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THE GAMBIA

Review of Ongoing Agricultural Development Efforts

Agriculture is the dominant sector in the Gambian economy, employing about 70% of the total work force and contributing, on average, 33% of GDP. It produces about 50% of the national food supplies with only about 60% of the country's total arable land resources currently being utilized. The sector generates approximately 40% foreign exchange earnings and provides two-thirds of total household

income. About 91% of the extremely poor and 72% of the poor in The Gambia are involved in the agricultural sector.

Out of a total arable area in The Gambia of 558,000 ha, an average of 200,000 ha are cultivated annually with field crops. Subsistence crops are composed of cereals such as millet, sorghum, maize and rice. Crop production has been fluctuating over the years, with the level of

performance varying amongst crops. The most significant and consistent increase has been registered for coarse grains with early millet constituting the largest increase for a single crop. In contrast, swamp rice production has declined during recent years. The main cash products are groundnuts, cotton, horticulture, livestock and fisheries. Horticultural production contributes about 4.2% to the GDP.

Horticultural production has been gaining momentum especially in the Western part of the country (WD and NBD) where climatic conditions are favourable. Although the full potential of the industry has yet to be realized, production has been increasing due principally to increased communal village vegetable gardens cultivated and managed by women. The livestock sub-sector, comprising cattle, small ruminants, different species of poultry, pigs and equines, contributes 6% to GDP. This sector constitutes important sources of food, income and farm input. Per capita meat consumption is estimated at 8 kg per annum, hence large volumes of meat, eggs and milk are imported annually to meet consumption requirements. Due to the low input management systems and poor husbandry practices, productivity and output have been generally low. The fisheries sub-sector, which has been steadily growing over the past years, presently contributes 8% to GDP. Fisheries constitute an important natural resource and provider of cheap protein for a significant proportion of the population. It is estimated that the Maximum Sustainable Yield from the Gambia's continental shelf and estuarine area is 80,000 mt per year, whilst current catches are put at 30,000–40,000 mt, although data indicate that high valued demersal species are under threat from exploitation. High post-harvest losses, lack of credit, low skill levels and lack of infrastructure for landing constitute key constraints encountered in the sub-sector.

Despite the important role of the agriculture sector in the economy, its performance and share in most key socio-economic indicators has stagnated or even declined in the past decade. Output per hectare from the crop sub-sector has declined over the years with increases in output mainly due to expansion of area under cultivation. The poor performance of agriculture is due to a seemingly unbreakable cycle of erratic inadequate input supplies, inappropriate technology, low output and productivity growth, low incomes and an acute inability to generate savings for investment. However, significant potential exist to increase crop yields from their current levels: coarse grain yields can be increased to over 2,000 kg/ha, rice yields to 6,000 kg/ha, and groundnut yields to over 2,000 kg/ha with the adoption of best practices and improved access to adequate production inputs and credit.

Per capita income in the Gambia is US\$310. The number of people living on US\$1 a day was 61% in 2003 with a poverty gap of 25.9% and poverty severity of 14%. Poverty is higher in rural areas with 68% compared to urban areas where 40% of the population is considered to be poor. The geographical distribution of poverty is uneven, with poverty being highest in the rural groundnut areas. The latest national nutrition survey (2005) by the National Nutrition Agency, rated acute malnutrition at 7% and stunting at 17.8%; micronutrient deficiencies are

a severe problem especially amongst children. Domestic food production only caters for 50% of consumption requirements; with the rest filled by imports particularly of rice. Current rice annual imports exceed US\$40 million.

LONG-TERM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES & AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

Agriculture in Vision 2020

The Vision 2020, which was formally launched in May 2006, seeks to transform The Gambia into a dynamic middle income country, socially, economically and scientifically over a 25-year period. The vision set out some objectives for agriculture and natural resources (ANR). These are to: i) increase ANR output of both domestic and exports produce in order to ensure food security and generate earnings of foreign exchange to finance other aspects of the development process; ii) create employment and generate income for the majority of the rural population who are largely dependent on ANR; iii) diversify the ANR base to facilitate the production of a wider range of food and export produce in order to reduce the fluctuations and uncertainties associated with rural household incomes and export earnings; iv) reduce disparities between rural-urban incomes as well as between men and women, curb rural-urban drift and accelerate the pace of development in the rural sector; and v) provide effective linkages between ANR and other sectors of the economy such that developments in the non-agricultural sectors, particularly manufacturing and tourism, are founded on a firm and diversified ANR base capable of progressively releasing both labour and financial capital to other sectors of the economy; and create a sustainable and balanced mix between rain-fed and irrigated agriculture, thus ensuring an optimal use of natural resources, of surface and ground water, animal, aquaculture and crop production as well as between chemical and organic inputs and the use of agricultural by-products.

Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)

The Gambia's second Poverty Reduction and Strategy Paper (PRSP II) which covers an implementation period of 5 years (2007–2011), outlines the overall policy framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction. The PRSP II which builds on long-term development objectives for attaining the MDGs and Vision 2020 is the main framework that defines the overall government development planning and budget process for achieving meaningful

progress, prosperity, sustainable development, and poverty reduction. The policy articulated five pillars that will serve as the major focus within the five-year period. One of them proposes to enhance the capacity and output of productive sectors: agriculture, fisheries, industry, trade and tourism, with emphasis on productive capacities of the poor and vulnerable populations. The PRSP projects the agricultural sector to be the prime sector for investments to raise income, improve food security and reduce poverty and, therefore, meet the Vision 2020 objectives and the MDG. Among the key proposed interventions in the agricultural sector are: training in polyvalence extension services; provision of training on seed production, selection of breeding stock, animal feed formulation, composting, soil and water conservation practices and other improved cultural practices; seed multiplication and distribution particularly rice, melon, maize, sesame, sunflower, etc; production of small ruminants, rabbits, poultry, grasscutters, etc; linkage of agricultural producers to health, trade, tourism and other industries (e.g. construction of market stalls and slaughter houses); and provision of agrochemicals, drugs and vaccines.

Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy (ANRP)

The Gambia Agricultural and Natural Resources Policy covers the 2006–2015 period. It has a short-term vision of a strengthened sector supported with at least 10% of national budgetary allocations (excluding debt servicing), attaining sustainable increased levels of self-sufficiency in food production, by at least 25% of present levels, as well as increased incomes of smallholders, and increased food security at household level. The major areas of focus of the policy in the short term are information outreach; water supplies; soil fertility and land use management; access to essential inputs/resources; research and extension structures and services; promotion and adoption of value chain approaches; creation of markets, expanding the growth of existing ones, enhancing inter-relationships between the agriculture sector and high value markets; establishment of a critical mass of skilled service providers and users of knowledge; strengthening selected institutions; strengthening of CBOs, farmers groups and organizations and their apex bodies; strengthening selected inputs/outputs market enterprises and livestock sub-sector. Targets include sustainable increase of rice by at least 25% of present levels of production; sustainable increased production of artisanal fisheries with over 90% of the catch/production process by indigenous small holders mechanized in the next 5–10 years and reduction of unregulated exploitation of fish in territorial waters of the

country by at least 50%; and a well developed forest land area covering at least 30%.

The Gambia National Agricultural Investment Program

In 2005, ECOWAS agreed on an Action Plan (2005–2010) to implement both the CAADP and ECOWAP. ECOWAS was then mandated to implement the Action Plan, and consequently, the Regional Agricultural Investment Program (RAIP). A key step toward the formulation of the RAIP is the preparation of National Agricultural Investment Programs (NAIPs) of ECOWAS member states. Towards this end, the Government of The Gambia embarked on preparing a NAIP, with its two CAADP implementing ministries, the Department of State for Agriculture (DOSA), and the Department of State for Trade, Industry, and Employment (DOSTIE), spearheading the process. The GNAIP also provides the country's agricultural investment program in the six areas identified in the RAIP: (i) development of agricultural chains and market promotion; (ii) improvement of water management; (iii) prevention and management of food crises and other natural disasters; (iv) improved management of the other shared resources; (v) sustainable farm development; (vi) institutional capacity building for the implementation of the RAIP. The program is thus deeply rooted both in the national, regional, and international development frameworks and agenda.

INVESTMENT PROGRAMMES UNDER THE PRS/ANRP

Improvement of water management

Boosting Rice Production in The Gambia: The overall objective of the sub-program is to ensure food security and rice self-sufficiency in the country by cultivating 25,000 ha through the employment of appropriate, sustainable and environmentally friendly water management techniques and cultivation practices.

Improved management of other shared resources

The sub-program consists of three components, namely, range management and organization of transhumance, support to shared forest resource management, and support to fisheries resource management.

Management of Rangelands, and Organization of

Transhumance: Range management and organization of transhumance seeks to ensure availability of forage, preservation and conservation rangeland bio-diversity, conservation of soil fertility, and continuous regeneration of vegetation.

Support to Shared Forest Resource Management: The objectives of the support to shared forest resource management are: (i) development of forest land covering at least 30% of the total area of the country, (ii) ensuring that at least 25% of the land under forest cover is managed for environmental conservation and participatory socio-economic development; (iii) preservation, protection, and conservation of the remaining flora and fauna in the country; (iv) promotion of eco-tourism to help diversify the economy; (v) enhancing forest regeneration for the production of timber, fuel wood, and food; (vi) control of desertification; (vii) provision of breeding and spawning ground for fish; (viii) community management and ownership of forests for enhancement food security, poverty reduction, wood energy production, and environmental conservation; (ix) by 2015, the level of protection and availability of Gambian wildlife and their habitat would have risen at least by 75% of the present levels; (x) measurable contribution to the achievement of the MDGs and the Vision 2020 objective of the country.

Support to Fisheries Resource Management: The objectives of the fisheries sector are: (i) increased sustainable production of artisanal fisheries for food security, income, and trade; (ii) a well-developed aquaculture industry capable of producing competitively sustainable supplies of fish for high-value domestic and foreign markets (iii) use of fish as a means improving the nutritional standards of the population; (iv) increased employment opportunities and net foreign exchange earnings; (v) enhancement of increased participation of Gambian entrepreneurs, particularly the youth, in the fisheries sector; (vi) improvement of institutional capacity and strengthening of the legal framework for the management of the fisheries sector; (vii) strengthening of the regional and international collaboration with regard to the sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources.

Development of agricultural chains and market promotion

This program has three components, namely: the development of food processing chains, strengthening of regional operator support services, and the promotion of intra-regional and extra-regional trade.

Food Crop Production and Productivity Enhancement:

to make food available, accessible and moving towards achieving MDGI by 2015.

Development of Food Processing Chains: The development of food processing chain will cover the following areas: (i) food crop chains (rice, groundnuts, maize, millet, sorghum and findo); (ii) horticulture (fruits [e.g. mangoes], vegetables [e.g. wonjo], roots and tubers); (iii) agro-forestry food products (Kaba [*Saba Senegalensis*], Dahar [*Tamarindus Indica*], and baobab [*Adansonia Digitata*], Tallo, Tamba seeds, bush tea, etc.); (iv) short cycle livestock chains (poultry, small ruminants, and dairy products); (v) fisheries products; (vi) export crops (mangoes, groundnuts, sesame, cashew nuts, and horticultural crops).

Strengthening National Operator Support Services:

The objective of this component is to place adequate technical and financial services at the disposal of farmers/producers and other operators of the agricultural chains. The expected result would be an increase in the available food stock in the national market and an increase in incomes derive from agricultural exports. The proposed sub-components will include: (i) developing financial services in line with operators' needs; (ii) development of market information systems (MIS) (iii) capitalizing on available technologies and conditions for their utilization by farmers/producers and the agri-food companies and agro-industries; (iv) implementing a research program on rational utilization of biotechnologies in the agricultural sector.

Promotion of Domestic, Intra-regional and Extra-regional trade:

Constraints on intra regional trade need to be addressed by fully implementing ECOWAS protocol on trade and free movement of goods and persons within the region, adoption of a single currency, minimizing, if not eliminating, non-essential check points, improve transportation links among member states etc. To promote extra-regional trade challenges related to Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures (SPS) and technical barriers to trade (TBT) faced by Gambian exporters to the EU market need to be addressed. In addition investment, by the private sector, in the packaging industries is to be encouraged.

Prevention and management of food crises and other natural disasters

This program consists of three interrelated components: (i) promotion of early warning system (ii) development of crisis management system (iii) support to post-crisis land rehabilitation.

Promotion of the Early Warning System: The objective is to set up functional early warning systems in the ECOWAS member states to quickly detect the risk of food crisis and adopt mitigating measures at the most appropriate time. At the regional level, a coordination framework will be developed for the circulation of information at the ECOWAS level. The component consists of three sub-components: (i) strengthening of the early warning system; (ii) emergency preparedness; (iii) development of disaster prevention and control programmes.

Development of crisis management system: the objective of this component is to reduce the negative impacts of disaster and situations leading to food crises by mobilizing adequate resources to help prevent and cope with food crises or natural disasters as well as reach the groups affected at the most appropriate time. The sub-programme aims at providing social protection of vulnerable groups, policy measures that will increase food production and economic gains, infrastructure development to support production activities, and the development of a mechanism that enhances effective networking and coordination between producers and buyers.

Post-conflict land rehabilitation: The objective of this component is to draw up a programme that will support or complement the effort of the Gambia Red Cross Society to reduce or prevent any incidence of landmines and ensure that the western region of the Gambia is free of landmines so that it can be reopened for economic activities.

Sustainable farm development

The objectives of this program are: (i) creating transparent democratic and self-manageable community based organizations by inclusion of the poor and women; (ii) building the capacities of community based farmers groups and organizations to plan, implement and monitor the program on their own; (iii) developing self-confidence among farmers in improving the quality of their farms improvement action.

Integrated Soil Fertility Management for Increased Farm Productivity:

The major activities under this component are: i) multiple-tree pure stand and farm boundary planting; ii) crop residue and compost management; iii) *Acacia albida* (*Faidherbia*), parkland technology for soil fertility improvement in sole and cereal/legume rotation systems; iv) native tree and shrub biomass management for soil fertility improvement; v) integrated watershed management; vi) liming and use of phosphogypsum; vii) judicious use of inorganic fertilizers; viii) soil conservation practices.

Capacity-building of Farmer Support Services and Farmer Organizations:

The objectives of the capacity building strategy should be: (i) creating transparent democratic and self-manageable community based organizations by inclusion of the most vulnerable, especially women and the poor; (ii) building the capacities of community based Farmers groups and organizations to plan, implement and monitor the program on their own; (iii) developing self-confidence among farmers in improving the quality of their farms improvement action.

Table I – Cost of PRS/ANRP Programmes

SUB-PROGRAM	BUDGET (USD)
1. Improvement of Water Management	63,044,000
2. Improved Management of Other Shared Resources	15,633,600
3. Development of Agricultural Chains and Market Promotion	106,130,000
4. Prevention and Management of Food Crisis and Other Natural Disasters	40,458,000
5. Sustainable Farm Management	22,230,000
6. Institutional Capacity-building for Program Implementation	14,275,835
TOTAL	261,771,435

Institutional capacity-building for program implementation

The institutional capacity building for the implementation of the RAIP seeks to create an enabling environment to facilitate the successful design and implementation of NAIP. The systems and mechanisms to be set up under this program are the following:

Steering and Coordination Mechanism: The primary objective of this mechanism is to ensure a successful implementation of the NAIP. To achieve this objective, two complementary institutions would be created and operationalized: Programme Steering Committee (PSC) and Programme Support and Management Unit (PSMU). There is need for coordination among the various components of the program. In addition to putting in place a PSC and PSMU, a task force comprising the various relevant stakeholders will be created to ensure coordination.

Financing Mechanism: The objective is to ensure that resources are made available for the successful implementation of the NAIP. Thus efforts would be made to identify and tap both internal and external sources of funding.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System: The M&E system to be designed should be reflective, user-friendly, and should consist of three components: (i) Statistics information (SI); (ii) information system (INS); and (iii) Geographical Information System (GIS).

AGRICULTURAL FUNDING AND PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS

Public Agricultural Sector Funding

The shares of budget allocations for the Department of State for Agriculture (DOSA) have been substantially smaller than the other two priority sectors, education and health. In recent years, DOSA received on average 2.7% of the total budget allocations for recurrent expenditures, compared to 11.0% for Education and 9.4% for Health. However, the Gambian government plans to increase funding to all the sectors especially agriculture to meet the overall growth target of 8–10% and achieve the MDG targets. It plans to explore possibilities of increasing budget resources to PRSP programmes and improve efficiency in the utilization of resources mobilized for poverty reduction. The overall funding requirement for the period 2007 to 2011 for agriculture is US\$10,000,000; fisheries and

marine resources total US\$357,848, while forestry is US\$1,261,380.

Private Sector Agricultural Funding

Credit to the agriculture sector is heavily dependent on commercial banks, which provide approximately two-thirds of the total credit to the sector. However, commercial banks mostly limit their exposure to large, short-term loans for groundnut trading. Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) provide the remaining third of the formal credit to the rural sector. Most of their clients are the rural poor, and 70% of the clients are women as most of the funds, exceeding 90%, are lent to small enterprises. Approximately only 30% of the rural population receives credit, and it is estimated that the rural credit supply would have to increase by up to 60% to cover unmet demand. The Government, with the collaboration of its development partners, is encouraging MFIs to develop special financial products and promote and finance the production of the most profitable agricultural products using identified appropriate technologies.

Public Sector Institutions

Department of State for Agriculture (DOSA): The department's aims are four fold: (i) increase Gambia's agricultural output; (ii) meet the food requirements of the population; (iii) provide gainful employment and income for the agricultural labour force; and (iv) generate foreign exchange through value-added agriculture-related activities. DOSA has some technical departments which include Department for Agricultural Services (DAS), Department for Livestock Services (DLS) and Department of Planning (DOP). DAS is the largest single line department providing extension and support services to the farming community. The Department of Agricultural Services consists of seven units namely: the Agricultural Communications Unit (ACU), the Soil and Water Management Unit (SWMU), the Food and Nutrition Unit (FNU), the Agricultural Pest Management Unit (APMU), the Agricultural Input Office (AIO), the Agricultural Mechanization Unit (AMU) and the Horticulture Unit. The DLS assists producers improve livestock production and productivity through the provision of technical advice, control of diseases, veterinary public health services and training. The DLS also regulates the import and export of live animals and products of animal origin by issuing veterinary certificates and livestock movement permits, and performs meat inspection services at the abattoirs. DOP undertakes regular farm surveys, performs monitoring and evaluation of major projects in the sector, engages in sub-regional networking, and advises on

policy formulation. The department's major activity each year is to conduct the National Agricultural Sample Survey, which provides areas and production details for all major field crops and a history of local retail prices. Collection of regular price and yield data for horticultural crops has now become part of their programme.

National Agricultural Development Agency (NADA):

The National Agricultural Development Agency is responsible for promoting and coordinating the development of agriculture in The Gambia. NADA has the mandate for the development of the agricultural sector to be based on DOSA's agricultural policy and regulatory framework. It was formed in 2007 to bring together various services under the Department of State for Agriculture: agricultural services (crop production and marketing, soil and water management and conservation, extension services, mechanization, etc.); livestock services (production, health, marketing, etc); planning (of agricultural development services); and cooperatives (organization and coordination).

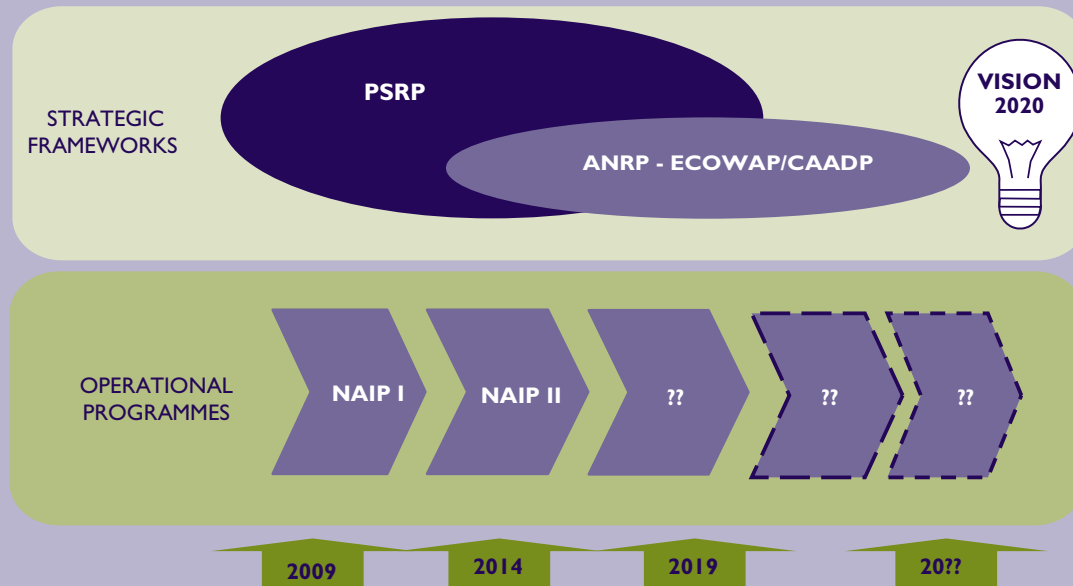
National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI):

NARI is the country's primary agricultural research and development institute with a mandate to conduct applied/adaptive research on all crops, including horticultural crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and natural resources. It is currently supporting the participatory Learning and Action Research (PLAR) approach for rice improvement in the Gambia. Through years of research and extension, NARI has a developed understanding and resources to support plant material improvements in rural communities in the .With assistance from FAO, NARI has formulated a Research Master Plan with components for medium and long-term funding, which also addresses the manpower and logistics requirements of the institute.

VISION 2020 PRSP, ANRP AND CAADP

The goal of the Common ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) is to serve as a framework for intervention in agricultural policies and development strategies in West Africa and in Africa, respectively. These frameworks are also intended to be integral parts of national efforts to promote agriculture sector growth and overall economic development in ECOWAS countries. The overriding goal of ECOWAP/CAADP is to help African countries increase their economic growth through agriculture-based development. The Gambia PRSP pillars are developed along the CAADP and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The targets of the ANRP are also structured to meet and surpass CAADP targets. The objectives of Vision 2020 were formulated in the strategic sense and were measured against the background of the present situation, and strategies were designed to attain the national goals of economic empowerment and poverty reduction. For example, the objective of the Vision to increase ANR output of both domestic and exports produce in order to ensure food security and generate earnings of foreign exchange to finance other aspects of the development process is in line with the goals of ECOWAP/CAADP. Also, sustainable increase of crop output by at least 25% of present levels, of availability and access to staple food commodities by all; and sustainable management of natural resources (marine, lands and soils, water, forests), coupled with a significantly reduced reliance on rain-fed farming as well as land degradation, which are part of the objectives of ANRP, is equally in line with the objectives of CAADP of increasing food supply and reducing hunger.

Figure I – Relationship between PSRP, CAADP, and NAIP



Definitions and Descriptions

Vision 2020: A long-term, national-level strategic framework that is indicative in nature.

PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper): A medium term, multi-sector, comprehensive framework, guided by the Vision 2020, with a current time horizon to 2011.

CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program): A long-term agricultural sector specific framework, embedded in but reaching beyond the current PRSP.

ANRP (Agricultural and Natural resources Policy): A document outlining the constraints, objectives and strategic for achieving desired results in agricultural and natural resources in the Gambia.

Programmatic Relationships

- **CAADP** programmatically translates the Vision 2020 by giving it a substantive content for the agricultural sector.
- **CAADP** provides sector-specific guidance for the definition of the agricultural sector component of current and subsequent PRSP programs.
- **CAADP** sets the strategic framework that guides the implementation of the current and future NAIP or similar subsector investment programs.

Based on the modeling conducted by ReSAKSS-West Africa in collaboration with experts from the Gambia and financial and technical assistance from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union Commission (AUC), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA).

REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

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