following:

- National Environmental Management Act, 1994: This act provides the framework for environmental quality standards, monitoring, and enforcement covering waste management activities.¹³¹
- Waste Management Bill, 2007: This bill complements the National Environmental Management Act, closing its enforcement gaps relating to waste management.¹³²
- Anti-Littering Regulation, 2008: This regulation is responsible for making indiscriminate littering a public offence and promotes proper environmental sanitation and hygienic practices through the institution of a nationwide monthly cleansing exercise.¹³³ In 2015, the Gambian government instituted a ban on the sale, import, and use of plastic bags.¹³⁴ In addition to imposing fines for breaches, the law also mandated manufacturers to be responsible for the recovery and recycling of plastic bags.¹³⁵

¹²⁵ UN Comtrade, "UN Comtrade Database," 2019.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Kaza, Silpa, Lisa Yao, Perinaz Bhada-Tata, and Frank Van Woerden. 2018. What a Waste 2.0: A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050. Urban Development Series. Washington, DC: World Bank

¹²⁸ Jambeck et al., "Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean."

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Climate & Clean Air Coalition, "Solid Waste Management City Profile: Lomé, The Gambia," 2017, https://www.waste.ccacoalition.org/sites/default/files/files/lome_city_profile_0.pdf.

¹³¹ UN (United Nations), "Sanitation Country Profile: Gambia," 2015, <https://www.wsp.org/sites/wsp.org/files/publications/CSO-Gambia.pdf>

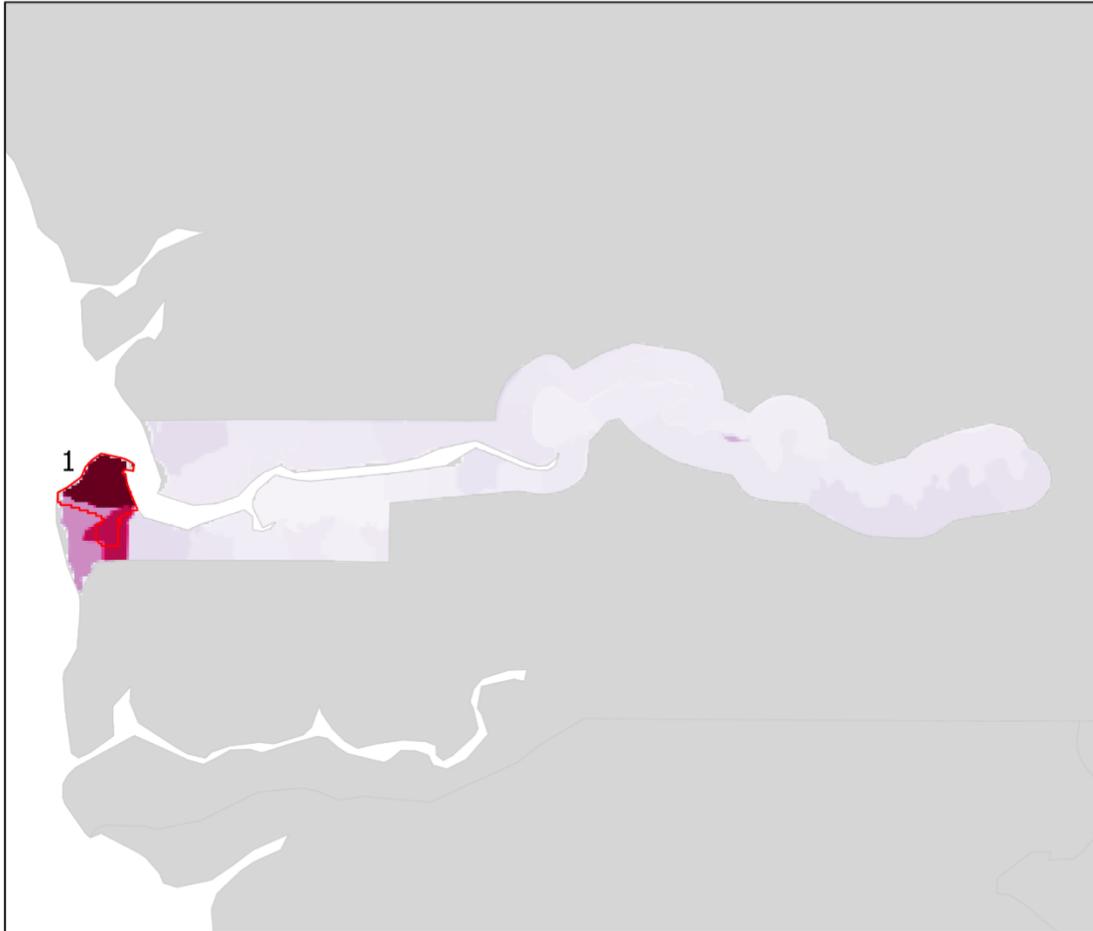
¹³² Chatham House, "Policies."

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

Plastic Waste in The Gambia



Plastic Generation Hotspots

ID	Locale	Rank	Plastic Waste (kt)	Population	Area (km ²)
1	Banjul	23	13.239338	1067034	473.704008

Total Annual National Plastic Waste Generation: 26.9 kt



Hotspot
Extent



Location in Region



West Africa Regional Gap Analysis: Plastics Circularity

World Bank Group