



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Man and  
the Biosphere  
Programme

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# **PORTUGAL National Report**

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## UNESCO Man & the Biosphere Programme **2020**

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National Committee of the UNESCO MAB Programme

April 2021

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## 1. Portugal and the UNESCO MaB Programme

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The national authority for nature conservation and biodiversity (Institute for Nature Conservation and Forests – ICNF) of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Action, is in charge of the coordination and promotion of the Man & the Biosphere Programme (MAB) in Portugal.

Portugal is associated with the MaB Programme since late 1981, when our first Biosphere Reserve - Paul do Boquilobo - was classified. Currently, from the 714 sites belonging to the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, 12 biosphere reserves (BR) are designated in Portugal. Three of these biosphere reserves are transboundary: Gerês/Xurês, Meseta Ibérica and Tejo/Tajo Internacional. A total of 21 Transboundary Biosphere Reserves (TBR) are currently designated including 129 countries.

After the designation of the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve, there were not developed new applications from Portuguese territories to the MaB Programme for 25 years. The MaB Programme was boosted again in 2007 and since then, eleven other territories were classified by UNESCO, which are now part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. There are six biosphere reserves designated in Portugal mainland and six in the Autonomous Regions: four in Azores and two in Madeira. Biosphere reserves are designated in about 14.5% of the Portuguese territory, corresponding to an area of 1.339.875 ha. The significant area occupied by biosphere reserves in Portugal is a good indicator of the recognized opportunities given by the UNESCO MaB Programme label, that fosters the harmonious integration of people and nature for sustainable development through participatory dialogue; knowledge sharing; human well-being improvements; respect for cultural values and society's ability to cope with change. It is one of the main international tools to co-operation through sharing knowledge, exchanging experiences, building capacity, promoting best practices and developing and implementing sustainable development approaches in a diversity of contexts.

The Portuguese Biosphere Reserves cover different types of ecosystems, from mainland (Atlantic and Mediterranean ecosystems) to the archipelagos of Azores and Madeira (Macaronesia ecosystems). These are territories where humans and nature have been historically coupled, which is reflected in the traditions and in the models of sustainable developed pursued.

On figure 1 and table 1 it is possible to see how the 12 Portuguese Biosphere Reserves are geographically distributed, their total size and the respective zoning in core areas, buffer zones and transition areas.



Figure 1. The Portuguese Biosphere Reserves Network map (April 2021)

**Table 1. Biosphere Reserves in figures (declaration year, area, population, zoning areas). TBR – Transboundary Biosphere Reserve. Total area in Portugal: 1.339.875 ha (14,5%)**

Biosphere Reserves	Year of Nomination	Total area (ha)	Land area (ha)	Marine area (ha)	Population (total)	Portugal (ha)	Spain (ha)	Zoning areas (%)
Paul do Boquilobo	1981	5896			8400			Core - 13,8% Buffer- 17,50% Transition-68,7 %
Corvo Island	2007	25.853	1.713	24.141	430			Core - 11,7% Buffer- 88% Transition-0,3%
Flores Island	2009	57.644	14.112	43.532	3793			Core- 3% Buffer- 12% Transition-85%
Graciosa Island	2007	10.786	6.076	4.710	4391			Core - 5% Buffer- 18% Transition-77%
Geres-Xurês	2009	267.958			76.301 total 66.177 PT 10.124 SP	196.838 (76%)	62.819 (24%)	Total Core - 16% Buffer- 32% Transition-52%
Santana - Madeira	2011	15.218			7.795			
Berlengas	2011	18.708	701	18.007	70+27.752			Core - 0,1% Buffer - 4,6% Transition -95,3%
Meseta ibérica	2015	1.132.606			169.745 total 133.940 PT 35.805 SP	657.365 (58%)	475.241 (42%)	Total Core - 9,29% Buffer- 56,36% Transition-34,35%
Fajãs de S. Jorge	2016	98.114,17	24.382,77	73.731,40	9.171 total Core - 188 Buffer-767 Transition 8217			Core-8.52% Buffer- 11.28% Transition - 80,2%
Tejo/Tajo Internacional	2016	428.274				169.201 (39,5%)	259.073 (60,5%)	Total Core -13,1% Buffer- 30,7% Transition-56,2%
Castro Verde	2017	56.942			7.276 total Core - 5 Buffer - 784 Transition - 6487			Core-10.5% Buffer- 46.7% Transition- 42,8%
Porto Santo Island	2020	27.310	5060	22251	5173 total			Core -9,4% Buffer - 42,2% Transition - 48,4%

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## 2. MaB National Committee

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The year of 2020 was strongly marked by a pandemic setting, which limited the development of activities in the territories. However, there were developed activities of awareness-raising, environmental education and support to governance in virtual interactions.

The MaB National Committee integrates in its composition the Institute for Nature Conservation and Forests, I.P. (ICNF, IP), representants of each of the 12 Portuguese Biosphere Reserves, including both technicians and politicians, Turismo de Portugal IP, the National Council for the Environment and Sustainable Development (CNADS) and the Portuguese National Commission for UNESCO (CNU) / Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There are also present some observers such as UNESCO Chairs, non-governmental organizations, university students and those interested or responsible for MaB actions under development. The MAB National Committee is chaired by the national authority for nature conservation and biodiversity (ICNF), which also carries out the functions of the secretariat and coordination of the Portuguese Biosphere Reserves. It also works as a clearinghouse of information and external dissemination and generates an impulse of visibility and management support in the biosphere reserves. The presence of Turismo de Portugal IP in the MAB Committee aims to help fostering tourism and visitation in the biosphere reserves. The CNADS contributes to the integration of the social, economic and environmental components of biosphere reserves. The CNU is a partner in the dissemination of information from UNESCO and a facilitator for the development of joint actions.

This year, because of social restrictions in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the two annual meetings of the MaB National Committee (that took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> June and 20<sup>th</sup> November) have been conducted online (Figure 2). Despite this situation, the meetings had high participation, with several moments of reflection and exchange of views and experiences on the management of Biosphere Reserves. During the last meeting, the members of the National Committee had the opportunity to meet Maria Rosa Cardenas and Manoel Giffoni, from MaB Secretariat, who explained the events programmed for the celebrations of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the MaB Programme. They also planned the activities to be developed in 2021.

The National Committee, through the president, also takes part in the governing bodies and advisory councils of some Biosphere Reserves (e.g. TBR Gerês/Xurês and TBR

Tejo/Tajo International) and participates in public events and technical work meetings with stakeholders whenever is considered relevant.



**Figure 2.** A meeting of the Portuguese MaB Committee that took place online in 2020

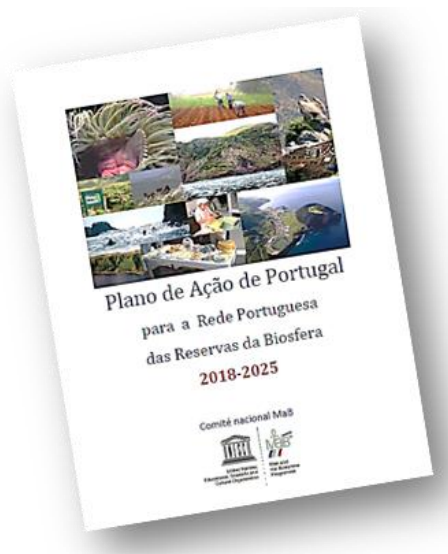
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### 3. Portugal Action Plan 2018-2025

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Portugal is committed to the UNESCO MaB Programme with the adaptation of the Lima Action Plan (PAL) to the Portuguese context and with the approval of the Portuguese Action Plan 2018-2025. This Action Plan (Figure 3) defines in more detail the actions that will be carried out in our country, respecting the original scheme of the PAL and its main objectives and lines of action.

The document was prepared through a participatory process, including the contributions of the managers of Biosphere Reserves and of all the elements of the National Committee. There will be an interim evaluation of the implementation of the action plan in 2021. The results will be indicative of the needs to reorient actions, in order to meet the objectives set for 2025. A special template was built to facilitate ongoing reporting.



**Figure 3.** The Portuguese Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves 2018-2025

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#### 4. Cooperation with Biosphere Reserves, Regional Networks, MaB Committees and MaB Programme Secretariat

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During this year Portugal proceed its international involvement in the MaB Programme and their formal and informal networks, increasing cooperation through sharing knowledge, exchanging experiences, building capacity and promoting best practices on the Portuguese Biosphere Reserves as laboratories of sustainable development.

- *Updating the digital catalogue “Información Básica. Reservas de la Biosfera Iberoamericanas” with the IberoMaB network.*

[http://rerb.oapn.es/images/PDF\\_publicaciones/Cat%C3%A1logo\\_ReservasBiosfera\\_Red\\_IberoMaB\\_2019\\_2020.pdf](http://rerb.oapn.es/images/PDF_publicaciones/Cat%C3%A1logo_ReservasBiosfera_Red_IberoMaB_2019_2020.pdf)

- *Participation on an online survey entitled “IberoMAB Biosphere Reserves y Covid-19”.*

- *Participation on the “Mid-term Evaluation of the Man and Biosphere Programme Strategy 2015-2025 and its Lima Action Plan 2016-2025” promoted by the UNESCO Internal Oversight Service (IOS), in collaboration with Hydroconseil.*

- *Participation in the online seminar (webinar) on “Resilient and sustainable islands”, promoted by the SMILO Association (Small Islands Organization) with the presence of Cabo Verde, Guiné-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé e Príncipe biosphere reserves.*

- *Participation on the process of preparing the document “Guidelines for the Preparation of Periodic Evaluation Reports of Biosphere Reserves” (IberoMab network).*

- *Participation in a meeting with all MAB national committees, focal points and biosphere reserves managers of the IberoMAB Network to inform on the activities planned to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the MAB Programme and the contributions that the Network could make.*

- *Contacts with Norway Innovation and Norway MaB Committee for a week tour to three Portuguese BR.*

- *Participation of Maria Rosa Cardenas and Manoel Giffoni, from the MaB Secretary on the second Portuguese MaB meeting (20<sup>th</sup> November) with a detailed presentation on the celebrations of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UNESCO-MAB Programme, the activities planned and the contributions that Portugal could make.*



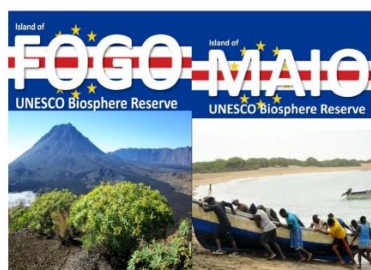
- Invitation to Miguel Clüsener-Godt (Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences Director - UNESCO) to a videoconference talk about SDG 17 and Biosphere reserves – Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme (21<sup>st</sup> October). *Ciências cruzadas: Parcerias para a sustentabilidade*. 1.<sup>a</sup> Edição. [www.htc.fcsh.unl.pt](http://www.htc.fcsh.unl.pt)
- Participation on the 32<sup>nd</sup> session of the MaB-ICC as an observer country.
- Presence on the UNESCO - MaB Global Communication Strategy webinar.

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## 5. Cooperation with Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOPS)

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Portugal provided technical and financial support for the development of the applications of the Island of Fogo and the Island of Maio, in Cape Verde, as future BR. This support was possible through a protocol of cooperation between the Environment Ministries of both countries and funded by the Portuguese Ministry of the Environment through the Environmental Fund. On October 2020, the ICC approved the Island of Fogo and the Island of Maio biosphere reserves, which are now part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (Figure 4).



**Figure 4.** *The two new biosphere reserves approved in Cape Verde*

The MaB National Committee participated in preparatory meetings with the CPLP Secretariat in order to support the creation of a UNESCO Lusophone Network of Biosphere Reserves. We made a support declaration as we consider this network will constitute a privileged and permanent space for dialogue and cooperation. Through this network, there will be a permanent process of exchange of experiences and development of joint cooperation initiatives around nature conservation and biodiversity, research and logistical support and economic and social development, within the framework of the UNESCO MaB Programme, in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. Currently, 6 CPLP countries are represented in the

MaB Programme by 24 BR: 7 in Brazil, 2 in Cabo Verde, 1 in Guiné-Bissau, 1 in Mozambique, 12 in Portugal and 1 in S.Tomé and Príncipe.

This subject was discussed on the VIII meeting of Environmental ministers of the CPLP, held in November 2020. In this meeting, there was made a formal declaration approving the initiative. The CPLP Ministers of the Environment decided and declared to promote the establishment of a “Network of BR from CPLP countries” aiming at: i) enhancing cooperation, technical and management capacity of existing CPLP BR, ii) supporting the establishment of new BR and iii) developing joint initiatives and networking within the UNESCO MaB Programme.

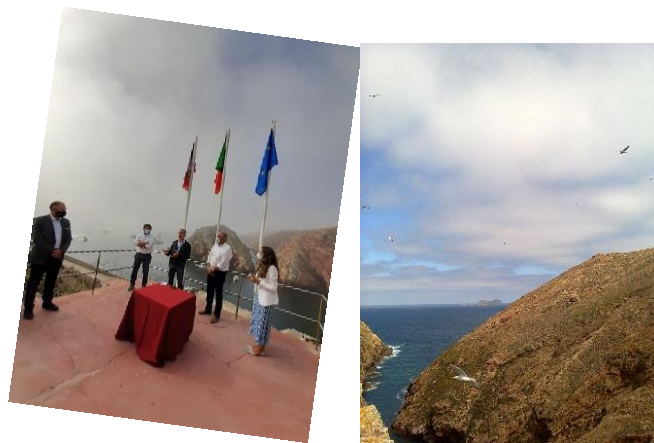
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## 6. Political involvement

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An important milestone was the inclusion in the programme of the new (XXII) Portuguese constitutional government 2019 – 2023, in the chapter “Affirming Transboundary Territories”, an action line named “Streamlining cooperation at the level of Transboundary Biosphere Reserves”. This action line was added to the Grand Options of the Plan for 2020-2023 on the theme “to value the territories that constitute the Biosphere Reserves as living laboratories of sustainability, promoting the quality of life of its inhabitants and also reinforcing the affirmation and identity of these classified territories”. The implementation of this theme will be periodically monitored.

The Secretary of State for Nature Conservation and Forest was present on Biosphere Reserves territories. Last September, he made a speech at the Berlengas Biosphere Reserve, in which he highlighted the classification and main objectives of this biosphere reserve (Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** *The Secretary of State for Nature Conservation and Forest at the Berlengas Biosphere Reserve*

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## **7. Island of Porto Santo (Madeira) – a new Biosphere Reserve**

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The Advisory Committee welcomed this new proposal submitted by the Portuguese authorities and congratulated them on the well-prepared process that was later approved by the 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the ICC. The biosphere reserve area is located in the Autonomous Region of Madeira, in the archipelago of Madeira, and corresponds to the sub-archipelago of Porto Santo. The total area of the new BR is 27,310.54 ha. It comprises a marine area of 22,250 ha and a terrestrial area of 5,059.59 ha. The seven core areas cover 2,559.71 ha, of which 397.04 ha is terrestrial (mainly islets) and 2,162.67 ha is marine. The buffer zone covers 11,534.21 ha (639.45 ha terrestrial and 10,894.76 ha marine) and the transition area covers 13,216.62 ha (4,023.10 ha terrestrial and 9,193.52 ha marine). A total of 5,173 people inhabit this BR, although the seasonal population can reach 22,000. All inhabitants live in the transition area.

The terrestrial biodiversity of the site includes more than 1,600 taxa with a high level of endemism. About 396 (24%) belong to various taxonomic groups such as fungi, lichens, plants (nonvascular and vascular) and animals (invertebrates and vertebrates), and some species have international, national or regional conservation status. The flora includes a large number of endemic vascular plants. Among the approximately 536 identified taxa, 15 are exclusive to Porto Santo (such as *Echium portosanctense*, *Pericallis menezesii* and *Sonchus parathalassius*), 28 are endemic to Madeira and 26 are endemic to Macaronesia.

Compared to the available information on terrestrial biodiversity, the existing information on the marine environment is scarce and dispersed. Approximately 453 taxa have been identified, eight of which are endemic to Macaronesia (six fish and two birds).

The sea around Porto Santo is Macaronesia, home to several species of marine reptiles and mammals, notably the rarest seal in the world - the Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*) - and the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*). Both are conservation priorities, considered, respectively, 'endangered' and 'vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List.

The population distribution in the territory is not homogeneous, but mainly concentrated in the south of the island. The majority of the active population is employed by the third sector, in particular in tourism services. During the high season, the island population is four times higher than during the rest of year. Other important social-economic activities are related with trade and services, such as public administration, education, health, banking, insurance sales, transport, hotels and restaurants. While the cement industry used to be representative of the secondary sector, it has been supplanted by wind and solar energy production. Few people work on the primary sector, mainly in agriculture and livestock, but also fishing.

The island is implementing the Smart Fossil Free Island concept to ensure a transformation over the medium to long term to an energy matrix free of fossil fuels, with a focus on electric energy and renewable energy sources.

The process of nomination of Porto Santo has been followed closely and was enthusiastically endorsed by numerous stakeholders of the island, such as government, institutions, universities and local businesses and associations, among others.

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#### **8. Periodic Review process: TBR Gerês – Xurês and Flores island BR**

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Both Gerês - Xures (our first cross-border biosphere reserve) and Flores Island (Autonomous Region of the Azores) were designated UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in 2009 by the International Coordination Council (ICC). Following the guidelines of the UNESCO MaB Programme, on their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary they presented their first Periodic Review process, carried out with the involvement of the relevant local socio-cultural and economic actors and the population.

The Advisory Committee welcomed both reports and the 32<sup>nd</sup> ICC approved them without any recommendations.

Excellent job!

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#### **9. Best Practise – Paul do Boquilobo BR awards environmentally-friendly farmers**

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Located in central Portugal and comprising a freshwater wetland surrounded by biodiversity-rich marshes and agricultural lands, the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve has been promoting a set of actions aimed at raising awareness of good agricultural and environmental practices in the territory (<https://en.unesco.org/news/portuguese-biosphere-reserve-awards-environmentally-friendly-farmers>).

An annual award was created to recognise farmers who, during the year, developed actions of outstanding merit, within the scope of the activities and objectives of the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve. The award is managed by Agrotejo and Agromais, two farmers' organisations that are part of the biosphere reserve governance. It recognizes farmers in a diversity of categories including: Best Producer by Type of Crop, Best Young Farmer, the Farmer with the Greatest Social Responsibility and the Biospheric Farmer Award. In 2020, the Biospheric Farmer award went to Manuel Tavares Veiga for his internationally recognised work in the genetic improvement of indigenous equestrian breeds, namely the Lusitano horse (Figure 6). The award highlights the sustainable use of pastures with great concern to maintain rural traditions. The annual award fosters local sustainable practices, the exchange of knowledge between farmers and its replication throughout the biosphere reserve.



**Figure 6.** *The ceremony of the annual farmers award of the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve in 2020*

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## 10. Research activities

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The National Committee supports, whenever requested, Master's and PhD students developing theses related with Biosphere Reserves and sustainable development. Other support has been available through the Biosphere Reserves, many of them collaborating with researchers and students from Universities and Technical Schools at regional and national levels.

The work of a PhD student (Ana Filipa Ferreira) was published in the scientific journal *Sustainability* with the title “*Biosphere Reserves’ Management Effectiveness - A Systematic Literature Review and a Research Agenda*”. Building on a systematic literature review of scientific papers, the authors contributed to a better understanding about where and how research about biosphere reserves management effectiveness has been conducted, what topics have been investigated, and which are the main findings. This study proposes a research agenda for biosphere reserves becoming real laboratories for sustainable development, in all its dimensions and diversity. The authors also highlight the important role that biosphere reserves may have in leveraging theory and practice of sustainability, through strengthening collaborative work between different research communities and practitioners in biosphere reserves, such as managers, local communities and other stakeholders.

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## 11. UNESCO Chair in Biodiversity and Conservation for Sustainable Development

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Among the 12 UNESCO chairs in Portugal, the Biodiversity and Conservation for Sustainable Development chair at the University of Coimbra, established in 2013, is the one with a closest relationship with the National MaB Committee.

Although some activities had to be postponed in the year of 2020, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was possible to participate in festivals of science outreach, such as CineEco 2020 and the GreenFest 2020. Two projects of science outreach were also developed: "Plant Letters" (<https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/catedraunesco/plant-letters>) and "TREASURING – Dimensões ambientais, históricas e sociais da conservação no Parque Nacional da Gorongosa: implicações para a salvaguarda da biodiversidade e o desenvolvimento sustentável" (<http://treasuring.fcsb.unl.pt>). The

project “Treasuring” is being promoted by the Centre for Functional Ecology of the University of Coimbra, in partnership with the Parque Nacional da Gorongosa.

Moreover, an ambitious and promising project directed to the Biosphere Reserves was launched in 2020: "Reservas da Biosfera: territórios sustentáveis, comunidades resilientes (see 12. For more details). The project is financed by the EEA Grants Portugal and has the collaboration of UNESCO Chair on Biodiversity and Conservation for Sustainable Development. It will be developed until 2023. The main goals of the project are the valuation of territories jointly with communities, the understanding of heritage assets and ecosystem services, and the strengthening of the existing skills and the governance models of biosphere reserves. Differentiated sustainable development plans will be established to contribute to the local development, resilience and sustainability of the Biosphere Reserves.

A roundtable entitled “The UNESCO MAB Programme: 50 years of conserving biodiversity for development” was organized by the Centre for Functional Ecology and the UNESCO Chair in Biodiversity and Conservation for Sustainable Development. It took place at the GreenFest Festival, in September 2020. This roundtable brought together experts and representatives of entities with great experience of the UNESCO MAB Programme, in the areas of management, research, promotion and development. The participants discussed the future of the programme that celebrates 50 years in 2021.

The UNESCO Chair is an active member of the National MaB Committee, participating in meetings and working groups.

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## **12. “Biosphere reserves - sustainable territories, resilient communities” (EEA GRANT – EFTA Fund)**

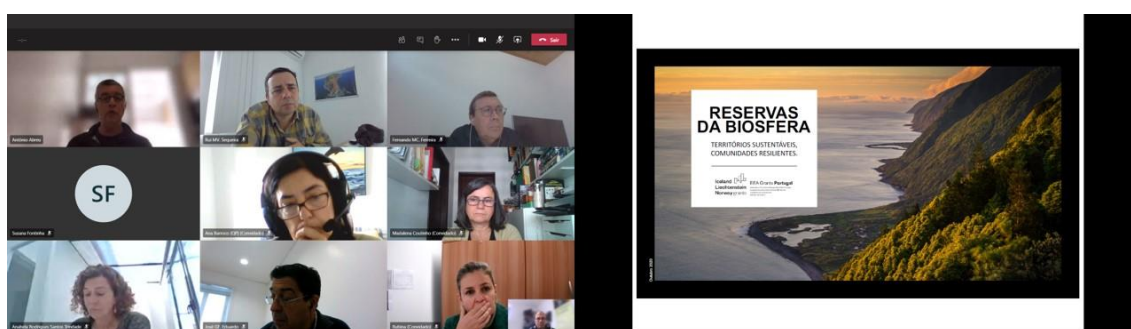
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Biosphere Reserves are unique territories with outstanding natural and cultural assets and committed to protect the heritage and promote the well-being and progress of their communities. The world network of BR reflects the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the local level, supported by UNESCO goals: education, science, culture and information.

The BR model is relevant in the global framework of sustainable management, natural and cultural heritage and historical identities. Portuguese BRs have not achieved yet the

visibility inherent to the status of privileged tools in the sustainable development of different territories.

The project “Reservas da Biosfera – Territórios sustentáveis, comunidades resilientes/ Biosphere reserves - sustainable territories, resilient communities” (Figure 7) structures and fosters a collective dynamic to fulfil that purpose, respecting the autonomy and diversity of contexts of the different BR. It is a project to be developed in 30 months and it is financed by the EEA Grants. It was launched in November 2020 and it will run until May 2023.



**Figure 7.** Presentation of the Biosphere Reserves project funded by the EEA Grants

The project targets the territory level, through the integration of heritage assets and ecosystem services, with a special focus on people, on strengthening their skills and on the governance model. The Sustainable Development Plans (SDP) of the BR, following participatory methodologies, will be the comprehensive and in-network programmatic framework, aiming at the differentiated territorial development, the resilience and sustainability of BR.

Sustainable Development Plans will be guiding tools in each reserve and between the national BRs and other thematic and geographical BR networks. SDP will be supported by better knowledge of the values of each BR, in particular their sociocultural identity reflected in their legacy and ecosystem services, through demonstrative and high-priority pilot actions (adaptation, circular economy) and subsequent dissemination. A robust monitoring system of indicators will ensure a flexible management that is sensitive to the evolution of risk factors and uncertainties.



The knowledge dimension is ensured by the partnership between universities (Portuguese and Norwegian), the UNESCO chairs of Coimbra, Bergen and Nova de Lisboa universities, and the participation of an international network of experts in the fields of ecology, biodiversity and sustainability, reinforcing the role of knowledge as a social transformation and territorial enrichment tool and promoting new dynamics of interdisciplinary research. Emphasis is placed on the integrated valorisation of BR natural capital, through the mapping and valorisation of ecosystem services, involving local communities in the identification of priorities, for their own benefit and for the sustainability of their territories.

As a transversal component of the project, it will be developed a robust digital infrastructure capable of revealing multiple dimensions associated with the BR. It will foster collaborative and state-of-the-art dynamics in the management of individual BR, as well as among partnerships, and the promotion of activities in key sectors (tourism, nature conservation, entrepreneurship, local economy, research, open science, legacy and identity, creation and cultural production). This infrastructure will also support an ambitious communication and awareness program.

Awareness-raising actions aimed at specific audiences such as tourism, culture, research and education, are included. The Portuguese Chamber of Biologists brings in the experience and network from the Biology Olympics, ensuring a national participation of schools and municipalities in the future Biosphere Reserve's Olympiads.

It is proposed a training and capacitation plan that is adjusted to the interests and needs of managers, technicians and promoters of the local economy, and to the expectations and interests of the communities. This plan is focused on the topics of entrepreneurship, new dynamics of the local economy and job creation, to support the integrated development of territories. It will benefit from the experience of the Pedro Nunes Institute.

The project has a highly experienced coordination team in terms of planning and territorial development, participatory methodologies and within the scope of the MAB Programme, both in the design and promotion of new BR as well as in the management within the UNESCO MAB Programme.

An international panel of BR managers and experts strengthens the exchange and partnerships component, with particular focus on Portuguese-speaking countries.

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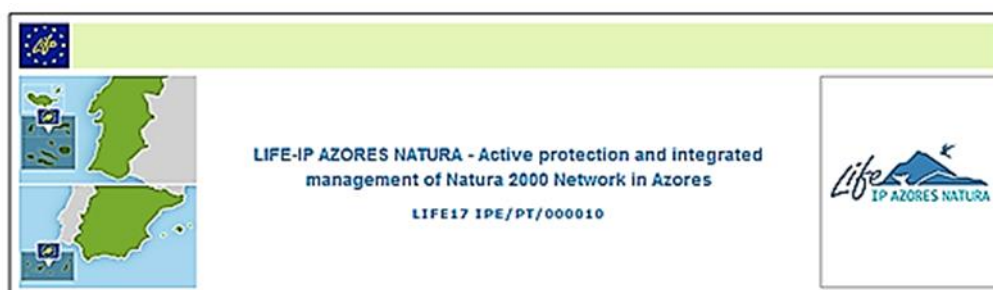
### 13. Other Funding sources

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The **Berlengas** Biosphere Reserves received a funding of € 130.000 through the European Union Regional Fund for the Fishing sector (GAL Pesca OESTE-MAR2020). The funded project is related with the creation of an information and interpretation gate centre in Peniche called “Portas da Biosfera Berlengas”.

The **Meseta Ibérica** TBR, together with other partners, was involved on the development of the project "Cultural heritage, indigenous products, nature and tourism as an economic basis for the development of the Meseta Ibérica Transboundary Biosphere Reserve". The project was co-financed by the POCTEP Program and aims to protect and enhance the cultural heritage of the Meseta Ibérica. It is intended to boost responsible and sustainable tourism, with the development of interpretative centres, road and city signage and touristic routes. These infrastructures and materials will add value to the territory. Moreover, it will create a corporate touristic brand for the territory through the Biosphere Destination Certification. The project fosters the integrated management of resources with the search for synergies that have a multiplier effect. An application of the winter masks of the Iberian border, in the old Zoela territory, is being made for their classification as Intangible Cultural Heritage.

All the **4 Biosphere Reserves of the Azorean** archipelago will also benefit from an EU LIFE funded project called LIFE-IP AZORES NATURA - Active protection and integrated management of Natura 2000 Network in Azores (Figure 8). This project is led by the Direção Regional de Ambiente of the Azores Autonomous Government, in collaboration with the Fundación Canaria, Reserva Mundial de la Biosfera La Palma,



**Figure 8.** The project LIFE-IP Azores Natura

Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves (SPEA), Direção Regional dos Assuntos do Mar (DRAM) and Sociedade de Gestão e Conservação da Natureza – AZORINA. It has a total budget of € 19,087,522.00 and it will be developed from January 2019 until December 2027.

***More projects are detailed in each Biosphere Reserve chapter later on the report.***

The National MaB Committee continues to analyse other funding sources that may support Biosphere Reserves territories, such as the EU Regional Funds under the framework Portugal 2020 overall mechanism, as well as the Interreg European Union regional funding. The Committee fosters the continuous dissemination of information to the managers and coordinators of Biosphere Reserves, and the analysis of funding opportunities, in order to deepen the support for existing and proposed sustainable development activities inside the UNESCO territories.

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#### **14. Communication and information dissemination on Biosphere Reserves**

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- Promotion of the MAB Programme and the Portuguese Biosphere Reserves in several events, particularly among **Master students in areas such as Tourism and Environment**. One example was the lecture given at the "Escola Superior de Turismo do Estoril", for more than 60 students. The lecture gave a broad perspective of the main goals of the MAB Programme and the main targets of the Biosphere Reserves as "living laboratories for sustainable development". There were described the 12 Portuguese Biosphere Reserves and their important role in sustainable tourism, especially during the pandemic situation. The Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development were also explained and related with the field of work of Biosphere Reserves, namely the SDGs 2, 4, 6,7, 11,12, 14,15, and 17.

- Participation on the transboundary congress about the project "Gerês-Xurês dinâmico", on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October (Figure 9).



*Figure 9. Congress of the project “Gerês-Xurês dinâmico”*

- The contents of the **website of the Portuguese Network of Biosphere Reserves and the MaB Programme** were updated. These websites are important public sources of information about the MaB Programme, the Portuguese MaB Committee and the BR. <http://www2.icnf.pt/portal/pn/biodiversidade/ei/MaB>
- Promotion and dissemination of the **messages of the Director-General of UNESCO and UNESCO Prizes**, during 2020. The Portuguese NatCom for UNESCO, in close cooperation with the managers and elements of the teams of the Portuguese Biosphere Reserves, translated into Portuguese all the main messages of the director-general of UNESCO. These messages were then widely disseminated by the Biosphere Reserves in their social networks and among their partners.
- Participation on a roundtable entitled “The UNESCO MAB Program: 50 years of conserving biodiversity for development”, organized by the Centre for Functional Ecology and the UNESCO Chair in Biodiversity and Conservation for Sustainable Development. The roundtable took place at the **GreenFest Festival** in September 2020 (Figure 10).



*Figure 10. Participation in the GreenFest Festival 2020*

- Planning of **an exhibition regarding the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** of the Portuguese NatCom that will be displayed in the 12 Biosphere Reserves along 2021. In this context, each Biosphere Reserve will receive the referred exhibition in their territory, in order to promote the 17 SDGs, especially among the school communities.

Besides the actions taken in each BR, described in section 15 of this report, it is also important to mention the activities developed in the Media (local and national news) and the participation in online seminars, workshops and conferences. The MaB National Committee was present in some of these initiatives, in order to disseminate and promote the MaB Programme, as well as the visibility of the National Network of Biosphere Reserves to different target audiences.

- **Biosphere School** - Project of the Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve in which the schools of the district of Beja created the discipline “Biosphere”, dedicated to the classified territory. The project was developed within the scope of the seminar in autonomy and curricular flexibility that is part of the basic and secondary education.

- **Itinerant exhibition** of the "Portuguese Biosphere Reserves Network", present in library of Silves municipality (Figure 11). This is an initiative of the Portuguese National Commission for UNESCO.



**Figure 11.** *The exhibition “Portuguese Biosphere Reserves Network” at the Silves municipality*

- **News** on the ICNF website, Facebook and Instagram about various activities of the National MaB Committee and the Biosphere Reserves.

- Interview for the Agrotejo magazine - “Biosphere Reserves - sustainable territories, resilient communities” (Figure 12).



Figure 12. Interview for the Agrotejo magazine - “Biosphere Reserves - sustainable territories, resilient communities”

In 2020, some television programs about the Biosphere Reserve were recorded:

Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve - RTP2's "Faça Chuva ou Faça Sol" program on 18/05/2020 on the Farming Experimentation Trials with local farmers and IPBeja researchers; TV Record Europa program "Giro" that presented the natural and cultural heritage, biodiversity, culture and gastronomy of the Biosphere Reserve.

Azores Biosphere Reserves – RTP, the public channel, “Mal amanhã – Os novos Corsários das Ilhas” that presented the natural and cultural heritage, biodiversity, culture and gastronomy of each territory.

Berlengas Biosphere Reserve - A TV documentary “De Norte a Sul” presented by a portuguese influencer and surfer João Kopke.

- Social media and newspaper news on the new BR – Porto Santo Island (Madeira)  
(Figure 13).

## Scientists gathered to debate in Porto Santo

The theme of the GEA-Terra Mãe training promoted by the Regional Secretary for the Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change (SRAAC), has, this year, the motto 'UNESCO Territories and climate change: challenges and local solutions' and brings to the Region Autonomous Madeira, more specifically to Porto Santo – candidate for the UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve Network – great names in geodynamics and palaeontology, António Brum da Silveira and Mário Cachão, both from the Department of Geology of the Faculty of Sciences of Lisbon.

The contents inherent to volcanology and palaeontology, to be addressed by these two leading researchers, will establish the close

relationship with climate change, the impacts they have had in the geological past and in the present.

Brum da Silveira, regarding his contribution to this formation, explains that "the sub glacial volcanic eruptions in Iceland occur under the ice, usually in isolated and remote places. Due to the interaction between magma and water, these natural events have a high degree of danger due to the ash they emit into the atmosphere and, even at a distance, they can have a strong impact on populations, particularly in Europe. This lecture addresses two volcanic eruptions that occurred in 2010 and 2015 in Iceland and aims to reflect on the impact that volcanic activity can have on current society and on climate change".



PHOTO: DANIEL ROSA

## Porto Santo Biosfera, mais que um galardão



António Domingos Abreu

**NÃO É CERTAMENTE A SOLUÇÃO PARA TODOS OS DEFIKIOS, CONSTRANGIMENTOS E DIFICULDADES**

Porto Santo acaba de entrar para a lista de Reservas da Biosfera da UNESCO, a qual integra, atualmente, 74 sites distribuídos por 12 países. Ao contrário dos rios, os elementos tangíveis e intangíveis, que fazem parte da Lista de Património Mundial da UNESCO, as Reservas da Biosfera, não se classificam apenas por possuírem valores culturais ou culturais exclusivos e de valor universal. É preciso muito mais que isso, o que implica, desde logo, o reconhecimento do valor da candidatura e da aprovação da Reserva da UNESCO. Paralelo ao processo de candidatura ao Porto Santo e a todos os que contribuíram para esse posicionamento e para o que daí resultou. Paralelo em particular às decisões que nos foram cooperar e liderar o desafio proposto assim o início da caminhada que se segue. Essa parte da missão foi bem sucedida e resultou, agora, num compromisso e responsabilidade partilhados que derramam na afirmação do Porto Santo como um laboratório vivo de experimentação, em linha com a Agenda 2030 e os Objectivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável.

Quem decidiu esse caminho, assumindo as responsabilidades inscritas no Programa de Honra e a Biosfera da UNESCO foi o Porto Santo, a região Autónoma da Madeira e Portugal, cabendo à UNESCO a acção e a acreditação da ilha enquanto lugar que reúne as condições biológicas, culturais e históricas e, mais importante, o compromisso e vontade de fazer parte do clube das Reservas da Biosfera, juntando-se à cerca de 200 milhões de pessoas que hoje vivem em Reservas da Biosfera e a quem as reservas da Biosfera dedicam a sua prioridade. Conservar e utilizar de forma sustentável os recursos naturais, reforçar a sua identidade, património, cultura e história, como parte central do seu modelo de desenvolvimento, criando oportunidades de emprego e crescimento económico inclusivo é a essência de uma Reserva da Biosfera, seja no Porto Santo, no Sudoeste ou em França. A classificação como Reserva da Biosfera, antes de mais nada, é acção, por parte da UNESCO, dessa vontade engrandecida pelos actores locais. O momento é de festa e de regozijo, pelo trabalho feito e por tudo o que se pode a partir de

agora, continuar a fazer, activando o envolvimento e orientações que dão corpo ao Programa de Honra e a Biosfera e procurando beneficiar das oportunidades que o trabalho em rede, a cooperação e a visibilidade da marca UNESCO podem oferecer. Não é certamente a solução mágica para todos os desafios, constrangimentos e dificuldades. Não é, sequer, uma obrigação definitiva, já que, por vontade própria, ou por incumprimento, também se pode deixar de ser Reserva da Biosfera. No entanto é um que o Porto Santo foi aprovado como Reserva da Biosfera, 11 Reservas em diferentes países como a Alemanha, Bulgária, Congo ou México, lutaram da luta é um processo dinâmico que depende sempre da vontade própria das reservas e dos seus países. O principal desafio, para qualquer Reserva da Biosfera é, quase sempre, o de obter para a classificação como um galardão, qual mobiliza em final de corrida, ou como qualificação para começar uma nova caminhada. E o Porto Santo deixou bem claro que quer continuar e que quer ir além a caminho seguinte. Parabéns Porto Santo.



Figure 13. The Ilha do Porto Santo Biosphere Reserve in the media

## National Biosphere reserves network



### 15. Main Initiatives of the 12 Portuguese Biosphere Reserves

#### **MAINLAND**

PAUL DO BOQUILOBO

GERÊS-XURÉS (TRANSBOUNDARY BIOSPHERE RESERVE)

BERLENGAS

MESETA IBERICA (TRANSBOUNDARY BIOSPHERE RESERVE)

TEJO/TAJO INTERNACIONAL (TRANSBOUNDARY BIOSPHERE RESERVE)

CASTRO VERDE

#### **AZORES ARCHIPELAGO**

CORVO ISLAND

GRACIOSA ISLAND

FLORES ISLAND

FAJÃS OF SÃO JORGE

#### **MADEIRA ARCHIPELAGO**

SANTANA

PORTO SANTO ISLAND

Each of the Biosphere Reserves develops their own planning and annual programming. Herewith is a short report of relevant activities during 2020<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> The following report texts are responsibility of each Biosphere Reserve





## **1. INTRODUCTION**

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In 2020, we continue to reinforce the implementation and development of a set of activities and strategies that they consider important, of which we highlight here those that most contribute to the objectives indicated by the MaB Program.

Despite the contingencies of the COVID19 pandemic, we were able to carry out many of the actions foreseen in the activity plan.

## **2. GOVERNANCE ACTIONS**

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During the year of 2020, through videoconference, a series of periodic meetings by the management body were held to discuss and develop the strategy for the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve (PBBR).

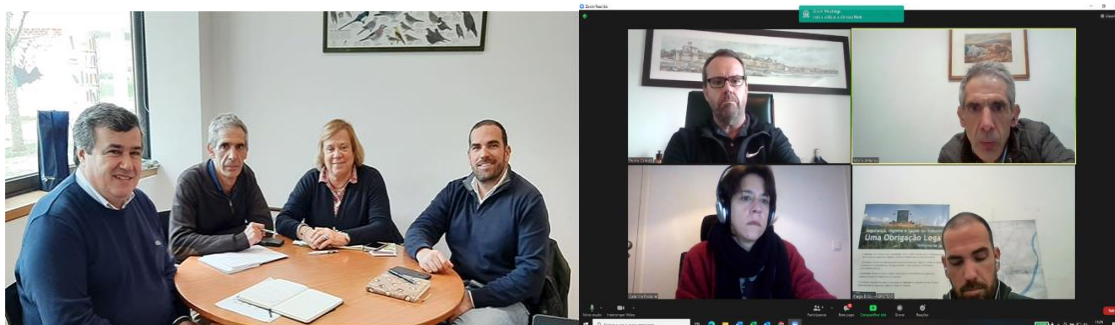
Possible sources of financial participation were identified and promoted with various partners in view of the economic sustainability of the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve. The objectives and development strategy for PBBR were disclosed to various entities.

A PBBR own budget was implemented, with donations from the Municipalities, to cover some of the current expenses.

The Management Body's participation in meetings and working groups was effective, of which we highlight:

- Participation in Working Groups / Collaboration Networks, such as the Portuguese and Mediterranean Biosphere Reserve Networks and the MaB Committee;
- Participation in technical meetings with the National MaB Committee and with other National Biosphere Reserves;

- Participation in the Torres Novas Municipal Tourism Council and other regional forums;
- Adherence, as an effective member, to the ADIRN



### ***Financing Sources***

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In 2020 a number of applications for community funds were identified and promoted for investments necessary for the development strategy of Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve.

It was also decided by the municipalities of Golegã and Torres Novas the transfer of funds to cover current communication and promotion expenses.

### ***Investments***

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A set of investments were developed and executed by the Management Board's partners with a view to revitalizing and beautifying spaces for conservation, observation and leisure, namely:

- By the ICNF, conservation works on trails and signs of the Paul do Boquilobo Nature Reserve;
- By the Management Body's partners, several dissemination and promotion materials were developed;
- By the Alentejo and Ribatejo Tourism Region, the execution of trails and guides in the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve.
- By the Torres Novas municipality, the initial execution of some of the investments foreseen in the Almonda Route;
- By the ONGATEJO, the development and acquisition of a set of promotional and communication material on the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve.



### 3. CONSERVATION FUNCTION

A set of PBBR nature conservation activities were carried out in 2020, of which we highlight the following:

- By ICNF, the maintenance of the constant effort ringing station under the terms of EURING;
- Continuation of conservation actions on the *Narcissus fernandesii*;
- The recovery of water lily áreas;
- Certification maintenance of ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*) populations;
- Conducting regular bird censuses with an emphasis on water birds and colonial species;
- Implementing a monitoring program of existing species of fish in the reserve
- Mapping areas of occurrence of weed and important flora species;
- Continued implementation of a nature conservation and surveillance program;
- Monitoring of climate and water levels in the PBBR;
- Installation of visits and visitors counters.
- Support of the celebration of 40 years of the Paul do Boquilobo Nature Reserve.



#### **4. DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION**

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2020 was a year in which a set of development and sustainability actions were carried out that deserve to be mentioned:

- Participation in the Optimus Prime project,
- Promotion of local food products from the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve;
- Accompaniment of guided visits, with environmental education actions;
- Carrying out several awareness and solidarity actions, under the stubble program.



#### **5. LOGISTIC FUNCTION**

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During 2020 several actions were developed in the areas of scientific research, monitoring, education and environmental awareness with the community and the different local agents, of which the following are highlighted:

- Raising awareness among farmers about a set of measures that they must carry out in the sense of environmental sustainability, namely in terms of the use of plant protection products and the use of water resources;

- Awareness raising for the maintenance of ecological interest areas in agriculture;
- Awareness raising for the prevention of rural fires;
- Promotion and information of the Paul do Boquilobo fauna through the dissemination of the chronicles published on mediatejo.pt;
- Actions to raise awareness / denounce water quality in the Almonda River;

## 6. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIONS

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In the activities developed in the scope of communication and dissemination of PBBR to third parties, we highlight:

- Update of online publications on the website - [www.pauldoboquilobo.pt](http://www.pauldoboquilobo.pt);
- Disclosure of news and all activities developed at PBBR on the Facebook;
- Promotion of the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve on the RB Mediterranean Network;
- PBBR news integration in the editorial line of 2020 AGROTEJO magazine;

## 7. “BIOSPHERIC FARMER” AWARD

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AGROTEJO and AGROMAIS are two farmer’s organizations based in the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve and which are part of their management model. They technically support farmers on their farms and promote a set of actions to raise awareness of good agricultural and environmental practices.

In 2020, the 2019 “Biospheric Farmer” prize was awarded to a farmer prize awarded to a farmer who stood out in support of the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve - Manuel Tavares Veiga



## 8. OTHER ACTIVITIES / OTHER PROJECTS / PARTNERS

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During 2020, the PBBR participated or promoted a set of other projects in the scope of nature conservation, agriculture, tourism:

- RESTOLHO– [www.restolho.org](http://www.restolho.org)
- SmartCrop project – <https://www.smartcrop.info/>
- ENTOVALOR project – <http://www.iniav.pt/menu-lateral-geral/projetos-de-investigacao/entovalor>
- MaisSolo project – <https://maissolo.webnode.pt/>

In 2020, investments were also developed by other partners to better receive those who visit us.



**Coudelaria Rita Cotrim Turismo Equestre Golegã**  
PASSEIOS A CAVALO E EM CARRÓS DE CAVALOS NOS CAMPOS E VILA DA CAPITAL DO CAVALO  
EVENTOS EMPRESARIAIS SEMPRE ASSOCIADOS AO TEMA CAVALO LUSITANO  
FESTAS PARTICULARES  
Contato: 966 136 201  
PASSEIOS EQUESTRES NA RESERVA DA BIOSFERA DO PAUL DO BOQUILOBO COM O APOIO DA COUDELARIA RITA COTRIM



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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The Gerês-Xurês Transboundary Biosphere Reserve developed, during the last year, a varied set of activities. All the projects and events were markedly modulated by the exceptional circumstances of the pandemic crises (COVID19). Nevertheless, volunteer initiatives, conservation projects and visitors activities happened. The activity plan was adapted as well as the meeting strategies and events. Opportunities and constrains, triggered by the pandemic crises, were experienced.

Peneda Gerês National Park celebrated (October, 11<sup>th</sup>) the 50<sup>o</sup> anniversary of the instatement. The Portuguese President attended the ceremony in Gerês.

The project “Biosphere Reserves – Sustainable Territories, Resilient Communities”, financed by EEA Grants started with the involvement of Gerês-Xurês Transboundary Biosphere Reserve.

## 2. GOVERNANCE ACTIONS

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Participation of the Gerês-Xurês Transboundary Biosphere Reserve in the regular annual meetings of MaB’s National Committee. These two meetings were held online.

The regular meeting of Biosphere Reserve Direction Board occurred in December.

The edition of the Management Plan 2021-2025 was lunched during this Transboundary Direction Board Meeting.

The *Gerês- Xurês Dinâmico* (Interreg - POCTEP) meeting occurred in October - visions and possibilities of transboundary cooperation were presented, shared and discussed with other transboundary regions.



### 3. CONSERVATION FUNCTION

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Conservation projects continued, during 2020, in the Biosphere Reserve. Among others, the most relevant projects were:

- i) Conservation of *Taxus baccata* forests: native forests of Yew continue in the area of the Biosphere Reserve – Improved cooperation occurred around the LIFE project “Bacatta”.
- ii) Distribution of Yews and habitats.
- iii) Endangered habitats restoration of areas destroyed by forest fires: seeding and plantation of native species was carried out not only through public contracts and staff but also with the help of volunteers.
- iv) Conservation of autochthonous forests of Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*); *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation efforts resulted in a significant increase of the occurrence extension of the native populations.
- v) Invasive species (*Acacia dealbata*) control in the core area of the Biosphere Reserve.
- vi) Monitoring programs of priority species (e.g. Wolf, Iberian Ibex) were carried out as in previous years.
- vii) Seeds of rare tree species were collected restoration projects in the Biosphere Reserve.
- viii) Mammals monitoring program.



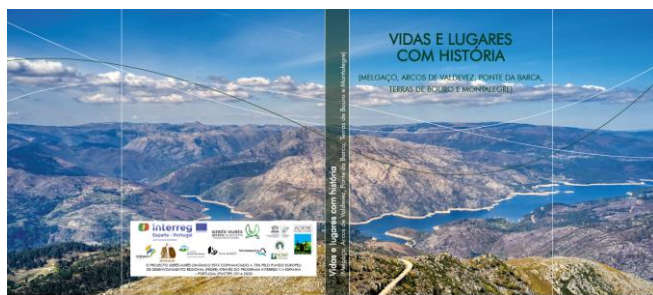


#### 4.DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION

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Plurennial projects were continued and measures were implemented ensuring economic development and welfare for those who live in the Biosphere Reserve, namely:

The collection of life stories of older residents: these stories being registered in text and video, leading to the creation a repository of ways of life and cultural habits. These stories reflect the history of the Reserve since the recordings were made in villages within the five municipalities of the PNPG. The editorial work was completed and it will be published in a book in 2021.

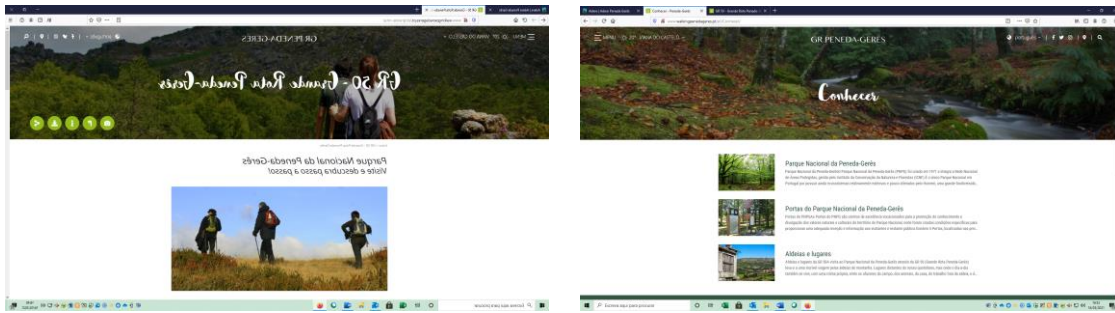


Collection of life stories

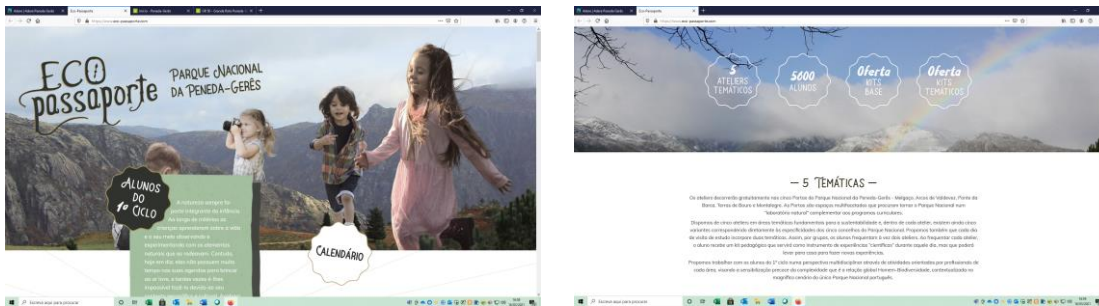
A part of the Gerês-Xurés Biosphere Reserve Communication Plan was implemented: signs for the 11 burgs of the Reserve and promotional material (magnet maps, pencils, brochures supports, etc).



Long Distance PGNP's Path (GR50): once completed the implementation of GR50, it was publicized using ADERE-PG's website and facebook, as well as printed maps.



Environmental education Initiatives among students from urban cities (Porto region), stimulating dissemination of good practices in nature conservation and biodiversity.



## 5. LOGISTIC FUNCTION

Regardless the constrains imposed by the global pandemic crises the existing partnerships with research institutions continued as well as citizen science and community involvement.

CCDR-N in a partnership with Mira Forum organized a photographic contest (“GERÊS-XURÉS: EM FOTOGRAFIA”). This event aimed the promotion of amateur and professional photographers and concurrently the Biosphere Reserve.

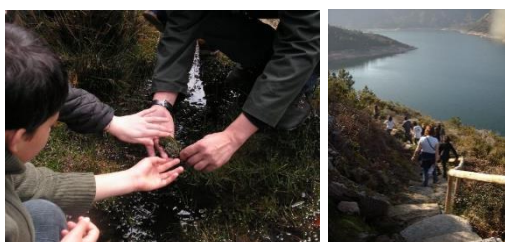


## 6. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIONS

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The main activities of Peneda-Gerês National Park were disclosed on *Facebook*. ICNF's advertised the events and activities on *Instagram* and the Weekly Newsletter was disseminated by the Communication Office.

Eleven activities were carried out to spread information on the natural and cultural values of the RBTGX territory, involving 338 participants – a significant reduction, due to the pandemic emergency, when compared with 2019 events.



Educating on natural values

### Visitors and visits

The information centers in the Portuguese territory of RBTGX, registered 35.571 visitors.

Under the guidance of PGNP guided tours took place, mainly related to the observation and interpretation of natural values, but also with the cultural heritage of the Portuguese territory of RBTGX.

Events organized with the Landscape Laboratory (a partnership between the Municipality of Guimarães, University of Minho and University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro) addressed the conservation of raptors - fully recovered birds (Wild Fauna Recovery Center) were released.



Release of a recovered bird

Nearly 350 activities, involving 3.425 participants, occurred: environmental and tourist animation companies operating in territory, associations or informal groups: walking

tours / interpretive observation of fauna and flora routes, overflights with drone (associated with visitation / leisure), filming / photography (publicity or professional), .

## Volunteer programs

Two volunteering activities were developed, involving 169 persons: planting of native trees, controlling invasive plants species and collecting garbage in the core area - Mata de Albergaria. These actions always have a relevant impact concerning the environmental awareness and education.



Plantation of native trees

## 7.Other activities

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### PGNP's Open Day Online Celebration

The PNPG anniversary was virtually and a short video about the Park, a brochure and a set of thematic quizzes on the natural and cultural heritage of the PNPG was made available.



PNPG's Open Day Online Celebration

## **Extraordinary Meeting of the Strategic Council of Peneda-Gerês National Park**

The Strategic Council of Peneda-Gerês National Park met on July 8, in Vila do Gerês: The co-management plan for protected areas, currently under implementation, was revealed. This co-management plan was also publicized during a general meetings with the Parish Councils of the national park.



## **PNPG 50th Anniversary**

PNPG celebrated the 50th Anniversary. Several events will take place during one year celebration program. In the kick-off event (October, 11th) the Portuguese President attended. One book - *Comemoração dos 50 anos da Inauguração do Parque Nacional*- was edited.



**PNPG 50th Anniversary**



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## Berlengas Biosphere Reserve

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### 1. GOVERNANCE

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In 2020, the permanent working group of Berlengas Biosphere Reserve (BBR) has started the implementation process conducting to the implementation of a reviewed management structure in order to address the main challenges listed on Lima Action Plan, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of UNESCO as well as on the MAB program.

As previously mentioned, the proposed management body will include Municipality of Peniche, ICNF – Institute for Nature Conservation and Forests, School of Tourism and Maritime Technology – Polytechnic Institute of Leiria and Smart Ocean - Marine Science and Technology Park of Peniche (Portugal) and SPEA – Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves, reflecting the present co-management structure of the Marine Protected Area of “Reserva Natural das Berlengas”. This management structure now counts with the assistance of a full-time collaborator to give body to the needs of the governance project implementation.

It was also started the 10 years review process, with the definition of a working group that includes the main stakeholders of Berlengas Biosphere Reserve. In terms of published national legislation, it must be referred the definition of the Carrying Capacity of Berlenga island (Portaria n.º 355/2019) that defines the maximum simultaneous visitor’s number. This measure is of extremely importance for this territory.



Berlengas Biosphere Reserve was also impacted by COVID19 pandemic. The economic activities – fishing and tourism, were significantly affected by lockdown restrictions and confinement measures defined by the Portuguese Government. It's important to highlight the decision self-adopted by the goose barnacles harvesters on suspending the activity, given the economic situation derived from COVID19 pandemic, showing a certain maturity to the COPESCA2 project that aims to implement a co-management process of the natural resource that is the goose barnacle, where the harvesters are the main focal point for change and action in the process of adding value through a responsible management process.

## 2. CONSERVATION FUNCTION

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During 2020, the municipality of Peniche has made some efforts on the conservation of terrestrial habitats occurring on the city of Peniche (territory of RBB), namely sand dunes, through the construction of wooden beach access stairways. This structure will be important for habitat restoration and tourists' access to the beaches.



Another important intervention in the territory by the Municipality of Peniche was the placement of wooden barriers along Peniche's coastal road to help prevent erosion of the geological heritage and protection of the peninsula's cliffs.

In order to follow the evolution of Berlenga Island and better understand the long-term benefits brought by the project to this habitat, an After-LIFE Conservation Plan was established, identifying the priority actions to be carried out by the partners in the 5-year period after the project's end, namely:



- Controlling and preventing the spread of non-native species
- Controlling the population of Yellow-legged Gull
- Maintaining seabird populations
- Raising awareness and informing visitors
- Promoting the conservation of other native species
- Reducing seabird bycatch in fishing gear
- Raising awareness in the school community

To carry out post-LIFE actions at Berlenga, the project «LIFE Volunteer Escapes» has been running from 2018 to 2020, implemented by SPEA with the support of ICNF.

The Municipality of Peniche has been performing the rehabilitation of support infrastructures that exists on Berlenga Island. These actions are extremely important to increase the visitor satisfaction and also to protect the natural heritage of BBR.



It was also concluded projects related with sewage treatment and solid waste compaction on the island. These actions were previously identified and the equipment's will be installed during 2021.

### **PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR PANELS - EDP**

The Berlenga Island is now officially off the grid following the inauguration of the solar panel plant in September 2020. The Portuguese Electric Company EDP supported this investment that replaces 3 old diesel generators, with an annual consumption and transport by boat of 15.000 lts of fossil fuel, with all the environmental risks that this process implies. The installation of the solar panels now in place was concluded in April 2020 and comprises of: 70 Wp of photovoltaic panel generation, 50 kWh batteries; and 1 backup generator;

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u20WV\\_oGtOE&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u20WV_oGtOE&t=1s)



### 3. DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION

One of the main economic activities of BBR is fisheries. In Berlengas archipelago, goose barnacle harvesting has a long tradition and supports the existence of an important fishermen community. For the sustainability of this activity, a consortium headed by the Polytechnic of Leiria is developing the project CoPesca2 (MAR2020).

Designação do Projeto Project Title <b>CO-PESCA 2</b>	Entidade Promotora Promoting Entity <b>INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE LEIRIA</b>
Despesa Pública Public Expense <b>594m€</b>	FEAMP FEAMP <b>445m€</b>

**Objetivos**

- Implementação de um grupo de co-gestão para a apanha de percebe na Reserva Natural das Berlengas;
- Estudo de rastreabilidade e perfil nutricional;
- Monitorização da pesca do percebe;
- Valorização da espécie enquanto recurso marinho;
- Capacitação e formação dos apanhadores de percebe.

*"O que se pretende é colocar o conhecimento científico ao serviço dos maricultores, ao serviço daqueles que têm perdido os recursos do mar sob o preito de vista de criar mecanismos de sustentabilidade dessa mesma atividade. Queremos que esta atividade continue no futuro, mas que seja uma atividade que tenha a sua sustentabilidade, sob o ponto de vista económico, social e também da parte ambiental."*

— Sérgio Leandra, Subdiretor Geral Superior de Turismo e Tecnologia do Mar – Instituto Politécnico de Leiria

CoPesca2 is a project that aims to implement for the first time in Portugal a co-management system applied to *P. pollicipes* exploitation at the Berlengas Nature Reserve (BNR), classified by UNESCO as a Biosphere

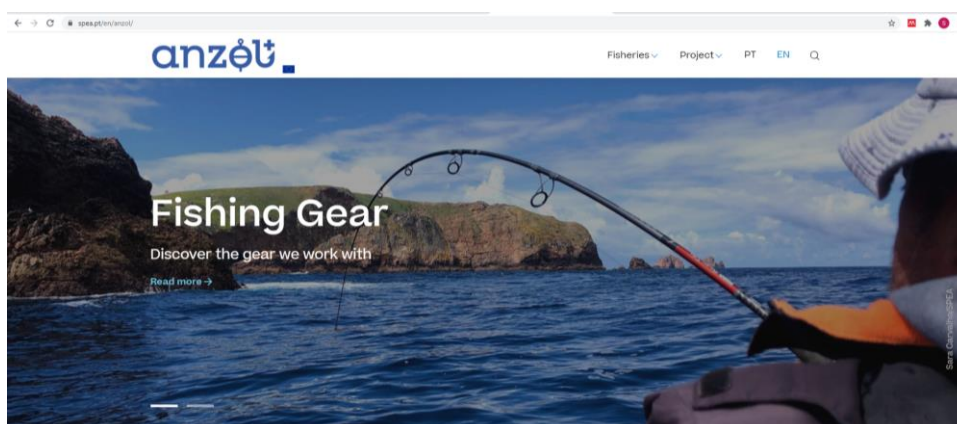
Reserve. BNR is where regulation for professional goose barnacle harvesting has first begun in Portugal.

Here, recreational harvesting is not allowed and there is a maximum of 40 harvesting licenses. In order to implement this co-management system in BNR a participatory process is being developed since 2018, based in a co-management model in practice in

Barcelona for the “sonso” fishery with the facilitation of World Wild Fund For Nature (WWF).

The first step of this implementation was the definition of the committee for this fishery that includes different groups of stakeholders: fishermen, scientists; NGOs; and authorities responsible for the fishery and conservation of this resource and for its surveillance and trade. One of the biggest aims in this co-management process is the opportunity to have an adaptative management based on the discussion among stakeholders and on data from the monitorization of this fishery and state of resource towards the sustainability of this fishery in this marine protected area.

Another project is also being developed in the BR aiming to achieve an equilibrium between human activities (fishing) and marine resources conservation. The project Anzol + funded by MAR2020, has started on 2019 and is coordinated by SPEA focusing on line fishing (ie; hook and line). This fishing method operated in the marine area of the Berlengas Biosphere Reserve, is a traditional activity with strong roots in the fishing community of Peniche.



In 2020, the project Anzol + organized a webinar “How to add value to sustainable fishing” with the participation of the project partners, private companies (LOTA DIGITAL) and public entities (DOCAPESCA SA, IPMA). The webinar is available at: <https://vimeo.com/489098956>

ICNF is working on implementing BERLENGAS GATE – Promotion and diffusion of Berlengas Biosphere Reserve natural values through a E.U. Regional Funding - GAL PESCA MAR2020.

With the aim of maintaining the equilibrium between nature conservation and tourism activity, the Portuguese Government published the legislation concerning the human carrying capacity of Berlengas (Portaria n.º 355/2019), which established a maximum limit of 550 people simultaneously on the island.

### **Accessible Portugal**

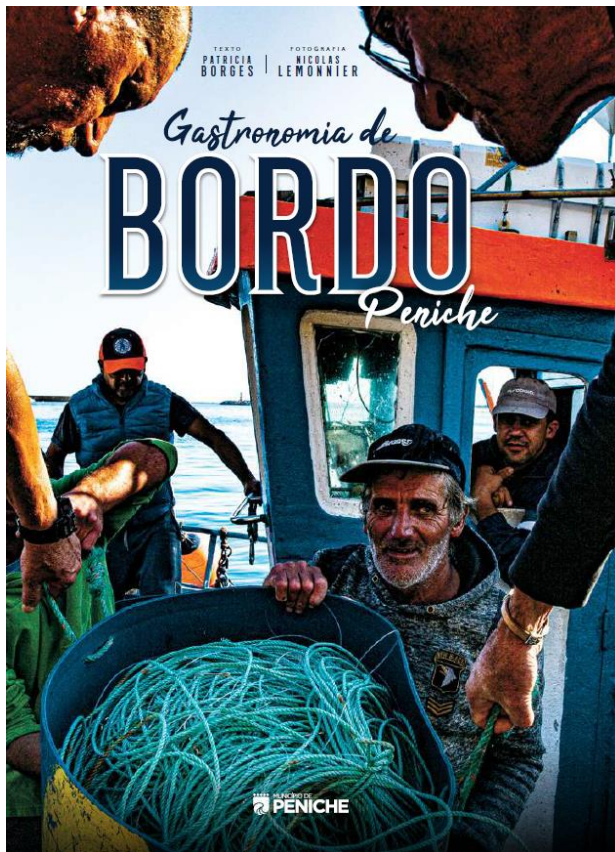
The Intermunicipal Community of the West, of which the Municipality of Peniche is a member, sponsored a project to promote accessible tourism and social inclusion in the West Region (<http://accessibleportugal.com/accesstur/>). Peniche Municipality decided to apply the project to the Berlenga Islands. The project consists of providing each Municipality with a multiformat kit that includes:

- Leaflet with tourist information in Simple Writing
- Information in Braille
- Information in Portuguese Sign Language
- Images or tactile replicas in 2D ou 2D1/2
- MP3 with audio description of a referential image or scenery or a promotional video

Work started in 2020 and the final project should be ready in 2021.

### **LOCAL HERITAGE AND IDENTITY**

The Municipality partnered with local Chef Patricia Borges to publish a book dedicated to honour the local fishing community and also to treasure the local food culture and heritage. The book mixes stories and photographs of the local fishing community, with recipes of traditional food from Peniche, called “on-board gastronomy”, which simply means food that was made on board the fishing vessels or that resulted from the fishermen’s activities.



The book received interest and was promoted on national television as an homage to the local fishing community and a preservation of local heritage.

Video links:

<https://tviplayer.iol.pt/programa/voce-na-tv/53c6b3153004dc006243b077/video/5fc0dbb60cf203abc5b3ac5d>

<https://tviplayer.iol.pt/programa/voce-na-tv/53c6b3153004dc006243b077/video/5fc106350cf203abc5b3b2ee>

<https://tviplayer.iol.pt/programa/voce-na-tv/53c6b3153004dc006243b077/video/5fc0ddea0cf28e704d993e9e>

### 3. LOGISTIC FUNCTION

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During 2020, the logistic function was less visible than on past years. The list of activities supported was significantly reduced in consequence of COVID19 pandemic situation. A large proportion of expected activities was postponed or cancelled. Continuing the strategic approach adopted in 2015 - (1) Monitoring, research and education; (2) Ecosystems conservation and (3) Cultural, economic and social development, a set of activities were developed and are listed on table 1.

<b>1 - Monitoring, research and education</b>		
<b>Semana Tanto Mar</b> Environmental activities for students, with the presence of the Portuguese Prime-Minister	postponed	ESTM-IPLeiria, Municipality of Peniche and Forum Estudante
<b>Visitors monitoring</b> Assessment of the visitors number to Berlenga island during summer season	Cancelled	LIFE Project
<b>Volunteer program for young students</b> Development of conservation actions and visitor surveys	Cancelled	LIFE Project
<b>Volunteer program for young students</b> Pós LIFE Berlenga conservation actions	Cancelled	LIFE Volunteer Escapes (SPEA)
<b>Berlengas watch</b> Monitoring of plankton communities and hydrological parameters.	2013-	ESTM-IPLeiria, IPMA and ICNF
<b>Jellyfisheries</b> R&D project aiming to evaluate the impact of jellyfish on the planktonic	2016-	ESTM, MARE-IPLeiria, ICNF, IPMA, CIIMAR, CCMAR
<b>2 - Ecosystems conservation</b>		
<b>Pos-LIFE actions</b> Eradication of plant invasive species and control of exotic mammals	2019-2024	SPEA, ICNF, Municipality of Peniche, ESTM, FCSH-UL
<b>Seagull population control</b> Annual control actions of seagull population on the berlenga island by egg destruction.	2019-	ICNF
<b>3 - Cultural, economic and social development</b>		
<b>CoPesca2</b> Implementation of a Co-management Comittee for <i>Pollicipes pollicipes</i> artisanal harvesting	2018-	ESTM-IPLeiria, WWF, ICNF, UEvora
<b>ANZOL +</b> Fisheries management	2019-	SPEA
<b>Natural heritage brochures</b> Electronic and physical distribution of brochures for supporting the natural heritage of RBB	Ongoing	ESTM, ICNF, Municipality of Peniche

The Berlenga Islands and the Berlenga Biosphere Reserve have been receiving interest and notoriety for being a “Natural Treasure”. Various publications and press releases were made regarding the territory. These are a few examples:



The regional newspaper **Região de Leiria** published a whole magazine supplement dedicated to the Berlenga Islands.



The acclaimed Portuguese **journalist Paulo Salvador**, awarded as the “Best European Gastronomy Journalist 2019” by the European Oenogastronomic Brotherhoods Council, came to the Berlenga Biosphere to showcase local gastronomy.

See the video [here](#)

### Five Great Places to Dive Near Lisbon

Urban Scuba Diving in Portugal

By Terry Ward January 12, 2021



**Terry Ward**, an American freelancer, journalist, reporter and travel writer who is a scuba diving enthusiast visited the Berlenga Biosphere in September 2020

<https://www.scubadiving.com/five-great-places-to-dive-near-lisbon>



Experiências / Rotetras / Inspirações / Culturales / Dicas úteis / Sobre nós



The Portuguese Bloggers from **Explorandar** did a 3 piece report / blog on the Berlenga Biosphere territory, focusing on the mainland (Peniche), the local gastronomy and the Berlenga Islands

<https://explorandar.com/2020/07/19/roteiro-visitatar-peniche/>

<https://explorandar.com/2020/11/15/comer-peniche-restaurantes/>

<https://explorandar.com/2020/09/30/visitar-berlengas/>



Portuguese influencer and surfer **João Kopke** visited the Berlenga Biosphere with his new tv documentary “De Norte a Sal”

See the video [here](#)





## 1. INTRODUCTION

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The Meseta Ibérica Transboundary Biosphere Reserve is centered on the development of the project "Cultural heritage, autochthonous products, nature and tourism as an economic basis for the development of the Meseta Ibérica Transboundary Biosphere Reserve" co-financed by the POCTEP Program, whose objectives are to protect and enhance cultural and natural heritage of the Meseta Ibérica.

It is intended to boost responsible and sustainable tourism and provide the Meseta Ibérica with interpretive and centres and tourist signaling, in order to generate added value for the territory, for visitors and tourists with tourist itineraries. The creation of a corporate tourist brand for the territory, obtaining the Biosphere Destination Certification, the integrated



management of resources and potential, as well as the search for synergies that will provide the project with a multiplier effect, as it is, the preparation of the application for Intangible Heritage of Humanity of the winter masks of Raia Ibérica in the ancient Zoela territory and the plan to promote sustainable agri-food production with the product quality mark of the Meseta Ibérica Transboundary Biosphere Reserve.



## 2. GOVERNANCE ACTIONS

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The European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation ZASNET AECT has established cooperation networks between various entities, namely with local and regional entities for the management of RBT Meseta Ibérica, among them the cooperation with the State Secretariat for the Valorisation of the Interior, CIM TTM (Intermunicipal Community Terras de Trás-os-Montes), IPB (Polytechnic Institute of Bragança) and its Mountain

Research Centre (CIMO), EDP, LAGs (Local Action Groups), Associations of local products and services and NGO's. Working meetings were established with all these bodies and the activities in which the ZASNET AECT participates and / or is represented are promoted, in order to achieve the best governance posture, as well as to involve the community in this governance and to promote and value the territory.

### **3. CONSERVATION FUNCTION**

The mentioned project contemplates the integrated management of resources and potentialities, which we believe are a clear international projection of the territory. With the BIOSPHERE Certification of Tourist Destination



through the Responsible Tourism Institute, we understand that we are promoting the conservation of nature, through the awareness of the region's businessmen, visitors and the population in general to the importance of the environment as the basis Social development.

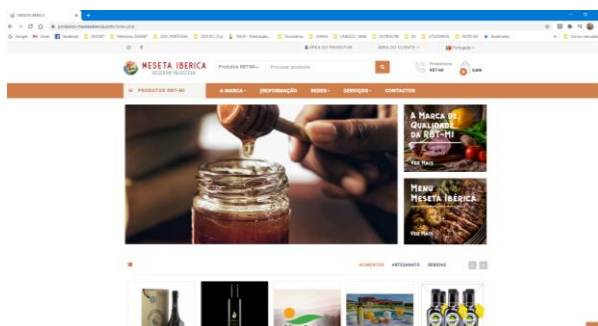
This project aims to value the territory and its natural and economic ecosystems in a transversal way, because only in this way will we be able to value people and the natural environment.

### **4. DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION**

ZASNET, the managing body of RBT Meseta Ibérica, is developing a project in the area of quality and responsible tourism, mentioned above. With the creation of an innovative tourist quality brand for the RBT Meseta Ibérica territory, the aim is to increase the number of visitors with the valuation and economic improvement of services associated with the natural and cultural heritage in a logic of participative sustainable development, with the creation of itineraries joint thematic tours and the enhancement of agricultural products: the creation of a gastronomic itinerary of products and flavours to increase the number of visitors and consumers.

The aim is to boost responsible and sustainable tourism and provide the Meseta Ibérica with interpretive centres and tourist signaling, in order to generate added value for the territory, which will provide the project with a multiplier effect, as it is, the plan to promote

sustainable agricultural production with the product quality mark of the Meseta Ibérica Transboundary Biosphere Reserve.



## 5. LOGISTIC FUNCTION

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The ZASNET\_Meseta Ibérica project, already mentioned, also includes training actions for agents in the territory, so that they can do more and better within their activities. Meseta Ibérica receives trainees from ESEB-IPB, from the Environmental Education course, namely from PALOP.

RBT Meseta Ibérica, together with all the activities already described, joined a program, promoted by EDP and in conjunction with various agents of the territory, namely NGO's, municipalities and schools, whose objective is to educate 8th grade youth schooling.



The Junto à Terra (JaT) Program is an education project for sustainability, where the importance of biodiversity is communicated in a conceptual line that starts from global thinking for local action. In the meantime, it participates in other environmental education actions in partnership with other partners in the territory.

## 6. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIONS

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Communication actions have been part of ZASNET's actions for several years, namely the promotion of the activities it develops individually or with partners, whether they are publications in specialized magazines, in local newspapers, social networks (Facebook,

Instagram and Twitter). Alongside, RBT Meseta Ibérica participates and also promotes seminars, inside and outside doors, in order to communicate the territory and its heritage.

<https://www.instagram.com/rbtmesetaiberica/>

<https://www.facebook.com/reservabiosferatransfronteiricamesetaiberica>

<https://twitter.com/rmesetaiberica>



Reserva da Biosfera Transfronteiriça  
Tejo/Tajo Internacional

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## Tejo/Tajo International Transboundary Biosphere Reserve

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

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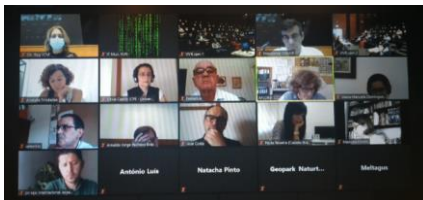
The year 2020 was strongly marked by a pandemic setting, which limited TTITBR activities, namely physical actions in the territory. Awareness-raising and environmental education and governance actions were essentially based on virtual interactions.

In this respect the following actions were undertaken:

### 2. GOVERNANCE ACTIONS

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Fostering of three governance actions, in compliance with what is expressed in the operating regulations of the governing body and advisory council of the TTITBR.



### 3. LOGISTICS

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I – Promotion of a school competition aimed at professional education schools, for the elaboration of billboards relating to TTITBR visitation. Two winning works were chosen from the fifteen received works. It is intended to print the winners and use them in dissemination campaigns about the importance of visiting this classified territory.



II – Fostering of the Pedagogic Project, in a physical and virtual format, entitled “Getting to know and to value the TTITBR”, targeted at high school students, where the importance of the Biosphere Reserve and the dissemination of the territory of the TTITBR is addressed. Four schools and 245 students were involved.



III – Design and dissemination of the thematic video “A different year” about the defence and valuation of the natural heritage of the TTITBR.



IV- Commemoration of the Native Forest Day – Elaboration and Dissemination of the awareness-raising thematic video on the importance of maintaining the native forest of TTITBR.



V- Celebrations of the World Environment Day by the launch of the virtual contest “Share a Memory”:



#### 4. DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

Continuation of the preparation of the thematic project “TERRITORY WITH LIFE” to be implemented in 2022, with the forestry, agricultural, hunting, nature conservation and environmental education facets. Although planned with the other TTITBR partners for 2020, this joint activity saw its realisation postponed due to the prevailing pandemic.



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## Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

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The Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve (CVRB) is located in Mainland Portugal, in the Baixo Alentejo region, with an area of 569km<sup>2</sup>, being coincident with the boundaries of the Municipality of Castro Verde. In these extensive and long plains, the high diversity of natural and cultural values result from the millenary man-nature relationship that characterize this humanized ecosystems of high natural value.

The year 2020 was marked by two events that strongly marked the Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve. On the one hand, all activities were affected by the COVID19 pandemic. On the other hand, there was a large fire on July 13<sup>rd</sup>, which affected an area of about 2500 hectares that had economic and environmental consequences on numerous farms. Following this fire, a meeting was held on July 29<sup>th</sup> involving civil protection partners, farmers and landowners to provide a balance of the occurrence and to identify ways to prevent these large fires, which frequency appears to be increasing as a result of climate change.

### 2. GOVERNANCE ACTIONS

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The Management Council, constituted by the three organizations responsible for the CVRB management (MCV - Município de Castro Verde, AACB - Associação de Agricultores do Campo Branco e LPN – Liga para a Protecção da Natureza) had coordination meetings during 2020.

The sources of funding used for the implementation of CVRB activities were the budgets of the three entities that constitute the Management Council (MCV, AACB and LPN), as well as the budgets of partners that participate in the Advisory Board and implemented



actions (Castro Verde Schools Grouping, ICNF, Football Club Castrense, Cortiçol Association, among others). The activities related to the imperial eagle were financed by the LIFE Programme of the European Union and the activities concerning powerlines (both monitoring and powerline corrections) had private financing (EDP Distribuição).

The process for reviewing Castro Verde's Land Management Municipal Plan, a central element of the spatial planning of the Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve, began its review process, including a public auscultation with a participatory session that took place on October 20<sup>th</sup> and obtaining contributions in the context of preventive prevention that took place until November 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **3. CONSERVATION FUNCTION**

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AACB and LPN, together with the Regional Directorate of Agriculture and Fisheries of Alentejo (DRAPAL), followed the implementation of the Agro-environmental Measures, such as the Castro Verde Zonal Plan that supports farmers to implement farming activities which promotes the conservation of the endangered steppe bird populations and their habitats in good environmental conditions, as well as the traditional landscape. It should be noted that in 2020 it was announced the possibility for new applications for the Castro Verde Zonal Plan for 2021 and 2022, which could increase the number of farmers adhering to agricultural practices compatible with the conservation of steppe birds.

The LPN implemented a project funded by the Portuguese Government (Fundo Ambiental) that allowed the implementation steppe habitat management measures, that included the structural and functional requalification of aquatic habitats (silt removal in summer pools and small dams, protection from grazing of areas along the banks of in streams and dams, increase riparian vegetation cover), improvement of nesting conditions for Lesser Kestrel and Roller and increase water availability for wild fauna.

In 2020 the LIFE Imperial Project which involved LPN and MCV (amongst other partners) was concluded. This project promoted the conservation of the Iberian imperial eagle in Portugal and contributed to the increase in the population of this species in Portugal, from 11 couples in 2013 to 24 couples in 2020. These results also had positive repercussions on the consolidation and installation of new territories of the Iberian

Imperial Eagle in the Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve. Among the actions carried out in 2020 stands out the dissemination of a code of conduct with 10 Good Practices for Tourism and Nature Photography and the production of animated videos to raise awareness about the conservation of the species.

LPN in partnership with EDP-Distribuição is implementing the Avifauna Protocol 8 that identified 20 km of powerlines, which were retrofitted in 2020 to reduce the impact of these infrastructures on steppe bird, namely the collision by Great Bustards and Little Bustards.

#### **4. DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION**

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The MCV organized the Entrudanças Festival between February 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, with the theme "O Pão" (Bread). Due to the pandemic by COVID19, several events were cancelled whose realization was not possible for public health reasons (Festival Sabores do Borrego, Festas de Castro, Feira de Castro, Feira de Natal, among others).

In the context of tourism promotion it should be noted that Castro Verde is the only Biosphere Reserve crossed by the mythical National Road 2 (EN2). This tourist product assumed in 2020 an important expression and contributed to boost the tourism sector of the Biosphere Reserve, especially amongst national tourists. Thus, two commemorative landmarks of the 75th anniversary of EN2 were placed in Castro Verde. Also in the field of tourism began the implementation of the project of creation of the Cycling Center of Castro Verde, under the responsibility of the MCV and with co-financing of the PDR2020.

LPN's Vale do Gonçálinho Environmental Education Centre and MCV Tourism Office maintained the support for visitors (individual and groups), providing visitation counselling about CVRB. LPN also organized guided birdwatching visits despite the small numbers of visitors during 2020.

#### **5. LOGISTIC FUNCTION**

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In the context of agricultural activity, AACB has kept the Farming Experimentation Trials in operation, in partnership with IPBeja, whose objective is to combine farming

experimentation with research and demonstrate results adapted to the region and the needs of farmers. The results were published online in October 2020.

In education, several environmental awareness activities were carried out with the students of the Castro Verde School Group (AECV), which integrated the theme of the Biosphere Reserve as an element of its Annual Activity Plan. In the context of curricular flexibility, a local curriculum discipline entitled "Biosphere", with a 3-hour weekly school workload for classes from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Grade has implemented. Also noteworthy is the Project of "Cante Alentejano na Escola" that promotes among the youngest the learning of this Intangible Heritage of UNESCO, covering students from preschool to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

In the 2020/21 school year, the MCV assumed the Curricular Enrichment Activities (AEC) in the schools of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle of the Castro Verde School Grouping. One of the AEC available is the "Biosphere" which includes activities to raise awareness of the natural and agricultural values of the Biosphere Reserve, as well as activities that stimulate the ability to build, repair and program using materials and technology from an innovation perspective.

The Portuguese Society of Pastures and Fodder, with the support of the MCV and the AACB, organized the 42<sup>nd</sup> Autumn Meeting, which took place online on 17/12/2020, under the theme "Extensive agricultural systems in the Campo Branco region", which had the intervention of the Secretary of State for the Valorization of the Inland, Isabel Ferreira.

As part of the 9<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Museum of Rurality opened to the public on August 1<sup>st</sup> the Photography Exhibition "Avifauna of the Biosphere of Castro Verde" by Dinis Cortes

In terms of monitoring natural values, census were made for some of the priority species of the RBCV: Red kite (LPN and SPEA), Crane (LPN and ICNF), Iberian imperial eagle (LPN and ICNF), black-bellied- sandrouse (ICNF), Lesser Kestrel and Roller (ISA/CEABN). ICNF carried out monitoring work in the context of the reintroduction of the Iberian lynx. Due to the pandemic by COVID19 in 2020 it was not possible to make the Great Bustard spring census (for the first time since 1997).

## 6. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIONS

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The Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve uses Facebook as a social network (<https://www.facebook.com/castroverdebiosfera/>), having made 22 posts with information during 2020 and has 2033 followers. RBCV does not yet have its own website, but there is information available on the MCV and LPN website.

On June 15, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve was celebrated, which took place at an online Facebook event that included the presentation of the new Tourist Map of Castro Verde (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VCjn53T0Os>) and the signing of the Contract for the implementation of the Castro Verde Cycling Center, which involves local partners such as the Associations 100 Trilhos, AMCP Bike Team and "Lunáticos do Pedal".

In 2020, 2 television programs about the Biosphere Reserve were recorded: (i) RTP2's "Faça Chuva ou Faça Sol" program on 18/05/2020 on the Farming Experimentation Trials with local farmers and IPBeja researchers; (ii) TV Record Europa program "Giro" that presented the natural and cultural heritage, biodiversity, culture and gastronomy of the Biosphere Reserve. Regarding the advertising presence in the written press magazines stands out the promotional article of AMBITUR (February 2020 edition).

In March, the example of the farming regime compatible with the preservation of steppe birds was presented at the XII Jornadas of the Muralhas Veterinary Hospital in Évora. In September, the expedition of the "Tour de Autor – Pelos Novos Caminhos de Santiago" took place in search of the traditions of worship and the Order of Santiago, through the culture and unique places of Alentejo and Ribatejo, accompanied by the historian specialized in the Caminhos de Santiago, Paulo Almeida Fernandes, who visited the Museum of Lucerne, the Church of Remedies, the Obelisk of the Battle of Ourique, the Treasure of the Royal Basilica and the historical site of São Pedro das Cabeças.

To promote awareness for several environmental subjects LPN promotes a weekly programme at the local Castrense Radio, in collaboration with the Cortiçol Association (21 broadcasts in 2020).

In addition to the new Tourist Map was produced a collection of educational games and tourist promotion, with a set of 6 puzzles that focus on some of the most relevant aspects of the natural, cultural and historical heritage of the Biosphere Reserve of Castro Verde,

such as the Royal Basilica, the Great Bustard, the Lucernes, the Cante Alentejo, the Viola Campaniça and typical cake (Queijada de Requeijão).

The 360° Hot Air Balloon Trip through the skies of the Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve with the Emotion - Life on Adventure company published by Carolina Pescada (Jornal Público) was the winner of the Best Digital Innovation Award of the SAPO Awards 2020.

In all these initiatives took the opportunity to present the natural and cultural values that underpinner the recognition of the territory as a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO, as well as the challenges in terms of promoting sustainable development in this territory.



Puzzles



Touristic Map of the Castro Verde Biosphere Reserve



Commemorative Landmark of National Road 2 in Castro Verde.



Environmental activities carried out with students.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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In the last year, RBIC developed, promoted and participated in several actions, among which, the following stand out:

- Following the last statutory visit of the Regional Government of the Azores, the President of the Government presented in the presence of the Regional Secretary for Energy, Environment and Tourism the projects for the Miradouro das Eiras do Maranhão, a winning proposal from the Participatory Budget of the Azores and, requalification of the Caldeirão Viewpoint. This intervention results from a partnership between the owners of the spaces and the Government of the Azores, aiming at enhancing the heritage and history of the island of Corvo.



- Also, within the scope of the aforementioned statutory visit, the Regional Secretary for Energy, Environment and Tourism, inaugurated the Vila do Corvo charging point, promoting electric mobility and promoting the electrification of land transport in the archipelago. The infrastructure will be essential for the application of



environmental quality policies and awareness-raising measures that the Government of the Azores has implemented throughout the archipelago, but also of nature conservation policies and ongoing LIFE projects.

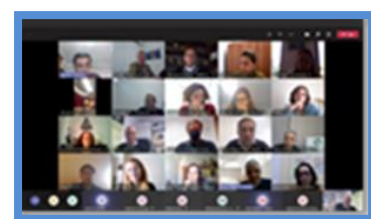
## 2. GOVERNANCE ACTIONS

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- The Regional Directorate for the Environment put into public consultation the proposals for the Action Plans of the Biosphere Reserves of Corvo, Flores, Graciosa and Fajãs de São Jorge, between January 20 and February 28, 2020. In order to clarify all interested parties about the main proposals of the referred Action Plans and, appealing for the participation of the population, that Regional Directorate also promoted public sessions in the respective islands.



- Participation as President of the Management Council of the Corvo Island Biosphere Reserve, in the annual regular meetings of the MaB National Committee, held online by the Teams platform, where, among other matters, the status of the documents submitted to the Council was reviewed. of International Coordination, as well as an analysis of the project: “Biosphere Reserves - Sustainable Territories, Resilient Communities”, to be developed within the scope of the actions financed by the EEA Grants 2014-2021, respectively.



## 3. CONSERVATION ACTIONS

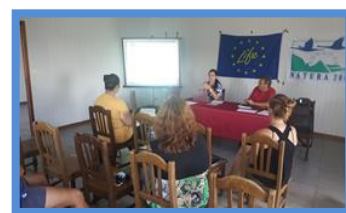
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- Monthly, as part of the LIXAZ and OSPAR project, the actions defined in the IMPLAMAC project were implemented, which aims to create an observatory that generates quantitative and qualitative data on the impact of microplastics and different pollutants on the beaches of the archipelagos of the Canaries, Cape Verde, Madeira and the Azores. To this end, a program for monitoring microplastics and different pollutants in the sands and waters of the beaches of the four archipelagos will be developed.





- Presentation session of the LIFE IP Azores Natura project, with the presence of the Project Coordinator, who clearly and concisely presented and explained it to the members of the Management Board of the Biosphere Reserve on the island of Corvo. This covers most Natura 2000 sites in the Azores and has as main objective the implementation of the Priority Action Framework for the Natura 2000 Network (PAF 2014-2020), so that future monitoring / evaluations show a better conservation status for 100% of habitats and more than 50% of species, than those described in an unfavorable state in the last evaluation report for the EU (2013).



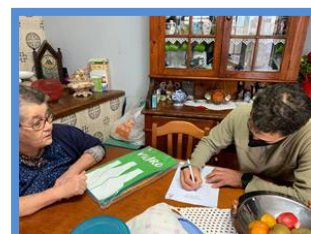
- Annually, seeds are collected to be sent to the Azores Seed Bank - Jardim Botânico do Faial, a safe deposit that guarantees the safeguarding of most plant species, through controlled laboratory conditions, where they are preserved. Regular afforestation and afforestation actions are also carried out with endemic species, in different locations of the Corvo Biosphere Reserve.



#### 4. DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

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- The Regional Directorate for the Environment promoted, in partnership with the Municipality of Corvo, through the Environment Service an action to raise awareness about waste, aiming at bringing the resident population closer to the theme of waste. This consisted of the application of a door-to-door survey, sent to the Waste Division, for further statistical analysis and preparation of a report with the results. Each dwelling received a set of Eco bags and the explanatory leaflet "Let's separate".



- Delivery of the Green Schools Eco banner to EBS Mouzinho da Silveira, which for the 10th consecutive year has achieved the Award of this international program that aims to encourage actions and recognize the quality work developed by schools, within the scope of Environmental Education/Education for Sustainable Development, thus aiming to guarantee the participation of children and young



people in decision-making, involving them in the construction of a more sustainable school and community.

- The Government of the Azores annually promotes the SOS Cagarro Campaign, through the Regional Directorate for Sea Affairs, with the support of the Regional Directorate for the Environment, with the Island Natural Parks as institutional partners. Following the 2020 edition, the Regional Directorate for Sea Affairs, through the Corvo Natural Park, awarded the “Cagarro D’Ouro” award, which aims to value the people and entities that participate more actively and regularly in this campaign.



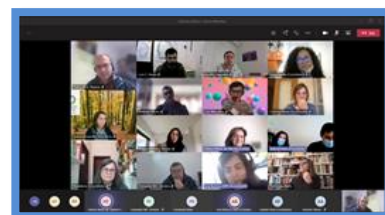
## 5. LOGISTICS ACTIONS

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- Quarterly collection of samples in the SLAM trap (Sea, Land and Air Malaise trap) installed in Corvo, for later sending to Prof. Paulo Borges - Azorean Biodiversity Group / UAç, within the scope of the “Long-Term Ecological Study of the Natural Forests of the Azores” - NETBIOME ISLANDBIODIV project.



- Between 7 and 11 September, the Corvo 2020 mission of IMAR / UAç took place, for the maintenance and recovery of data from the acoustic telemetry network aimed at the study of the ecology of the Mero (*Epinephelus marginatus*) and monitoring of the voluntary reserve of “Caneiro dos Meros” , marine area of the Natural Park of Corvo, which provided all the logistical support and means necessary to carry it out.



- Participation in the meetings with a view to presenting the set of registered actions and to be developed within the scope of the EEA Grants project: Biosphere Reserves, Resilient Territories, Sustainable Communities.
- Throughout the year 2020, the Natural Park of Corvo provided support for human and material resources to the Portuguese Society for the Study of Birds, namely, in the maintenance and assembly work of a roof of the Estufim, which this NGO has for the production of endemic species.

## 6. COMMUNICATION ACTIONS

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- In April, the Corvo Biosphere Reserve sent a text and respective photographs to the 2020 edition of the magazine “I Like This”, under the theme “Our Heritage at the Service of Sustainability”.

- Between September 7 and 11, the Natural Parks of Corvo and Flores hosted the 6th Regional Meeting of Nature Watchers of the Azores, whose activities took place on the islands of Corvo and Flores, which was attended by some elements of the Vigilante program of the Junior Nature of the Azores. Regional program that intends that young people, between 8 and 15 years old, arouse interest and participate in the preservation of the natural heritage.



## 7. OTHER AREAS NOT INTEGRATED IN THE PREVIOUS TOPICS

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- Within the scope of the VALCONMAC project, the Corvo Biosphere Reserve provided support to the Regional Directorate of Forest Resources in the development of an action included in the Macaronesia Remarkable Tree Network, having also developed the AZORESFORESTPARKS APP, which through posts with QR Codes, make available information from each cataloged specimen, not only to signal them as part of a common network, but also to allow interested parties to access the information on these trees.



- Carrying out activities within the scope of Parque Aberto 2020, a program that aims to disseminate and promote the natural heritage of the Natural Parks of the Azores by the entire population, through the provision of environmental, scientific and socio-cultural promotion, awareness and conservation actions, throughout the year. Some of them were carried out within the scope of the LIFE IP Açores Natura Project.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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In the last year, at Graciosa Island Biosphere Reserve, a very diverse set of actions was developed, promoted and carried out, of which the following stand out:



In 2020, the start of the work and actions foreseen in the Operational Plan of the Ilha Graciosa, which was developed within the scope of the LIFE IP AZORES NATURA project, was particularly noteworthy. Considered as the largest conservation project ever conceived for the Azores, it has a global direct investment of around 19.1 million euros, of which 14.1 million euros are earmarked for the land component, corresponding to a vast set of interventions in the 41 areas of the Natura 2000 Network of the Azores that will run until December 2027.

Throughout 2020, the LIFE IP AZORES NATURA project, in partnership with the association “*Plant a Tree*”, and the Ilha Natural Parks, organized 4 volunteer camps, namely in the islands of Graciosa (14 to 21 July), Flores (15 to 23 August), Pico (14 to 22 September) and Santa Maria (5 to 13 November).



Despite the pandemic caused by COVID-19 having forced to modify some procedures, the balance is extremely positive. In the volunteer camps organized in 2020, more than 50 volunteers from the various islands of the Azores participated, as well as some young volunteers of different nationalities, also counting on the participation of several institutions and companies based in the Region.

Various activities took place over the days, ranging from coastal cleaning, control of exotic and invasive species, reinforcement of populations of endemic and native species, as well as the monitoring of these same populations. These volunteer fields contributed

to the dissemination of the richness of the natural heritage of the Azores and are part of Action E5 of the LIFE IP AZORES NATURA project "*Public involvement and volunteer program*".



## 2. GOVERNANCE ACTIONS

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- Participation of the Graciosa Island Biosphere Reserve in the two annual meetings of the National Committee of the Man and the Biosphere (MaB) Program that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic contingency, were held online, through the Teams platform. Among other issues, the status of the documents submitted to the International Coordination Council was reviewed, as well as an analysis of the project: "*Biosphere Reserves - Sustainable Territories, Resilient Communities*", to be developed within the scope of actions financed by EEA Grants 2014 -2021.



- The two ordinary meetings of the Graciosa Island Biosphere Reserve Management Council were held in 2020, as recommended by regional legislation. Following the 18th meeting, held on January 10, a Public Session was held on the proposal for an "*Action Plan for the Graciosa Island Biosphere Reserve*" whose final version was published in the Official Journal of the Autonomous Region of Azores on October 6.

- Participation of the Graciosa Island Biosphere Reserve Management Council in the online seminar (webinar) on "*Resilient and sustainable islands*", promoted by the SMILO Association (Small Islands Organization).

## 3. CONSERVATION FUNCTION

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- Integrated in the Roseate Tern LIFE Project (LIFE14 NAT/UK/000394), Graciosa was part of the working group to update the "*International (East Atlantic) Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the roseate tern*



*Sterna dougallii*". During 2020, in addition to participation in the Roseate Tern SAP workshop, contributions were sent to the status report, to the Framework for Action, and to the final proposal of the action plan "*East Atlantic Roseate Tern SAP*".

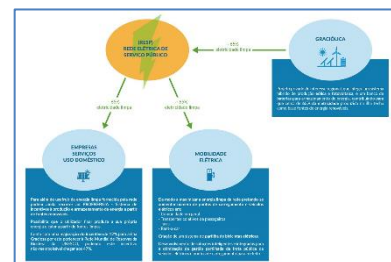
- In 2020, planting specimens of *Tolpis succulenta* was promoted along the coast of Graciosa. Some/few populations of coastal *Tolpis* on the island are currently treated as *T. succulenta*, but research carried out by Dan Crawford, from Kansas (USA), has shown that it is, in fact, a new species not yet described.

#### 4. DEVELOPMENT FUNCTIONS

- During the year 2020, 2 new contracts were signed with local companies for the use of the "*Biosfera Açores*" brand and logo, as regulated in the "*Biosfera Açores*" brand regulation and in the legal regime for the conservation of nature and biodiversity in the Autonomous Region of the Azores, namely with the island's pharmacy - Farmácia Graciosa - and with the INATEL Foundation as the managing entity of the Graciosa Hotel. There are currently 11 local companies authorized to use the "*Biosfera Açores*" brand and logo.



- In 2020, regional support was maintained and increased for the "*system of incentives for the maintenance of traditional landscapes of the vineyard, in corrals and in terraces, and of orchards of traditional species*", "integrated in regional natural parks and biosphere reserves". At Graciosa until 2020, there are currently 30 candidates whose projects guarantee the preservation of 73 vineyard pens ( $\pm 20$  ha) and 22 orchards of traditional species ( $\pm 4$  ha), with an overall support of around € 47 thousand euros per year.



- Participation of Graciosa in the II Meeting of the Forum for Monitoring the Sustainability of the Azores Tourist Destination (FASDTA) as a member of the Green Team of Graciosa, foreseen in governmental legislation.

- In 2020, the Regional Government of the Azores announced the implementation of the 'Graciosa – Model Island' project which aims to make the island Graciosa a model as an intelligent electric ecosystem, based on the sustainable use of its natural resources and its optimized integration into the network. This pilot project foresees the implementation of innovative and emerging electric mobility solutions, including the use of electric bicycles through a sharing system, taking advantage of the island's intrinsic characteristics for adopting this type of mobility.

## 5. LOGISTIC FUNCTION

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- Support to the team of the Portuguese Society for the Study of Birds (SPEA) in the work carried out in the natural reserves of the islet of Baixo and Praia, namely, in the monitoring of Graciosa's nesting seabirds within the scope of LIFE IP AZORES NATURA.



- In 2020, the renovation of the entire signage of the Graciosa Natural Park began, namely, to bring communication and information closer to the existing signage to the counterpart of the rest of the national territory, established by national law.

- During 2020, several contributions were sent by the Graciosa Island Biosphere Reserve Management Council and their members, namely and among others:

- To the *Secretaría de la Red IberoMaB* for updating the digital catalog "*Información Básica. Reservas de la Biosfera Iberoamericanas*".
- Completion of an online survey promoted by the UNESCO Internal Oversight Service (IOS), in collaboration with Hydroconseil, as part of an independent *Mid-term Evaluation of the Man and Biosphere Programme Strategy 2015-2025 and its Lima Action Plan 2016-2025*.
- Completion of a "*questionnaire to the managers of Biosphere Reserves*", as part of an application to the EEA Grants - Projects for the promotion of sustainable development models in Portuguese Biosphere Reserves - Notice # 3, prepared by LOCCIMETRO - Consultoria em Inovação Territorial, Lda.

- An online survey entitled “*IberoMAB Biosphere Reserves y Covid-19*” was sent to the MaB Program Secretariat in Paris.
- A questionnaire prepared as part of the process of preparing the “*Guide for preparing the 10-year reports on the IberoMab Network’s RB*” was sent to the IberoMab Secretariat
- Sent to the Secretary of the IberoMab Network a questionnaire elaborated within the scope of the elaboration process of the “Document of Guidelines for the Preparation of Periodic Evaluation Reports of Biosphere Reserves”.
- Completion of the “*Environmental Education Survey in the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (EA2CPLP)*”, developed by OBSERVA (Observatory of Environment, Territory and Society of the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon) and ASPEA (Portuguese Association of Environmental Education) in collaboration with the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom.

## **6. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIONS**

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- Between January 30 and February 2, the Nature Wardens of the Graciosa participated in the “*XXIII National Meeting of Nature Wardens and XVII Technical Days*”, which took place in the Natural Park of Southwest Alentejo and Costa Vicentina, in the south of mainland Portugal.
- On November the Graciosa Natural Park celebrated its 12th anniversary and the International Day of Biosphere Reserves with a guided visit to the protected area for the management of habitats or species on Ponta da Restinga and an action of ringing and liberation of Cory’s shearwater (*Calonectris borealis*) with a senior group from the Social and Parish Center of Nossa Senhora da Luz.



## 7. OTHER AREAS NOT INTEGRATED IN THE PREVIOUS TOPICS

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- In 2020, the program “*Mal-amanhados - Os Novos Corsários das Ilhas*” was broadcast on RTP, the main public television channel, conducted by the two Azorean communicators, Luís Filipe Borges and Nuno Costa Santos, under which, in the episode about Graciosa Island, particular emphasis was given to Furna do Enxofre and the native donkey breed called “*Burro da Graciosa*”.



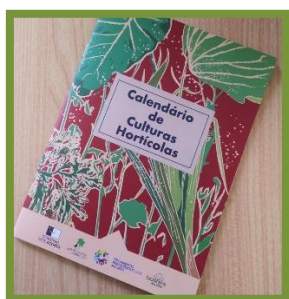
- In January 2020, the Government of the Azores, to mark the 5th anniversary of the “*Marca Açores*” (Açores Brand), was held at Furna do Enxofre, located inside the Natural Monument of Caldeira da Graciosa, the “*First Azores Brand Gala*”. Created in 2015 by the Regional Government of the Azores, it currently encompasses around 200 companies and aims to promote and value Azorean products and the creation of a value-adding brand.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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In 2020, Flores Island Biosphere Reserve promoted and participated in multiple actions, highlighting the following:



- Execution of Project nº 25/2018 of the Participatory Budget of Azores "Common Land / Land Memories". This project aims to be a human platform that establishes the harmonious connection between the land and its people, its past and present, leveraging both, embracing popular knowledge, rescuing the simplicity and autonomy of the island's ancient life, allying it with the modern knowledge, thus making everyday life more sustainable, healthy, diverse, participatory and supportive. This project has already organized some activities, namely a workshop on organic farming and the execution of a "Horticultural Crop Calendar". This brochure presents some tips and recipes to make the best use out of vegetables, providing insights regarding the best planting and harvest times for many commonly grown species in Azorean backyards.

- Beginning of LIFE BEETLES and LIFE IP Azores Natura project works. In the first project, the preparatory works for conservation actions and the involvement of relevant stakeholders, such as municipalities, schools and the population in general, are already complete. For this purpose, clarification sessions and workshops have already



been performed. Regarding to LIFE IP Azores Natura, some preparatory actions have already been completed, such as information processing, internal and external training strategies, and communication and networking actions with other LIFE projects are already underway. In both projects, conservation works have already begun in the

intervention areas to improve habitat quality, through actions of invasive flora control and planting of native trees and shrubs.

## 2. GOVERNANCE ACTIONS

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- The proposal for the Flores Island Biosphere Reserve Action Plan was available for public consultation at the beginning of the year. The presentation session took place in Santa Cruz das Flores Town Hall and aimed to clarify and inform the population about the main goals of the Action Plan, appealing to the participation of the community. Still during the year 2020, the Plan was approved and published in Official Journal, by the Decree 79/2020, of 23 June.



- Presentation of LIFE BEETLES and LIFE IP Azores Natura projects to the Management Board of Flores Island Biosphere Reserve during the ordinary meeting. Both projects are co-financed by the European Union and coordinated by the Regional Secretariat for the Environment and Climate Change. The main goal of LIFE BEETLES is to improve the population size, distribution area and conservation status of 3 species of endemic beetles, one of them endemic to Flores Island, an Ironclad Beetle (*Tarphius floresensis*). On the other hand, LIFE IP Azores Natura covers 2 SAC's (Special Areas of Conservation) and 2 SPA's (Special Protection Areas) of Natura 2000 Network in Flores Island, seeking to pose a significant contribution to the conservation of species and habitats protected by the Habitats and Birds Directives.

### 3. CONSERVATION ACTIONS

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- Voluntary actions “*Volunteer Escapes Camps*”, part of the LIFE IP AZORES NATURA project (LIFE 17 IPE/PT/000010), resulted from a partnership between Plantar Uma Árvore - Association (P1A) and the Regional Directorate for the Environment and Climate Change, with the objective of carrying out a program that includes youth volunteering

camp and volunteer initiatives involving the Flores Island community and visitors. Between August 15 and 23, concrete conservation actions of nature and biodiversity were carried out, creating an opportunity for greater awareness for the importance of values, heritage and natural capital of the territory.

### 4. DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

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- Support and promotion of the “Azores Biosphere” brand. During the year 2020, a company applied to use the “Azores Biosphere” brand and logo, as regulated in Ordinance No. 27/2011 (Regulation of the brand “Azores Biosphere”) and DLR no. 15/2012 / A, of 2nd April (Legal Regime for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity in the Autonomous Region of the Azores).

- Inauguration of the Electric Mobility Charging Point in Santa Cruz by the Regional Director for Energy. During the presentation of the Charging Point, the Director announced that the electric energy obtained from renewable sources in Flores was around 55% in 2019, 6% of which came from wind energy and 49% from hydropower.

- Workshop “Eco-Traditions from Corn to Bolo-do-Tijolo”. An activity on the production process of Bolo-do-Tijolo (literal



translation=Brick Cake). The participants had the opportunity to see a water mill in operation as well as the whole process, from the cultivation of corn through its transformation, to the making of the Bolo-do-Tijolo, ending with the tasting of the prepared delicacy. During the whole



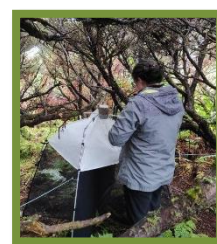
process, it was possible to talk about local traditions and customs, variations of the recipe presented and ways to eat Bolo-do-Tijolo (with butter, in "milk soups", with jam and cheese).

- Installation of 12 community composters by the Municipality of Santa Cruz das Flores within the scope of the Municipality's Environmental policies. This investment aims to introduce organic recovery in the municipality through composting. The composters were installed in publicly accessible areas, allowing them to be used by both municipal services and the general population.
- Distinction of the Bathing Area of Fajã Grande with the classification "Gold Quality Beach" by the National Association of Nature Conservation Quercus.

## **5. LOGISTICS ACTIONS**

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- Support in the field work, placement and sample collection of PitFall and SLAM traps (Sea, Land and Air Malaise trap) at various points of Natura 2000 Network. These traps aim to capture arthropods in a container that is later filtered and sent to the University of Azores for analysis. The collection and filtration of these samples is usually carried out on a trimestral basis, in 7 traps installed along Flores Island, serving as a monitoring and identifying method for the arthropods species present on the island. This action is also part of the LIFE BEETLES project and the "Long-Term Ecological Study of the Natural Forests of the Azores" - NETBIOME ISLANDBIODIV project.
- Support in the fieldwork of Eel Trek project (a project that deepens scientific knowledge about ocean the various actions developed in the last year, the following deserve special mention:



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

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In 2020 there are continuous works of the Biosphere Reserve of Fajãs de São Jorge:

- Maintenance of trails, viewpoints and signage inserted within the classified areas [F1];
- Collection of coastal waste in urban áreas and Fajã da Caldeira de Santo Cristo;
- Cleaning and monitoring of water lines;
- Nature Conservation Actions [F2];
- Promotion of environmental education activities.

Throughout the year there was support and followed the process of elaboration of the Management Plans of the São Jorge Island Natural Park, Action Plan of the Biosphere Reserve of the Fajãs São Jorge and Integrated Program for Development of Fajãs de São Jorge. These last two were published in the Official Journal of the Autonomous Region of Azores, on October 8, attached to decree number 138/2020.

## **2. GOVERNANCE ACTIONS**

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- Holding of two ordinary meetings of the Fajãs de São Jorge Biosphere Reserve Management Council, foreseen in article 54<sup>o</sup>, paragraph 4, of the DLR no. 15/2012/A of April 2, namely on February 12 with 10 participants and 4 guests, and December 29 with 10 participants and 1 guests [F3].
- Participation in the process of alteration of the Planning Plan for the Coast of São Jorge Island.
- Participation in several work meetings between the four Biosphere Reserves of the Azores and SIMBIENTE AZORES – Engineering and Environmental

Management, Lda., in the context of the elaboration of the Plans of Action of the Biosphere Reserves of the RAA, advocated in the Council Resolution of Government No. 65/2017 of June 22.

- The Regional Directorate for the Environment put into public consultation the proposals for the Action Plans of the Biosphere Reserves of Corvo, Flores, Graciosa and Fajãs de São Jorge, between January 20 and February 28, 2020. In order to clarify all interested parties about the main proposals of the referred Action Plans and appealing for the participation of the population, that Regional Directorate also promoted public sessions in the respective islands [F4].
- Participation as President of the Management Council of the Corvo Island Biosphere Reserve, in the annual regular meetings of the MaB National Committee, held online by the Teams platform, where, among other matters, the status of the documents submitted to the Council was reviewed. of International Coordination, as well as an analysis of the project: “Biosphere Reserves - Sustainable Territories, Resilient Communities”, to be developed within the scope of the actions financed by the EEA Grants 2014-2021, respectively.
- Participation in a meeting held online, by the Teams platform, in December, with a view to presenting actions registered for development within the scope of the project “Biosphere Reserves, Resilient Territories, Sustainable Communities”.
- Participation of the Biosphere Reserve of Fajãs of São Jorge Management Council in the online seminar (webinar) on “*Resilient and sustainable islands*”, promoted by the SMILO Association (Small Islands Organization).

### **3. CONSERVATION FUNCTION**

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- Implementation of PRECEFIAS – Regional Plan for the Eradication and Control of Invasive Plant Species in Sensitive Areas – in all protected areas of Natural Park of São Jorge.
- Collection of seeds of endemic species for the Azores Seed Bank.

- Continuation of implementation of several papers related to the approval of the Life Application – "LIFE VIDALIA – Valorization and Innovation Directed to Azorina and Lotus in the Azores Islands", a program of valorization and innovation that allows the conservation of endemic species *Azorina vidalii* and *Lotus Azoricus*.
- Continuation of implementation of the Life Application "LIFE IP AZORES NATURA - Active Protection and Integrated Management in natura 2000 network" (LIFE17 IPE/PT/00010).
- Presentation session of the LIFE IP Azores Natura project, with the presence of the Project Coordinator, who clearly and concisely presented and explained it to the members of the Management Board of the Biosphere Reserve on the Fajãs of São Jorge. This covers most Natura 2000 sites in the Azores and has as main objective the implementation of the Priority Action Framework for the Natura 2000 Network (PAF 2014-2020), so that future monitoring / evaluations show a better conservation status for 100% of habitats and more than 50% of species.
- Seeds are collected annually to be sent to the Azores Seed Bank – Botanical Garden Faial – safe deposit, which guarantees the safeguarding of most plant species, through controlled laboratory conditions, where those are kept. Regular afforestation and afforestation actions are also carried out with endemic species in different places of the Biosphere Reserve on the Fajãs of São Jorge.

#### **4. DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION**

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- In 2020, support was provided to 11 new applications elaborated under the Regional Regulatory Decree No. 24/2014/A of 15 December, which approves the "system to maintain the production of vineyard, in corrals and terraces, and of traditional species, in protected landscape areas and coastal fajãs, integrated in the Natural Parks of the Island and Biosphere Reserves." In São Jorge, there have already been a total of 49 applications for the preservation of vines and orchards of traditional species (32, 4 ha), with a global support attributed to about €48,500.00 year.



- Implementation of the regulation on the movement of motor vehicles in Fajã da Caldeira de Santo Cristo and the section of the PR1SJO trail, approved by Ordinance No. 59/2018 of 4 June, with the aim of ensuring effective protection of naturally occurring habitats and species in the territory, as well as their landscapes, maintaining ongoing surveillance of their conservation status and adopting the policies and measures necessary to ensure their maintenance in a favourable conservation state of the section in question
- Support the promotion of the trademark “Azores Biosphere”, as regulated in Administrative Rule n.º 27/2011 (Regulation of the “Azores Biosphere” brand) and Regional Legislative Decree n.º 15/2012/A, of April 2 (Legal regime for the conservation of nature and biodiversity in the Autonomous Region of the Azores). Attribution, by request, of the use of the brand by the companies “Café Vimes” and “Queijaria Canada”.
- Promotion and attribution in the Island of São Jorge of the “Miosotis Azores Award” which aims to promote sustainable tourism and reward environmental practices in Azores tourist developments.

## **5. LOGISTIC FUNCTION**

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- Conducting various Censuses (Bats Census, the Wood Pigeon (AZORPI Project), Terns, Common Birds (CAC) and Common Buzzard).
- Promotion and follow-up of the “ECO Parish, Clean Parish” Competition, organized by the Regional Secretariat for Energy, Environment and Tourism, aiming to distinguish the efforts of the parishes and the collaboration of the populations in the cleaning, removal and referral to the final destination of abandoned waste in spaces including water lines and coastlines [F5].
- Collaboration with University of the Azores in the study and monitoring of the lagoon of Fajã Cubres and Caldeira de Santo Cristo, notably for water analysis.
- Conducting various actions of promotion, education and environmental awareness, highlighting the programs Open Park, School Park, Eco-Schools and Azores Entre-Mares [F6].

- Collaboration with the Regional Director of Sea Affairs with the local operationalization of the Azores Cetacean Network (RACA), reporting the boldness and developing the necessary steps.
- Collaboration with the São Jorge Agrarian Development Service in the execution of the annual Environmental Conditionality controls.
- Conducting various activities in partnership with the Geoparque Azores Association, notably in the monitoring of Geossites and several celebrations such as World Earth Day and European Geoparks Week.
- Support to the Hydrometeorological Network of the Azores.
- Support to the Permanent Station Network of the Autonomous Region of the Azores (REPRAA).
- Elaboration of a questionnaire on protected areas was completed, requested by the National Council for the Environment and Sustainable Development.
- Elaboration in the matriz for monitoring the Portugal 2018-2025 action plan of the activities carried out to date by the Biosphere Reserve of Fajãs of São Jorge.
- Completion of a “*questionnaire to the managers of Biosphere Reserves*”, as part of an application to the EEA Grants - Projects for the promotion of sustainable development models in Portuguese Biosphere Reserves - Notice # 3, prepared by LOCCIMETRO - Consultoria em Inovação Territorial, Lda.
- An online survey entitled “*IberoMAB Biosphere Reserves y Covid-19*” was sent to the MaB Program Secretariat in Paris.

## **6. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIONS**

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- In April, the Biosphere Reserve of Fajãs of São Jorge sent a text and respective photographs to the 2020 edition of the magazine “I Like This”, under the theme “Our Heritage at the Service of Sustainability”.

- Between January 30 and February 2, 2 the Nature Wardens of the São Jorge Natural Park participated in the “XXIII National Meeting of Nature Wardens and XVII Technical Days” which took place in the Natural Park of Southwest Alentejo and Costa Vicentina, in the south of mainland Portugal.
- Between setembro 7 and 11 Nature Wardens of the São Jorge Natural Park participated in the VI Regional Meeting of Nature Wardens of Azores, which took place in the islands Corvo and Flores.

## 7. Other areas

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- The Regional Direction for the Environment promoted the candidacy for The National Landscape Prize 2020, entitled Fajãs of São Jorge, obtaining this candidacy the 3º place of podium with honorable mention.

### Photographic credits



(F1)



(F2)



(F3)



(F4)



(F5)



(F7)



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

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Integrated in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves in June 2011, the Santana Madeira Biosphere Reserve is managed by the Municipality of Santana (Madeira). In addition to continuing the projects in progress, it has been guided by outlining strategies for local action based on directives issued by UNESCO. More and more the reserve has been used by local actors, and an example of this is the promotion of actions that, whilst not being organised by the reserve, have the 'biosphere reserve' as their central theme.

## **2. GOVERNANCE**

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Meeting with Cátia Oliveira, coordinator of Portuguese Society for the Study of Birds [Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves] (SPEA) Madeira: application to the project LIFE Natura@night, for the financial instrument for the environment (LIFE programme), in which the Municipality of Santana is a participant. The objective is to minimise light pollution in a broad network of protected areas.

10th meeting of the MaB National Committee, which was held on 2 June by means of videoconference.

Meeting with the Institute of Forestry and Nature Conservation [Instituto das Florestas e da Conservação da Natureza] (IFCN), within the scope of the project Bios Tales – When the Biosphere Reserves Speak [Bios Tales – Quando as Reservas da Biosfera Falam]. Besides the Santana Reserve, also participating in the project are the Reserves of Îles et Mer d'Iroise, Isle of Man, La Palma, Wadden Sea and Halligen Islands of Schleswig-Holstein.

### **3. THE CONSERVATION FUNCTION**

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In partnership with the schools of the municipality through the Pro-Schools Programme, an environmental education activity, ‘**O mar começa aqui**’ [The sea begins here], was carried out. This



activity consisted of painting gutters with figures alluding to the importance of the preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity.

A **Clean-up Campaign** was carried out with the collaboration of the waste water company, ARM – Águas e Resíduos da Madeira, S.A, during the European Week for Waste Prevention with the theme ‘**Invisible Wastes**’, for the purpose of alerting citizens to the amount of waste produced when we manufacture the products we buy, as well as the waste that will be produced following the consumption of those products. So a more intensive mega-operation of cleaning was performed at the most critical points where bulky waste is abandoned.



The Santana town hall invested 38 380 thousand euro in **straw roofs and the recovery** of eight typical houses. Two of those eight houses were recovered from the ground up. In this way, an important landmark of the municipality’s heritage has been preserved.

### **4. THE FUNCTION OF DEVELOPMENT**

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There were 193 participants from 13 countries in the **8th edition of ‘Biosphere Roller Skate’**. The Faial beach was also cleaned up – gathering, separating and identifying the existing rubbish – in collaboration with the local sport and recreational club, CDR Santanense.



A **Festa dos Compadres** starts of the Carnival festivities in the municipality of Santana and the Region of Madeira. This popular manifestation was created by the people for the people as a way of relieving the spirit of hardness of their day-to-day life in working the land. This is a festival where joy, creativity

and a lot of social criticism reign supreme. Ethnography and revelry are found hand in hand, in perfect harmony.



The cultural centre, Casa da Cultura de Santana, hosted the exhibitions related to linen, '**Os Tormentos do Linho**' and '**A Rota do Linho**' by Master Jaime Andrade. These exhibitions promoted the knowledge of artisanal work processes related to the technologies for the transformation of the flax plant.

At the same time, the exhibition '**Panos e Pontos II**', was organised by the Casa do Povo de Santana, displaying tapestries in cross-stitch, canvases, and old lace. Last but not least, the exhibition '**Outros Tempos, Outras Vivências**' brought together numerous artefacts, artisanal articles, pieces of antique furniture and decoration, loaned by members of the community and considered relics today.

To commemorate the 30th anniversary of Associação Lírios do Norte, a group dedicated to entertainment, recreation and the preservation of local culture, the CD '**Memórias de um Povo**' [Memories of a People] was published, with the support of the Santana Town Hall.



The municipality of Santana presented three applications for the **7 Wonders of Popular Culture**: the Typical Santana Houses, the Floral Carpets, and the Festa dos Compadres. Two of the three candidates reached the regional finals,

the Typical Santana Houses and the Floral Carpets.

## 5. THE FUNCTION OF LOGISTICS

**Awareness campaign 'Beatas no Chão? Não!'**, the goal of which was to alert the population to the effects on the marine ecosystem of throwing cigarette butts on the ground and the



consequences. Each year 4.5 trillion cigarette butts are indiscriminately discarded in the environment.

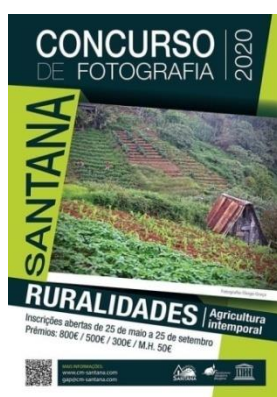


**Exhibition ‘Os nossos suspeitos’**, an activity carried out within the scope of the Blue Flag on the Faial beach, with an exhibition and identification of the rubbish habitually found on the beach.



## 6. ACTIONS OF COMMUNICATION AND DISCLOSURE

Tourism promotion in **Goldenbook Edição Especial 2020 – Desfrutar Portugal** [Goldenbook Special Edition 2020 – Enjoy Portugal], a publication in Portuguese, with 10 000 copies distributed by the 38 participating municipalities and on sale domestically at selected kiosks and bookshops, etc. There are 6 pages dedicated to the municipality of Santana, which highlight the dissemination of the Biosphere Reserve.



Dissemination of the territory of the Biosphere Reserve through a portfolio of **25 post cards**, with photos of various points of tourist interest in the municipality of Santana.

Organization of the **8th edition of the photography contest** entitled ‘Ruralities – Timeless Agriculture’ [Ruralidades – Agricultura Intemporal]. The final result was to promote and pay tribute to agriculture in the municipality of Santana, its



landscapes, subsectors and techniques, from the most traditional to the most modern. One of the results of this contest was a photographic exhibition of the same name, held in the Casa da Cultura de Santana.

Santana hosted the regional final of the **7 Wonders of Popular Culture**, a programme with an international range and visibility, contributing to the dissemination and tourist promotion of the municipality.





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**INTRODUCTION**

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The Biosphere Reserve of the island of Porto Santo, classified on October 28, 2020, does not yet have the management unit formed, assuming that responsibility, at the moment, the Working Group constituted for your application (GT-PSRB).

Of the actions promoted in 2020, we highlight the program issued by RTP-Madeira during the months of August and September, dedicated to the island of Porto Santo as a candidate for UNESCO's Biosphere Reserve. In total, 8 episodes were broadcasted weekly, covering various themes and aimed to raise awareness of the importance of classifying a territory as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, aspects of Porto Santo's socio-cultural identity, its natural heritage and yet the added value for the island's economy with the definition of a sustainable development strategy for the future.

The program was attended by several personalities specialized in Biosphere Reserves, such as Anabela Trindade, chairman of the national committee of the Man & Biosphere program, António Domingos Abreu, as a consultant for UNESCO and Susana Fontinha, of the Regional Secretariat for the Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change, application coordinator.

There were several topics covered, from the use of natural resources by Porto-Santense over the 600 years of settlement, Porto Santo's terrestrial and marine natural heritage and its scientific relevance, biophysical recovery and erosion control, agriculture and excellence the quality of agricultural products, with emphasis on other human and economic activities. The program was also dedicated to the dissemination of projects taking place on the island of Porto Santo in the area of environmental sustainability, and also highlighted the socio-cultural dynamics of Porto-Santo, highlighting the unique aspects of their cultural identity.

## **GOVERNANCE ACTIONS**

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During the year 2020, the GT-PSRB monthly meetings were held and work was carried out to implement the management unit.

## **CONSERVATION FUNCTION**

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During the year 2020, actions with the conservation function aimed at protecting genetic resources, species, ecosystems and landscapes were implemented by the Institute of Forests and Nature Conservation, IP-RAM and were continuity actions:

- Surveillance and inspection of the Porto Santo Marine Protected Areas Reserve; *Biosphere Reserve of the island of Porto Santo*
- SOS Wildlife Network which aims to safeguard wild animal species;
- Protection and monitoring of the forest spot on the island of Porto Santo;
- Surveillance and policing in all areas under the management of IFCN, IP-RAM;
- Monitoring of the artificial reef Corvette General Pereira D'Eça in Porto Santo.

## **DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION**

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Starting in 2021

## **LOGISTIC FUNCTION**

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### **PORTO SANTO ISLAND CANDIDATE THE UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVE - CLARIFICATION SESSIONS TO THE COMMUNITY IN GENERAL**

In September 2020, and still as an aspiring UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, several information sessions were held in order to promote the involvement of the local community in this application. These sessions were promoted by the coordinator of the candidacy, Susana Fontinha, from the Regional Secretariat and Environment, Natural

Resources and Climate Change and by the representatives of the local partners, from the Municipality of Porto Santo, Rubina Brito; the Office of the Vice-President of the Regional Government in Porto Santo, former DRAPS, Rute Areal; and also by Duarte Mendonça from the Porto Santo Folklore Group Association.

The sessions were addressed to the local community, public and private entities, schools, companies, among others and also to the collaborators of the two local entities involved in the application, employees of the Municipality of Porto Santo and the former Regional Directorate for Public Administration of Porto Santo.

In these sessions, which were attended by about 60 people, the importance of the involvement of the local community was reinforced, taking advantage of the opportunity to clarify any doubts that might still exist. *Biosphere Reserve of the island of Porto Santo*

#### **PORTO SANTO ISLAND CANDIDACY THE UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVE - STUDENTS OF PROF. DR. FRANCISCO FREITAS BRANCO SCHOOL INVOLVED - BIOSPHERE MURAL**

From October 22 to 30, 2020, several sessions of clarification and involvement of students from Escola B + S Prof. Dr. Francisco Freitas Branco carried out within the scope of the application of the island of Porto Santo to the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, meanwhile announced on October 28 by UNESCO as one of the new 25 Biosphere Reserves worldwide.

This initiative reached around 290 students, in the second and third cycle, and also students in the secondary arts course. The sessions were promoted by the local partners of the candidacy, namely the Municipality of Porto Santo, the Office of the Vice-President of the Regional Government in Porto Santo and the Associação Grupo de Folclore do Porto Santo.

The objective was to promote the values underlying the Biosphere Reserve, namely, Natural and Cultural Heritage, Material and Immaterial, in order to inspire students and teachers in the elaboration of a mural alluding to the theme that will be installed in the city center in May 2021.

## **PORTO SANTO WITHOUT MARINE WASTE**

The PORTO SANTO SEM LIXO MARINHO project is co-financed by the EEA Grants Environment Program and aims to contribute to the protection of the island's marine environment, through joint efforts carried out by the main public and private stakeholders in the elimination of plastic waste from the nature and circularity of its use.

On September 19, the first initiative of this project took place on the ground, which marked the International Coastal Cleaning Day involving the local community in a cleaning action that counted on about 30 volunteers and collected more than 350 kg of garbage from coastal areas and other areas. areas that contribute to the accumulation of marine litter such as streams. The project is promoted by Associação Natureza Portugal and has as partners AIDGLOBAL- Action and Integration for Global Development, ARDITI - Regional Agency for the Development of Research, Technology and Innovation - Association, the Municipality of Porto Santo and Águas e Resíduos da Madeira, SA Identifying the flow and discharge of waste, optimizing waste management and radically reducing the consumption of disposables on the island are the main objectives of this project that has the approval of a Community Management Plan for a period of 5 years. *Biosphere Reserve of the island of Porto Santo*

**Links** Presentation: <https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/media/3076/porto-santo-portugues-min.pdf> Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RV8RjNR0w2c&feature=youtu.be>

## **LIFE DUNAS - LIFE19 CCA/PT/001178**

Started in October 2020, the LIFE DUNAS project is coordinated by the Regional Secretariat for the Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change through the Regional Directorate of the Ambinet and Climate Change, having as partners the Municipality of Porto Santo, the Vice-Presidency of the Regional Government through from the Vice President's Office in Porto Santo, the Regional Secretariat for Agriculture and Rural Development, the Institute of Forests and Nature Conservation, IP-RAM and the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Lisbon.

The project intervenes in an area of about 60000m<sup>2</sup> in the area of Calheta, Porto Santo beach, where there is degradation of the dune cord by anthropic action and where its geomorphological restoration is sought using sand dredging. It is also intended to restore the dune ecosystem, based on the control of invasive alien species and the installation of a native vegetation cover in the reconstructed area and adjacent areas. The project

also has a socio-cultural component, with the promotion of traditional viticulture in the adjacent agricultural land with the recovery of the typical “crochet” walls. One of the main objectives of this project is to contribute to improving general climate governance and to raise the local awareness of the population and tourists and companies through involvement in voluntary actions and active participation in replication / transfer works.

Link <https://www.facebook.com/LIFE.DUNAS>

## **COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIONS**

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Starting in 2021

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Portuguese National Committee of the UNESCO MAB Programme

