



# GAMBIA BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT & INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING PROJECT (GBMIS)



Hippos are the largest mammals in the Gambia and one of the greatest tourist attractions in the country. At sunset, hippos leave the water and travel over land to graze, and can travel six kilometers in a night along single file pathways to graze an average of 35-40 kilograms of grass. Considering their enormous size, a hippopotamus intake is relatively low, if threatened on land hippos take refuge and run for the water and they match a human's speed for short distances

Hippopotamuses possess short, stumpy legs, and barrel-shaped bodies. They have large heads, with broad mouths, and nostrils placed at the top of the snout. Hippopotamus are ungulate, although, unlike most other such animals, they have no hooves, instead using a pad of tough connective tissue. Their stomach has three chambers, but they are not true ruminants. While they resemble pigs physiologically, their closest living relatives are actually the whales.

**Scientific Name:** *Hippopotamus amphibianus*

**Measure:** Length: (3.3 to 5 meters) Shoulder height: up to (1.6 meters)

**Weight:** 3-3.5 tons

**Conservation status:** Vulnerable

**Conservation measures and strategies :** Sensitization

Monitoring and population counting

**Main threats:** Increase human population

Increase land conversion for rice cultivation

Shrinking hippo natural habitat reducing access to natural food source

**Distribution**

