

Bolama-Bijagos - Customary Taboo and UNESCO Statute Together Protect Africa's Largest Green-Turtle Nesting Ground (Guinea-Bissau)

PES & Nature-Based Solutions · Good practice · Guinea-Bissau

Quality score: 47/100

Evidence strength: Descriptive / self-reported

Summary

UNESCO named the 88-island Bijagos a Biosphere Reserve in 1996 and, in July 2025, a World Heritage Site. On the 43-hectare sacred island of Poilao alone, 7,000-29,000 green-turtle nests are laid yearly - protected as much by Bijago customary taboo as by IBAP park rangers.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Carbon — sequestration / storage, evidenced	1/3
Biodiversity — conservation / improvement, evidenced	3/3
Water & soil — retention, infiltration, erosion control	1/3
Fire resilience — risk reduction, evidenced	0/3
Governance, certification & transferability	2/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-09-21

[Instituto da Biodiversidade e das Areas Protegidas \(IBAP\)](#) — accessed 2026-09-21

[UNESCO World Heritage listing](#) — accessed 2026-09-21

[State of the World's Sea Turtles - Bijagos conservation progress](#) — accessed 2026-09-21

[Mongabay - a lifelong love affair with Guinea-Bissau's turtles](#) — accessed 2026-09-21

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