

Guinea-Bissau

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Location and area

Guinea-Bissau is a republic in northwestern Africa, bounded on the north by Senegal, on the east and south by Guinea, and on the west by the Atlantic Ocean. Guinea-Bissau includes about 60 offshore islands, including the Bijagós (Bissagos) Archipelago. The area is 36,125 km². (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Topography

Most of Guinea-Bissau is a low-lying, swampy coastal plain. The land rises gradually to form a plateau region in the east. The maximum elevation of about 310 m is found in the southeast. Numerous meandering rivers cross the country from west to east and form wide estuaries at the coast. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Climate

The climate is tropical, with a mean annual temperature of 25° C. A rainy season lasts from June to November. The average annual rainfall at Bolama is 2,180 mm. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Land use

The vegetation consists of mangrove and rainforest on the coastal plain and savannah woodland on the interior plateau. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Wetlands

Mangroves, swamp forest, estuaries, and mudflats are found in the coastal area and in the Bijagos Archipelago (www.wcmc.org.uk/wh/reviews/wetlands/t11.htm).

Peatlands

Markov et al. (1988) mention the presence of mangroves and inland-“peatlands”. According to the interpreted World Soil Map (Van Engelen & Huting 2002) no histosols exist in xxxx and 142 km² of gley soils.

Mire and peatland losses

Some mangroves are used for agriculture (Markov et al. 1988).