



### THE SCARCIES REGION

#### LAND AREA

THE SCARCIES REGION is located in the Kambia District, Northern Sierra Leone. It has an estimated area of **102.42 km<sup>2</sup>** and its estuary has an area of **44.4km<sup>2</sup>**.



#### PEOPLE



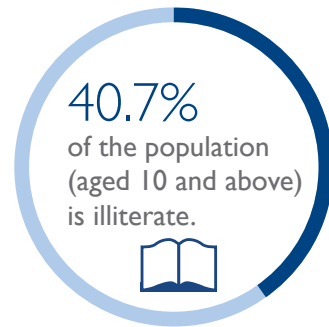
The Themne are the predominant ethnic group and typically occupied the inland area while the Susus, the minority ethnic group, typically occupied the riverine areas. Due to livelihood activities in the area, the Themnes have migrated and now dominate the riverine areas in addition to the inland areas.



The Kambia District Council, established under the Local Government Act of 2004, provides the legal framework for local government. Each of Kambia's seven chiefdoms is headed by a Paramount Chief who is supported by his chiefdom administrative staff and other chiefs.



There is an acute lack of access to clean water in some areas of the riverine and coastal communities of the Scarcies River Estuary. Other areas use public taps and secured well, rivers, streams, wells etc.



Kambia District population: **345,474**



#### ECONOMY

Total number of agricultural households: **45,019**



CROP FARMING  
**39,513**



ANIMAL HUSBANDRY  
**38,376**



FISHERIES  
**11,896**

## SCARCIES RIVER ESTUARY

### ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

Mangroves in the region represent 7.6% of Sierra Leone mangroves. Here, the mangroves extend inland for up to 15 km along the rivers. The most dominant mangrove species in the Scarcies is *Avicennia germinans*. The region has diverse species of mangroves which include: *Rhizophora racemosa* (Red mangrove), *R. mangle*, *R. harrisonii*, *Conocarpus erectus* (Button mangrove), *Avicennia africana* (Black mangrove) and *Laguncularia racemosa* (White mangrove). *Rhizophora racemosa* is a pioneer species and often inhabits the edge of the water or sea front whilst *Rhizophora mangle*, *Rhizophora harrisonii*, *Avicennia* and *Languncularia* are dominant upstream at the intertidal limits. (FAO, 1979). According to USAID (2016 Assessment), the mangroves in the Scarcies are in good health with high species diversity. The estuary serves as one of the major stop-over sites along the flyways of many Palaearctic migratory species.

### THREATS

This region has lost 46% of its mangrove cover between 1990-2016 at a depletion rate of 1.8% per year. Rice farming is common in the Scarcies region where large acreage of mangrove forests have been cleared to make room for farms. Salt mining is also a popular means to meet the high demand for zircon, and mangrove wood is used to process the salt. Women use mangrove wood to produce smoked fish which is commonly exported inland to Freetown and Guinea. Mangroves have been extensively cleared and depleted for rice cultivation upstream in both Great Scarcies and Little Scarcies Rivers.

### PAST AND ONGOING MANAGEMENT INTERVENTIONS

- Kambia Fisheries Development Project/North West North Artisanal Fisheries Community Development Project (1983 -1988)
- Artisanal Fisheries Development Project (2002 – 2010)
- Institutional Support to Fisheries Programme (2007 – 2010)
- West Africa Regional Fisheries Programme (2010- 2015) These past efforts have had little or no conservation effects in this region.

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### WA BICC PLANNED ACTIVITIES

1. Promote community-based ecosystems management.
2. Provide improved fish smoking systems, additional community livelihood, agroforestry, and disaster risk reduction measures as a way of building resilience to climate change.
3. Promote awareness raising and behavior change communication campaigns to support conservation, ecosystem approach to restoration of degraded mangrove areas, targeted capacity building and sustainable management of ecosystem resources.
4. Promote institutional strengthening, good governance practices and mainstreaming of climate change adaptation into local development plan.



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