



ACTION PLAN 2019-2030

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE AZORES DESTINATION



INDEX

INTRODUCTION / 8

PART 1 - FRAMEWORK / 11

- 11.1 Sustainability in the Azores / 12*
- 1.2 Sustainability of Tourism in the Azores / 15*
- 1.3 Vision / 16*
- 1.4 DMO / 17*
- 1.5 DMO Commitments / 18*
- 1.6 The Azores Destination / 20*
- 1.7 Responses to COVID-19 / 23*

PART 2 - ACTION PLAN / 25

- 2.1 Introduction / 26*
- 2.2 Sustainable Commitments of the Azores / 28*
- 2.3 Activity Map / 48*
- 2.4 Contributions from Green Teams / 86*
- 2.5 Monitoring / 98*

CONCLUSION / 100

ACRONYMS

ATA – Azores Tourism Association

AHRESP - Association of hotels, restaurants and similar from Portugal

CCSDTA - Advisory Committee for the Sustainability of the Azores tourist destination

DMO – Destination Management Organization

DRA – Regional D of Agriculture

DRAAC - Regional Directorate for Environment and Change climatic

DRAE - Regional Directorate of Educational Administration

DRRF - Regional Directorate of Forest Resources

DRAIC - Regional Directorate for Investment Support and Competitiveness

DRAM – Regional Directorate for Maritime Affairs

DRC – Regional Directorate of Culture

DRCI - Regional Directorate for Commerce and Industry

DRCTD - Regional Directorate for Science and Digital Transition

DRD - Regional Directorate for Sport

DRDR - Regional Directorate for Rural Development

DRE - Regional Directorate for Education

DREn – Regional Directorate for Energy

DRJ - Regional Directorate for Youth

DROPTT - Regional Directorate for Public Works and Land Transport

DROT – Regional Directorate of Budget and Treasury

DROTRH - Regional Directorate for Spatial Planning and of Water Resources

DRP – Regional Directorate of Fisheries

DRPCD - Regional Directorate for Prevention and Combat to Dependencies

DROPE - Regional Directorate for Qualification and Professional and Job

DRS - Regional Directorate of Health

DRTAM – Regional Directorate of Air Transport and Maritime

DRTu – Regional Directorate of Tourism

EDA – Azores Electricity

EGME – Electric Mobility Management Entity

ERSARA – Regulatory Authority for Water Services and Waste from the Azores

FASDTA - Sustainability Monitoring Forums of the Azores Tourist Destination

FCSDTA - Destination Sustainability Primer Forum Azores tourist

IPDT - Inst. Tourism Planning and Development

GASDTA - Sustainability Monitoring Group of the Azores Tourist Destination

GSTC – Global Sustainable Tourism Council

KPA – Key Performance Areas

SDG – Sustainable Development Goals

NGO – Non-Governmental Organizations
OTA – Azores Tourism Observatory
PNI – Island Natural Park

RAA – Autonomous Region of the Azores

SPEA – Portuguese Society for the Study of Birds

SPER – Public Business Sector of the Autonomous Region of Azores

SRAAC - Regional Secretariat for the Environment and Changes climatic

SRADR - Regional Secretariat for Agriculture and Rural Development

SRMP - Regional Secretariat for the Sea and Fisheries

SRTTE – Regional Secretariat for Transport, Tourism and Energy

INTRODUCTORY NOTE FROM THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, TOURISM AND ENERGY

Sustainability is currently one of the main themes on the global agenda and consists of the capacity to sustain or conserve a process or system, supporting it, preserving it and taking care of it, in order to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Now, the word – SUSTAINABILITY – has been present in our thinking and in the implementation of the **Azores Regional Government's plan for the archipelago**. It is, and will continue to be, the great challenge of the coming decades of governance, with a focus on the **development of tourism without compromising the environmental assets and landscapes that differentiate us from the rest of the world**.

We know it is not easy to resist rapid growth and to immediate wealth creation. We also know that Tourist Regions that had an explosive increase in offer, without taking care of a correct sustainability strategy, are currently undergoing reconversion processes to recover their lost attractiveness.

The only way for Tourism is, without any doubt, the adoption of a sustainable development model, given that natural and cultural resources form the basis of our economic activities, policies have been implemented to protect the environment, affirming economic and tourism growth and the protection of the environment as compatible and complementary goals.

The proof that we have been pioneers in implementing the values that define the word sustainability is visible with international recognition and the consequent awarding of numerous awards.

The Azores are currently playing a leading role in terms of sustainability, not only at a national level, but also at an international level. First evidence of this fact is the certification of the Autonomous Region of the Azores as a Sustainable Tourist Destination in accordance with the criteria of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, positioning our archipelago as one of the few tourist destinations with this recognized distinction.

The recognition we reap today is the result of the work of all Azoreans, particularly of our ancestors and older generations who, with the evolution of time, knew how to perpetuate through the younger generations respect for the environment, traditions, and culture, leaving present generations a valuable legacy. Through this legacy, the economy region has benefited in different ways, one of them being through tourism. **Those who visit the Azores not only see beautiful landscapes, but those also who visit the Azores see authenticity, witness the symbiotic relationship between Man and Nature, get to know its people and this is what distinguishes us from other tourist destinations.**

For the Azores and for the Azorean people, assuming the commitment to the new European and global agenda in the fight against climate change is not an effort nor is it something that makes us think twice. Respect and interaction with the environment are in our genesis, and we feel, no matter how small our territory is, that we can make a great contribution through the example of what has been done and what we intend to continue doing. **It is not an end, but a way of life.**

All this natural, material, and immaterial heritage is something that we are interested in preserving, and for that, a joint work between public and private entities, associations, community representatives, representatives of different economic sectors and each individual person in our society is necessary. Put on all these forces in coordination, focused on the same timeless and continuous objective is the role of the Government of the Azores. To coordinate all this work, we reinforced the coordinating structure of the Destination, which has the role of being a catalyst for all this interaction between the different actors in our society, so that everyone can work and develop their areas of expertise, **always bearing in mind the 17 goals for sustainable development that the United Nations defined for common action across the planet.**

Another fact that should be highlighted in the review of this Action Plan is the adaptation of its timeline of action to the objectives of the European Union, which sets energy efficiency and the fight against climate change as a priority, an agenda that is at the heart of Europe's action for the present decade, with ambitious goals until 2030. **For this reason, the present action plan, which had initially foreseen the implementation of measures for the years 2019-2027, will now be aligned with the European Union's temporal goals, until 2030.** The revision of the plan includes measures that are already underway by the Government of the Azores, such as the Life IP Climaz, as well as more immediate measures to recover from the damage. economic and social effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the priorities for this Regional Government is precisely the challenge of the recovery of the tourism sector by supporting the post-pandemic business recovery, betting on the sectorial consolidation of the next decade.

The future success of this sector will depend on the investment in developing models centered on the valorization of local people and the territory, where locals, businesspeople and tourists will leave highly benefited. Throughout this process, the implementation of a new Strategic and Marketing Plan for Tourism in the Azores (PEMTA) and the new Tourism Planning Program for the Autonomous Region of the Azores (POTRAA) will be essential. Both documents will guide the tourism policies to be followed in the coming years and will reflect the future of tourism not only as an economic activity, but also as sustainable one, generating value and employment.

Thus, environmental sustainability and tourism sustainability will continue to be priorities inherent to development tourism, which tends to focus on our green economy and our blue economy. Once this pandemic crisis has been overcome, the Azores see their Tourism strengthened by certification as the world's first sustainable archipelago, by EarthCheck, what constitutes an added value that positions us as a destination with a differentiating offer, increasing our competitiveness against competing markets, and it will be prepared to face with optimism the resumption of its economic activity.

Mario Jorge Mota Borges

Mário Jorge Mota Borges



INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is, in the current international context, one of the most crucial paradigms in decision-making for the development of territories.

The adoption of strategic measures aimed at improving the quality of life, valuing cultural elements, preserving ecological environments and economic stimulation of activities that generate impacts positive for the territories and their community, are elements – increasingly – inherent in the outlined policies.

Associated with this objective, there is a vision of greater time scope, something that until the beginning of the century XXI was not common. Currently, territorial planning is focused on long-term development goals and visions, promoting, and defining strategic paths that allow the implementation of measures and the more agile adaptation of territories to new global needs and trends.

In this context, the development policy “towards sustainability”, defined by the Autonomous Region of the Azores, is something that has been following the evolution and projection of the destination through tourism. The increase in tourism demand over the past decade represents a fundamental input for national and international economic flows, being a constant concern of the destination the adoption of measures that promote the valorization and preservation of the Azorean touristic environments, managing the touristic dynamics, avoiding massification and guaranteeing a safe environment for all, visitors, and locals.

The degree of involvement in the preservation and enhancement of the Azores Destination through the adoption of active and constant behaviors in favor of sustainability, whether by the local community and the government, either by agents and tour operators, or even by tourists, has resulted in the creation of environments of cooperation, extending to other areas and activities associated to territorial development, leading to decision-making increasingly oriented towards the sustainability of the destination.

Given the dynamics present in the territory, one of the commitments assumed by the region is to certify it as a sustainable tourist destination according to the GSTC criteria, and to undertake a work of continuous improvement that allows, every year, to affirm the Azores as a world reference territory in the evaluation indicators.

It was this dynamic and vision that allowed the Azores in 2019 to be the first archipelago in the world certified as a sustainable tourist destination, positioning itself as an international best practice in several key indicators.

This is, however, a continuous process, every year the Azores must show a positive evolution, so that the certification of the Azores as a sustainable destination is renewed and a benefit to all who live, invest and visit the destination. This process is monitored and audited by EarthCheck, an entity accredited for this purpose, which will analyze and verify compliance with the criteria defined by the GSTC, measuring the level of action and performance of regional authorities and the measures, policies and programs promoted with a view to the sustainable development of the destination.

To respond to the growing preponderance of tourism sustainability in the Azores Destination, the Government created the **DMO, which has the mission of monitoring and managing the procedures necessary for the certification of the destination by EarthCheck.**

In this context, the Action Plan for the Sustainability of the Azores Destination was developed to identify and define measures to be implemented in the short, medium, and long term, by Destination Azores, aiming at the continuous improvement of the environmental, social, cultural, and economic sustainability of the territory.

This document is thus articulated with the strategic plans and legislation in the Autonomous Region of the Azores, integrating actions and proposals in areas related to tourism development, such as transports, safety, economy, waste management, urban planning, environmental management, culture, among other areas.

The 2019-2030 Action Plan reflects an update of the initial version of this strategic document – initially scheduled for the 2019-2027 horizon. The extension of this time frame aims to ensure the alignment of measures and policies undertaken by the Azores with the challenges and projects promoted by the European Union within the scope of policies related to sustainable development, such as the 169 targets established by the 2030 Agenda. The destination's ambition to evolve and to always move towards new challenges and goals that enable the territory to be equipped with better and more efficient policies and projects that favor sustainability in all sectors of activity. For this reason, the regular updating of the document is a commitment of the DMO, which intends to promote a process of collaborative construction in favor of the destination's sustainability.

The 2019 – 2030 Action Plan is positioned as one of the key strategic documents for the performance of the DMO, representing a commitment to the enhancement and preservation of the territory, while associating an aspect of prioritizing interventions, tracing the path of tourism in the Azores “towards sustainability” in a gradual and progressive way.

This document is divided into two parts. The first part presents a framework sustainability in the Azores, especially in its connection to the tourism sector. It explores the importance of sustainability for the territory and for the tourist activity and how the government structure operationalizes measures for its dynamization, namely through the creation of the DMO. It also includes a reflection on the impact and responses of fate to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The second part of the document presents the “Sustainable Commitments of the Azores”: the umbrella goals for which the Azores Autonomous Region proposes to encourage actions aimed at achieving them. Reconciling the perceptions and needs of the participants of the nine Green Teams, as well as the strategic and operational documents of the several government departments, it was developed the map of activities to which the Azores Autonomous Region is committed to achieving in the 2019-2030 horizon. At the level of Green Teams, actions on the 9 islands are also identified, to train and protect the territory and its communities.

In the final part, it is presented the Action Plan monitoring model, as well as some of the indicators to obtain the necessary data for the annual update of the document.

As mentioned, this document should stimulate joint action "towards sustainability", practiced by all institutional bodies, should represent the real needs of the territory, its potential and should provide a sustainable response to tourist demand, making it an element that adds value and protects the essence of the territory and its people.

It is considered that certifying the Azores as a sustainable tourist destination represents, for the region, not only an institutional recognition of what it has been done in recent decades, but an even stronger commitment to the community and the world population in the preservation and enhancement of an insular territory, where harmony between Man and Nature reaches Edenic levels.

A man and a woman are standing in a greenhouse, smiling and holding pineapples. The man is wearing a light blue polo shirt and light blue trousers. The woman is wearing a dark blue jacket, a black and red striped scarf with white polka dots, and dark trousers. They are surrounded by rows of pineapple plants. The greenhouse structure is visible in the background.

01. FRAMEWORK

01. FRAMEWORD

1.1 SUSTENTABILIDADE NOS AÇORES

The Autonomous Region of the Azores is located in the North Atlantic over an extent spanning around 600 kilometres. The islands in the Archipelago are of volcanic origin and divided into three geographic groups: The Eastern Group, made up of Santa Maria and São Miguel, the Central Group with the islands of Terceira, Graciosa, São Jorge, Pico and Faial, and the Western Group composed of Corvo and Flores.



Figure 1 - the Autonomous Region of the Azores

The Azorean geography holds a multiplicity of natural resources, as well as its historical and cultural dimensions, that together render these islands unique. Hence, in recent decades, priority has been attributed to initiatives leading to its protection and preservation. This vision has driven the continuous development of sustainability policies in the region that, in turn, have led to the classification of almost 25% of its landmass as Protected Areas, integrated into the Natural Parks established on each of the islands in the Archipelago. Regarding the maritime territory, the region has 50 Marine Protected Areas (AMP), the coastal ones being included in the Natural Parks and the oceanic ones in the Marine Park of the Azores; 36 areas classified under the Community Directives of the Natura 2000 Network and 10 under the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Northeast Atlantic

(OSPAR). They represent about 4% of the Exclusive Economic Zone and Territorial Sea and 7% of the Extended Continental Shelf. Another nine small areas, designated as fishing restriction areas, promote the conservation of resources and non-extractive maritime-tourism activities. The five underwater Archaeological Parks and the 70 bathing areas that exist on all the islands constitute refuges with implications on the conservation of natural resources, for which they were designated (conservation of heritage and shared usage).

In addition to nature conservation and biodiversity protection, sustainability policies have also been developed in terms of energy production and management, noise management and inspection, air, waste and water quality, as well as the implementation of actions of promotion and environmental education, of endogenous products, heritage and Azorean culture valorisation.

The worldwide recognition of the significant value of the Azores is not a recent phenomenon. In 1983, UNESCO recognized the Historic Centre of Angra do Heroísmo, on Terceira Island, and, in 2004, the Pico Island Vineyard Culture Landscape as World Heritage. The island of Corvo and the island of Graciosa, in 2007, the island of Flores, in 2009, and Fajãs de São Jorge in 2016 also became part of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves. In 2015 the Azores Geopark become part of the UNESCO territory, reinforcing its value and role in the implementation of conservation and enhancement strategies for the Geological Heritage of the Azores. The Azores are one of the only two regions in the world that have the full ratings given by UNESCO, namely “World Heritage”, “Biosphere Reserve” and 'Geopark'. Moreover, the Azores also have the Ramsar international classification, attributed to wetlands to which the UNESCO is associated.



Marine diversity and the importance of the coastal area also represent an important place in the international panorama and constitute a strategic resource in which the Autonomous Region of the Azores has been investing through its dissemination, management and conservation. As a result, the Azores have obtained several international recognitions, being certified since 2014 with the Platinum seal of the Quality Coast Program. The Azores were also named, by the European Best Destination, as one of the most beautiful destinations for whale watching in Europe.

In June 2019, the underwater archaeological map of the Azores was considered by UNESCO as one of the five examples that represent the best practices for the protection of underwater cultural heritage.



In this line of action, the region intends to continue to maintain sustainability as a priority and central theme, as demonstrated by a set of government initiatives that have been implemented and others that have started recently and will take place over the next few years. Some good examples are the project “LIFE IP AZORES NATURA – Active Protection and Integrated Management of the Natura 2000 Network”, which is the largest conservation project conceived for the Azores and will be developed over the next nine years.

It is the intention of the Regional Government to continue to deepen this path, to which tourism can decisively contribute, through a policy that favors sustainable development, in a logic of territorial cohesion, and respecting the distinctive characteristics of each community and territory.

1.2 SUSTAINABILITY OF TOURISM IN THE AZORES

In the Azores, tourism has taken on an increasingly important role in boosting the local economy and increasing its attractiveness. In 2019, the Azores registered approximately 972 000 guests and 3M of overnight stays, numbers hitherto never reached.

At the same time, the relative contribution of the tourism sector to the economy of the Azores also increased: the Gross Value Added (GVA) generated by tourism rose from 8.2% in 2015 to 12.2% in 2018 and to 12.8% in 2019. At the same time, the weight of tourism consumption in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has also increased – 15.0% in 2016 to 18.1% in 2018.

This evolution was due, in large part, to the differentiating nature of the destination's tourism offer, based on nature. The positioning of the Azores as a nature destination, both active and contemplative, allied to the complementarity nautical, cultural and health and well-being activities, reinforced its competitiveness in the tourist market.

With inclusive sustainability standards, it is intended to deepen the preservation and economic enhancement of cultural and natural heritage, based on the balance between the environmental, cultural, social, and economic dimensions. It is intended that the Azores Region increasingly asserts itself as a leading and reference travel destination, recognized by its sustainability, aiming at strengthening social and territorial cohesion and a clear commitment to sustainable development.

These standards, in line with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, elect as priorities for tourism in the Azores:



Thus, the development of tourism in the Azores must be based, necessarily, on a unique environmental offer, combined with energy sustainability, on a concerted strategy to safeguard natural resources, which enhances the tourism activity of the Azores archipelago as a Nature destination.

1.3. VISION

The Azores, with a unique reality as an archipelago, adopt the identity "Azores - towards sustainability" as a regional design, based on a strong alliance between the various partners of the destination, supported by a public and private collaborative structure, which regionally and institutionally strengthens capacities, knowledge, skills and the commitment to sustainable development¹ so much for the community, as for tourism.

This sustainable development framework facilitates and drives the creation of new experiences, sustainable products, and services, positioning the Azores as a leading and reference destination.

¹ The definition of the UN is adopted - "Development model that allows meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".



1.4. DMO

The Azores Destination Sustainability Management Structure (Azores DMO), created in 2018 by Government Council Resolution No. 58/2018 of May 15 of 2018, and with a mandate renewed by Resolution No. 91/2021, of April 21 of 2021, is the entity responsible for managing the sustainability of the destination in the dependency of the Regional Secretariat with competence in matters of tourism. The Azores DMO is thus the structure mandated to plan, organize, implement, manage and supervise the certification of the Azores as a Sustainable Tourist Destination, as well as to monitor the implementation of the strategy for the tourism sector in the Azores.

The creation of this entity comes in a context in which tourism is increasingly asserting itself as a fundamental sector for the territory and in which the development of the Destination Azores must be distinguished for its sustainability.

The Azores DMO is responsible for:

- a) Plan, organize, implement, and supervise the certification process of the Sustainable Destination, following the criteria of the EarthCheck, GSTC certified member destination criteria, based on the guiding principles of the United Nations World Tourism Organization and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- b) Prepare and promote the implementation of planning, management and monitoring instruments related to the Sustainability of the Azores Destination.
- c) Coordinate, streamline the activity and organize the operation of the Monitoring Group of the Sustainability of the Azores Destination (GASDTA), the Forums for Monitoring the Sustainability of the Azores Destination (FASDTA) and the Forum on the Sustainability of the Azores Destination (FCSDTA).
- d) Prepare proposals to be submitted to the Advisory Committee for the Sustainability of the Azores Destination (CCSDTA), GASDTA, FASDTA and FCSDTA, as well as do the follow-up.
- e) Manage and operationalize the dynamics of FCSDTA indicators and objectives.
- f) Undertake the administrative management of certification processes for sustainable tourism destinations and consequent certification renewals.

The Azores DMO initiatives are coordinated with the community, members of the private and the public sector, whether municipal or from various departments of the Regional Government, as well as with Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

1.5. DMO COMMITMENTS

The Azores DMO assumes a transparent commitment to the promotion of the sustainable development of the Azores:

- Follow national and international sustainability guidelines, such as the World Code of Ethics of Tourism.
- Define goals related to Tourism that contribute to sustainable development and, consequently, to achieve continuous improvement from EarthCheck indicators.
- Integrate considerations related to sustainability in the strategic and operational management of tourism in the Azores.
- Consult, involve and sensitize local communities, partners and economic agents of the tourism value chain in the decision-making related to the management of the sustainable development of the Azores Destination, including sustainability indicators, thus allowing them to contribute to achieving the goals defined by the destination.
- Promote the Sustainability Management policy of the Tourism of the Azores to all agents working in the tourism sector.
- Promote and encourage the sustainability of the destination, following the evolution and levels of compliance with the goals assumed for each of the key certification areas.
- Stimulate and foster awareness and training of partners and economic agents regarding the sustainability of the territory.
- Engage in innovative local initiatives and projects aimed at environmental, cultural, social and/or economic sustainability and green experiences – for residents and tourists.
- Ensure the training and employability of residents in tourism.
- Identify and mitigate the risks associated with tourism activity, mitigating its negative impacts, through its prevention, but also, enhancing its positive impacts.
- Monitor the evolution of tourism from the perspective of environmental, cultural, social and economic sustainability by providing accurate information in promotional materials.
- Promote and monitor the implementation of the Regional Program for Climate Change, specifically the sector's adaptation measures of tourism.
- Encourage the use of local products by companies in the tourism sector and, whenever possible, that imported products comply with “fair trade” standards.
- Promote the adoption of innovative individual or sustainable corporate practices, through the attribution of incentives or other benefits.
- Promote and monitor the implementation of the Azores Tourism Strategy, through the planning, coordination and implementation of the measures and actions foreseen.

The DMO undertakes to review the principles that support the guidelines for the sustainability of the destination on an annual basis and to share them with agents who intervene directly or indirectly in its management.

Thus, Azores DMO follows a path that promotes the monitoring of all initiatives, with the aim of progress, innovation and rise of sustainability standards.

For this purpose, the Azores DMO has selected 12 key performance areas (KPA) in which it intends to plan and implement measures aimed at the central goal of making the Azores an international destination of reference in terms of sustainability.

These KPA's consider the reality of the territory, where it has natural or built elements of high value, as well as the presence of innovative projects. It is also included areas in the which territory has some gaps and it is necessary to act with a view to mitigating the impacts.

Associated with each KPA, actions will be taken to be developed throughout the region, with a view to achieving higher sustainability standards.



Figure 2 - Key Practice Areas

1.6. O THE DESTINATION AZORES

The Azores are - increasingly - one of the travel destinations of international reference. The natural beauty of this region, combined with the security and welcoming capacity of the Azoreans, creates conditions for visitation, highly valued by tourist demand.

Added to all these elements, the natural landscapes and the cultural aspect are, in fact, two of the most important tourist anchors in the Azores. The offer of environments to contemplate the harmonious union between nature and human hand and the presence of highly authentic and differentiating traditional attractions, result in the promotion of differentiating experiences, capable of creating a sentimental bond between the territory and those who visit it.

This effect has provided the projection of Azores Destination on a world scale, as well as the regular presence in international awards and distinctions, in addition to numerous references and articles in the specialized media. In this field, it should be noted that in 2020, the Azores won the National Tourism Award in the Sustainable Tourism category, for the certification work carried out by the destination.

The investment in the diversification of the tourist product has been one of the areas most worked on by the destination, with a view to its capacity to receive tourists with different motivations and thus promote tourist growth in value, rather than quantity.



In addition to two World Heritage sites (Angra do Heroísmo Historical Centre and the Pico Vineyard Culture Landscape), four Biosphere Reserves (Fajãs de São Jorge, Graciosa Island, Flores Island and Corvo Island) and a Geopark (encompassing the nine islands), all with the UNESCO seal which, per se, represent attractions of international projection, the Azores have a vast portfolio of products that have allowed the destination to support a sustained and high quality tourist development, among them :

- **Pedestrian and cycling routes**
- **Nautical activities (surfing, diving, yachting, canyoning, rafting)**
- **Wildlife observation (cetaceans, birds, etc.)**
- **swimmin activity**
- **Cultural and Landscape Touring**
- **Geotourism**
- **Health and wellness**
- **Business tourism**

It should be noted that the Azores Destination has been monitoring tourism demand on a regular basis, an element that allows for the updating of the Tourism Strategy in force, an instrument to support the decision. the Strategic and Marketing Plan for Tourism in the Azores was written in 2015, based on an extensive process of listening to the local trade, and the application of profile and opinion surveys applied to tourists and national and international operators. This methodology allowed the development of a joint work with demand and supply, defining a strategic path that allows for the development of the destination on an international scale and its better preparation to better receive international flows.

Since 2015, this document has been updated and revised, taking into account statistical data published by official national and regional entities, as well as through consultations and analysis of the performance of the target segment of the destination, paying attention to its (new) needs, as well as the development of technology.

Constant monitoring of demand has been central to the tourist growth registered by Destination Azores in recent years. The strategic action has been focusing on improving the destination's performance in two fundamental axes for sustainability: tourist deconcentration across the 9 islands and the reduction of the effect of seasonality.

Between 2015 and 2019 there was an increase of 92% in the number of guests received, with a 2 pp decrease in the seasonality rate, with a greater annual deconcentration of overnight stays in the Autonomous Region of the Azores.

In terms of tourist deconcentration, between the 2015/2019 analysis interval, there is a decrease in 1.3 pp in the concentration of overnight stays on the Island of São Miguel compared to the total, meaning that tourists have a greater tendency to also visit the other islands in the Region, with considerable increases in the number of overnight stays in all of them in the period of analysis.

Another axis of strategic action has been the training of human resources related to tourism, with the aim of improving the experience provided in the activity. In this field, the Government of the Azores has carried out a series of initiatives that value people, as the main asset of the Destination, such as the partnership with AHRESP (with the Gastronomy and Wines Selection Program) or with IPDT, through the Azores Receives Well program, it reached all municipalities in the Region and around 600 participants. But also, with the increasingly strong action of the Escola de Formação Turística e Hoteleira (School of Tourism and Hotel Training), with a qualification and valuation plan for assets in the area of tourism. In the 2019-2020 school year, marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2 professional courses were developed: Restaurant/Bar Technician and Cooking/Pastry Technician (both lasting 3 academic years), reaching 110 trainees in about 1,135 hours of training. In 2020, 1,010 hours of active training were carried out, divided into 32 modules, and covering 397 trainees.

In terms of qualification, the courses for Guides in Azores Natural Parks are also highlighted, which have been carried out with the aim of enhancing knowledge of protected areas and the services provided by professionals who lead groups of visitors to these areas. So far, these courses have certified more than 300 professionals to accompany and guide groups of people to protected areas and for the environmental and cultural interpretation of the environment, continuing the efforts that have been developed with a view to improving the quality of services in the Azores Natural Parks.

There is a broad concern at the level of the destination capacitation aiming at the sustainable development, generating valuable economic impacts for the region, which do not jeopardize the travel experience or the experience of the locals.

1.7. ANSWERS TO COVID-19

On March 18, 2020, a State of Emergency was decreed in Portugal for the first time, through the Decree of the President of the Republic. Since then, the performance of the region has focused on managing the COVID-19 pandemic in the public health area, providing infrastructures with equipment and human resources necessary to fight the disease.

To support the management of the pandemic, the Special Commission for Monitoring the Fight against Pandemic by Covid-19 in the Azores was created, responsible for monitoring the evolution of the disease, advising the public bodies on measures to be taken and support in the implementation of those measures.

One of the measures that the Regional Government has prioritized is the vaccination of the Azorean population having achieved during the summer of 2021 group immunity in the Region, an essential milestone to increase the health security of all (residents and visitors) and to transmit more confidence that allows to leverage the economy - also through tourism.

The actions of the Azores in terms of the management of the COVID-19 pandemic aim to reconcile and promote the balance of measures, in order to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic in terms of health, social, economic and, especially, in the tourism sector. From its performance, we highlight some of the main measures and primary objectives assumed since March 2020.

- **Ensure the health safety of all residents.** For this purpose, awareness-raising measures were implemented for the adoption of individual safety behaviours, preventive measures to reduce situations of possible community transmission and encouragement of vaccination by the population.
- **Ensure the economic sustainability of companies.** Through the availability of funds for the acquisition of equipment to adapt to the needs of COVID-19, from lay-off systems to encourage the maintenance of employment and financial support to balance companies' treasury.
- **Support families in need.** Through social actions aimed especially at families and/or people socially and economically affected (e.g., job loss) by the pandemic.
- **Conveying confidence for the return of tourism.** For this purpose, the negative test to COVID-19 or the presentation of the European Union COVID Digital Certificate to enter the Azores has become a mandatory criterion. Over the months, the region also launched several measures to encourage travel (e.g., vouchers for those who carry out tests at origin, or payment of tests to COVID-19 at the arrival).

In addition to a targeted tourism promotion policy for target markets (in a period of pandemic considering travel restrictions) the region promoted a project across all islands: the “Clean & Safe Azores” seal. It intended to instruct tour agents on how to adapt their businesses to ensure greater safety for visitors and increase confidence in travellers, through a seal that proves compliance with security measures. The project has the participation of more than 1,500 tourism businesses



Figure 3 - Clean & Safe Azores Stamp

In order to communicate more effectively with residents and visitors, the Azores also launched the website Destino Seguro Açores (Safe Destination) - <https://destinoseguro.azores.gov.pt/> - where all the information regarding the management of the pandemic, economic and social support, measures in force and travel procedures is available.

The work developed contributed to the Azores being considered, in 2020 and 2021, as one of the safest tourist destinations in Europe by European Best Destinations, an anchor distinction to support the revival of tourism



Figure 4 - Distinction 2021 - European Safest Destinations



Figure 5 - Video of the promotional campaign "Azores Safe by Nature" | 2021



02. ACTION PLAN

02. ACTION PLAN

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The governmental structure of the Autonomous Region of the Azores has defined the sustainability of the territory as one of the priority axes for its performance, especially in the last two decades. The dynamization of a policy to facilitate the implementation of measures to encourage the increase of sustainable practices, such as preserving the essence of the territory, valuing cultural elements, improving the quality of life of the local community and encouraging economic activities that add value to the territory, constituted as one of the guiding action paradigms of decision-making for the territory, in recent years.

Due to the growing importance that the tourism sector has assumed in the region's economic chain, as is the case worldwide, the Government of the Azores decided to submit to the Certification of the Azores as a sustainable tourist destination, recognized by the GSTC criteria, achieving certification of silver in December 2019. However, this is an ongoing process in which the Azores has to present a positive evolution towards the sustainable development of the territory, on a daily basis. In this line of action, we aim to achieve Gold certification in 2024 as a sustainable destination by EarthCheck, thus reinforcing Azores Autonomous Region's position as a leading destination of international reference in light of the most demanding sustainability standards for tourist destinations defined by the GSTC.



Figure 6- EarthCheck's regulations define that every year the destination must demonstrate compliance and constant evolution of sustainability criteria. Only in 2024 is the Region 'enabled' to achieve Gold certification.

It is intended that, due to the multiplier effect of tourism, and the intrinsic capacity to involve numerous areas and services, it is possible to achieve an even more effective action in the sustainability of the Azores Destination, allowing sensitize and hold residents and tourists accountable for the need to jointly promote valuation and preservation behaviours.

In this context, this section of the Action Plan presents the commitments to be made, the actions to be developed and their monitoring. Measures to be implemented in the short, medium and long term by Destination Azores are identified and defined with a view to constantly improving the environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability of the destination.

The measures and initiatives to be implemented are presented and grouped based on the areas defined in the EarthCheck normative standards. Thus, considering the contributions collected in the various working groups, the EarthCheck benchmarking report and the risk assessment, strategic actions were defined in ten key performance areas:

1. Energy efficiency
2. Greenhouse gases / decarbonization
3. Drinking Water Resources
4. Waste water and sewage
5. Ecosystems and biodiversity
6. transport
7. Solid waste
8. Society and culture
9. Economy
10. Territorial Planning

The 2019-2030 Action Plan thus integrates actions that prove to be of added value to the policy of sustainability of the Destination Azores, in a coordinated posture between tourism and the various sectors of activity in the region.

2.2. SUSTAINABLE COMMITMENTS OF THE AZORES

Maintaining the Azores as a sustainable destination certified by the GSTC criteria, an international reference requires a commitment from the communities to the management of the territory, between private agents and the public sector, between real needs and present and future demands. In this context, the involvement of everyone in its reflection and definition is essential, so that this process can be assumed and promoted by everyone.

To achieve this matrix of involvement, a set of sustainable commitments was defined in which the territory, through its governmental structures and private agents, proposes to work to reach levels of excellence with regard to its sustainability.

For this purpose, the main instruments were considered Strategic and Operational management entities of the territory in various fields of action and, at the same time, commissions and working groups were created to monitor the Action Plan, these are essential to reflect and monitor the path traced by the Azores in terms of the sustainability of the tourist destination.

Based on the conclusions of the various documents consulted and on the Benchmarking Report, as well as the needs reported by public and private agents, the sustainable commitments for the performance of the Azores were defined according to the ten key performance areas of the EarthCheck standards, mentioned above.



1. ENERGY EFFICIENCY

COMMITMENTS

1. Raise awareness among the general public, students from schools in the region and the tourism sector for the adoption of energy efficiency practices.
2. Actively welcome and/or integrate national or international innovation projects aimed at the promotion energy efficiency in the territory.

GOALS

- Raise awareness in the local community (technical staff, engineers, managers, entrepreneurs, regional public administration, local authorities and public in general) by holding at least 4 meetings with the Energy Efficiency every year.
- Raising awareness in the school community (pre-school, elementary and middle schools) by carrying out awareness-raising actions in schools in the region and promoting the adoption of energy efficiency practices by the hotel sector, by carrying out actions to disseminate good practices on social networks.
- Integrate at least one energy efficiency innovation project per year.
- Improve the efficiency of heat recovery systems for the exhaust gases of power plants.

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

- Energy efficiency is one of the key elements for the sustainable development of territories. THE sensitization of the local community urges, therefore, as a basic procedure for the adoption of sustainable behaviours that can gradually improve the energy performance of the Autonomous Region of the Azores. By increasing public awareness of the advantages of the proposed measures, we will benefit from the degree of involvement and the adoption of practices by the local community, making this the main promoter/disseminator of this ambition: to make the Azores an increasingly sustainable territory.
- Education is essential for the integration and social cohesion of citizens. Indeed, the school, being an educational centre par excellence, contributes to the development of citizenship skills and guarantees the acquisition of values, attitudes and skills essential to the promotion of behaviours conducive to critical and responsible consumption.

Thus, it is intended to act in the training of the school community, contributing to the increase of energy literacy and to the adoption of behaviours that promote energy efficiency and rational use of energy, both by young people and their households.

- Accommodations are important centres for transmitting the message that the destination adopts in terms of sustainability. Having hotel units fully committed to implement energy efficiency measures is essential to (1) promote more sustainable behaviours, (2) convey a message to visitors and (3) encourage the adoption of more efficient energy consumption by the visitors themselves.
- The most efficient way to implement innovative measures or projects is to integrate them and actively participate in their development. In a phase where countries and regions are committed to a process of climate transition, and the Azores are recognized as one of the most sustainable territories in the world, it is crucial the destination promotes this action. An open participation or testing innovative ideas allow the implementation of disruptive projects that (1) enable and make the territory more sustainable and (2) can later be replicated worldwide.

HOW WILL WE ACT?

Empower the local community + Raise awareness in the school community + Promote good practices among tourists+ Integrate innovation projects + Life IP Climaz

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

Regional Directorate for Energy + Regional Directorate for Tourism + EDA – Electricity of the Azores

KEY ACTIONS

- Promotion of "Meetings with Energy Efficiency" for the local community and awareness actions at Schools.
- Dissemination and awareness of hotel units for the adoption of energy efficiency practices.
- Implement innovative projects (eg V2G – Vehicle-to-Grid, IANOS, RESOR and EMOBICITY).
- Implement heat recovery systems from the exhaust gases of power plants.

2. GREENHOUSE GASES / DECARBONIZATION

COMMITMENTS

1. Empower the territory with solutions that promote sustainable mobility and the reduction of emission of greenhouse gases.
2. Reduce the use of internal combustion vehicles through gradual fleet electrification car.
3. Reduce electrical energy from fossil fuels by increasing the penetration of renewable and endogenous sources in the electricity production system.

GOALS

- Até By 2025, ensure that 61% of the electricity is produced from renewable and endogenous sources.
- Until 2025, annually produce 187 GWh of energy from geothermal sources in the Azores.
- Install 16 fast charging points and 118 standard public access points by 2024.
- By 2024, ensure that 50% of the regional public administration and public sector automobile fleet is electrical.

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

- The emission of greenhouse gases is strongly associated with the burning of fossil fuels and, in the Region, the land transport sector is one of the biggest consumers. Thus, the electrification of the car fleet is the most effective means of promoting sustainability in the land transport sector promoting an effective reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases, since electric vehicles have practically zero emissions when compared to traditional internal combustion vehicles.
- Allied to this fact, according to the PMEA – Plan for Electric Mobility in the Azores, the Autonomous Region of the Azores presents the ideal conditions for the implementation of Electric Mobility. On the one hand, the small size of the islands overcome the challenge associated to the battery autonomy that the most recent electric vehicles offer, on the other hand, the use of endogenous and renewable resources, for the production of energy, can be optimized with the massive use of the electric vehicle.
- The excessive emission of greenhouse gases is one of the world paradigms that has most shaped international political action, with the more frequent implementation of projects aimed at reduction of its impact on the atmosphere.

- The existence of renewable and endogenous natural resources available in the Azorean territory (wind, sun, water, sea, geothermal energy) are incentives for the implementation of systems that promote energy generation electricity from renewable and endogenous sources, reducing the need to use fossil fuels, and the consequent emission of greenhouse gases.

HOW WILL WE ACT?

Replacement of the Public Administration and Business Public Sector vehicle fleet in the Region + Concession of incentives for the purchase of electric vehicles + Charging points for electric vehicles.

Investment in the installation and expansion of energy production and storage plants using renewable and endogenous sources + Implementation of the “LIFE IP CLIMAZ - Regional Program for Changes Climate Change in the Azores”.

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

Regional Government of the Azores and Public Business Sector of the Autonomous Region of Azores + Regional Secretariat for Environment and Climate Change + Regional Directorate of Energy + EDA.

KEY ACTIONS

- Electrification of the public administration and Public Business Sector of the Autonomous Region of Azores car fleet.
- Granting of financial, non-financial and tax incentives for the acquisition of electric vehicles by private.
- Capacity building of the public network of charging points for electric vehicles.
- Installation and expansion of energy production and storage plants using renewable and endogenous sources (geothermal wells, photovoltaic parks, wind farms, energy parks batteries).
- Installation of photovoltaic systems in public and private buildings.
- Stimulation of the Graciosa Project – Model Island.
- Implementation of projects programmed under the “LIFE IP CLIMAZ” program.

3. DRINKING WATER RESOURCES

COMMITMENTS

1. Implementation of monitoring systems for water consumption and losses from the networks public drinking water supplies.
2. Implement mitigation measures for the impacts generated by periods of drought and shortage of Water.
3. Raise awareness in the local community about the efficient use of water and reduce water consumption in plastic packaging.

GOALS

- By 2023, install 3,000 flow reducers to reduce water consumption, namely, in large non-domestic consumers;
- Reduction, by 2027, of water losses in public supply systems to less than 20% of the total water abstracted.

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

- According to the Management Plan of the Hydrographic Region of the Azores (PGRH-Azores), the losses of losses of water in the public supply systems correspond to 32% of the total water abstracted.
- The effects of climate change imply a change in the pattern of precipitation, which may lead to the more frequent occurrence of periods of drought and water scarcity, so the adoption of solutions that enhance a more efficient water collection, management and supply.

HOW WILL WE ACT?

Awareness actions + Installation of drinking water meters + Installation of flow meters in water abstractions + Implementation of mitigation strategies for the impacts of drought or water shortage

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

Regional Secretariat for Environment and Climate Change + Regional Directorate for Spatial Planning and of Water Resources + ERSARA + Municipalities + Entities managing water supply systems

KEY ACTIONS

- Support for the purchase and installation of drinking water meters.
- Support for the acquisition and installation of flow reducers.
- Drought and Water Scarcity Management Plan.
- Certification program for the water efficiency of residential buildings.
- Installation of public drinking fountains.
- Awareness actions with the local community and the hotel sector to reduce consumption of fresh water.
- Requalification, maintenance and monitoring of the Region's hydrographic network.



4. WASTEWATER AND SEWAGE

COMMITMENTS

Infrastructural and technological improvement of urban wastewater sanitation systems and evaluation and redefinition of goals for meeting drainage and water treatment services urban waste.

GOALS

Every year, train the human resources of the WWTP, ERA and similar for the storage and management of hazardous materials and the correct handling of these

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

The training of human resources represents an essential mechanism to reduce the danger associated with storage and management of hazardous materials, making these processes safer.

Given the current levels of service of urban wastewater sanitation systems and the settlement patterns observed in the Region, we must also promote the resizing of the drainage network, the reinforcement of treatment, the acquisition of energy eco-efficiency or improvement of the separation capacity of the rainwater, while the suitability of individual solutions must be assessed. currently implemented.

HOW WILL WE ACT?

Human resources training

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

Regional Secretariat for Environment and Climate Change + ERSARA + Municipalities.

KEY ACTIONS

- Technical training of human resources at the WWTP, ETA and similar

5. ECOSYSTEMS AND BIODIVERSITY

COMMITMENTS

1. Preserving biodiversity and ecosystem functioning through regulation and efficient management of the network of terrestrial and maritime protected areas.
2. Preserve the fauna and flora of the RAA and increase the populations of endemic and autochthonous species vulnerable.

GOALS

- By 2027, create 124 ha of ecological corridors to ensure the status of 9 protected habitats.
- By 2025, increase the regional network of marine protected areas to cover at least 15% of the Zone Exclusive Economy of the Azores.
- By 2023 reinforce the populations of Azorina Vidalli and Lotus Azoricus to the “favorable” grade.
- By 2024, increase the population of three endemic beetles by 15%.

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

The preservation of biodiversity and ecosystem functioning through well-managed protected areas is a central premise in the performance of regional policies. The new challenges imposed to counteract the loss of habitat and biodiversity, the intensive exploitation of resources, the introduction of pollutants into ecosystems, among other threats, in combination with the effects of climate change, require that protected areas become representative and coherent, ensure ecological connectivity, are efficiently managed, with shared management plans, with a view to the effective protection of species and sensitive and classified habitats, ensuring the functioning of ecosystems.

This action will ensure the environmental sustainability of the Azorean land and sea territory. The RAA's international commitment to increasing protected areas, an essential land management tool for nature conservation, unequivocally indicates the regional ambition to maintain the basic conditions for a more fruitful natural heritage for current and future generations.

In parallel, the preservation of the natural habitats of endemic species in the Azores is a priority for the future of the region. As such, it is intended to increase the population of vulnerable species and develop measures that can improve the quality of their habitats.

HOW WILL WE ACT?

LIFE IP Azores Natura, LIFE IP Climaz, LIFE Beetles and LIFE Vidalia Programs + IMPLAMAC Program + Interagua Program + MARCET2 Program + Blue Azores Project + Creation of legislation + Awareness and participation active civic community

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

Regional Secretariat for Environment and Climate Change + Regional Directorate for Sea Affairs + Regional Directorate for Forest Resources + Regional Directorate for Science and Digital Transition + SPEA + Natural Parks of Island

KEY ACTIONS

- Protection and conservation of native habitats and species, including endemic, terrestrial and marine (LIFE IP Azores Natura, LIFE Beetles and LIFE Vidalia programs).
- LIFE IP CLIMAZ Program - Training for the creation and management of time series of oceanographic data through Earth Observation methodologies (satellite).
- Blue Azores Project - Increase marine protected areas in the RAA.
- UNESCO recognition of the Paleoparks concept.
- Creation of 1 observatory to analyze the impact of microplastics and emerging contaminants on beaches of the Canary Islands, Cape Verde, Madeira and the Azores.
- Implement innovative programs: RAGES; MARCET2; MISTIC-SEAS III; OCEANLIT.
- Creation of a dynamization grant for environmental volunteering projects.
- Publication of a legal diploma with the legal classification of volcanic cavities and respective measures of protection.

6. TRANSPORTS

COMMITMENTS

Enable the RAA's public transport network, through the provision of vehicles powered by sustainable fuels and promote alternative sustainable mobility solutions.

GOALS

By 2024, proceed with the acquisition of 10 new buses/minibuses for public transport powered by energy "green".

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

Sustainable urban mobility is a challenge that territories must increasingly respond to and promote measures that can be beneficial to both residents and tourists. From a perspective of decarbonization of territories, it is essential that the public transport fleet can be aligned with environmental needs. Thus, maintaining the path that is already being traced in the RAA, the intention is to continue to replace public transport with more sustainable alternative solutions. At the same time, it is intended to maintain the focus on the qualification of public spaces so that the offer of pedestrian and cycling routes can be attractive and stimulate a change in behaviour for short-distance travel.

HOW WILL WE ACT?

Clean energy-powered buses + Pedestrian and cycling networks

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

Regional Directorate of Transport + Municipalities

KEY ACTIONS

- Replacement of the public transport fleet by alternatives with clean fuels.
- Structuring urban cycling and pedestrian networks.

7. SOLID WASTE

COMMITMENTS

1. Implement and manage an efficient environmentally sustainable waste management system throughout the region.
2. Replace the use of single-use products whose structural component is plastic by recyclable solutions.
3. Raise awareness in the local community for the adoption of good waste management practices and for need to adopt behaviours to preserve the environment.

GOALS

- Prohibit, in 2021, the provision by hotel, restaurant and cafeteria establishments or similar of single-use products whose main structural component is plastic, namely plates, bowls, glasses, cutlery, straws and straws.
- Install, by 2022, at least 45 containers for the selective collection of waste in the Forest Reserves of Playground.
- Install, in 2022, 25 logistics machines for the collection of non-reusable packaging, within the scope of the project "Gives another value to packaging".

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

Disposable or single-use products significantly contribute to the production of waste, being that plastic-based products are responsible for serious pollution problems, particularly in the marine environment. Replacing the use of these products with more sustainable solutions could drastically reduce the aforementioned pollution of marine environments.

Although the negative effects associated with the use of plastic materials (especially those for single use) are public knowledge, it is crucial to maintain an action focused on the continuous awareness of the Azorean population, through the introduction of actions and projects aimed at increasing recycling, reuse of products and reduce the (unnecessary) production of waste.

Waste management is a process that has seen a positive evolution in the region, however there is still the presence of localized situations that need to be addressed (70% of waste in São Miguel has as its final destination

the landfill). In 2019, across the region, 55% of urban waste was already recovered and 6 islands reached - the degree of "zero landfill". The region must maintain its strategy, in order to increase the levels associated with these elements.

HOW WILL WE ACT?

Community awareness campaigns + Legislative measures + Strategic review + Capacity building selective collection and waste recovery systems.

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

Regional Secretariat for Environment and Climate Change + Regional Directorate for Sea Affairs + Municipalities + Trade associations + Urban waste management systems + Forestry Services

KEY ACTIONS

- Approval of legislation on single-use products, namely those based on plastic.
- Review of the Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Management of Waste in the Azores.
- Storage system for non-reusable beverage packaging in the Azores (project: "Gives another value to packaging")
- Empower systems for the collection and recovery of used cooking oils; used clothing collection and; collection of organic waste.
- Awareness actions for waste prevention and management aimed at the local community.
- Actions for cleaning the coast and waterlines of the RAA, namely in the context of the Eco Freguesia program.

8. SOCIETY AND CULTURE

COMMITMENTS

1. Promote measures to enhance and promote the material and intangible cultural heritage of the RAA.
2. Empower the territory with digital tools that facilitate and encourage access to specialized training, information on existing cultural heritage and promote culture Azorean and associated initiatives.
3. Recognize and reward good business, associative or individual practices that stand out through sustainability initiatives or projects in the Azores.

GOALS

- By 2023, complete the reformulation of the “Cultura Açores” website, making it more interactive, the basis for promoting the region's identity elements and the commercialization of cultural events or elements identities.
- Annually, carry out 100 actions “ O Parque vai à Escola” to raise awareness in the school community.
- Until 2022, obtain recognition by the GSTC of the certification Miosótis Azores.

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

The Azorean culture has several identity elements that urgently need to be preserved and valued. process to be achieved through direct incentive measures (eg making the community – especially school – aware of the differentiating cultural elements existing in the territory), or indirectly, an example being the development of cultural tourism products that allow attracting niche visitors, with special interest in the cultural and social aspects of destinations and – with the growth of tourist demand – to enhance economic value and notoriety.

It is also crucial that tourism growth is accompanied by everyone's commitment to the sustainable development of the territory. Thus, distinguishing and rewarding the (many) good practices existing in the Azores, in terms of sustainability, is presented as a way of valuing these approaches and bets and turning them into examples to be followed by other agents in the territory.

O Recognition of the certification Miosótis by the GSTC – Global Sustainable Tourism Council – a world entity that works as an accrediting body for certifying entities and recognizes programs/labels of sustainable tourism – will bring a new approach and international recognition to the award in terms of sustainability, allowing it to position it, also, as an important communicational element of destiny and of its companies in, above all, international markets.

Another fundamental element is the continuous qualification – throughout life – of all Azorean professionals. At a stage where specialized training is 100% online, or in a hybrid format, presents itself as a valid and facilitated way to qualify people, it is crucial that the region has continuous work in this area, benefiting a digital system that streamlines the entire process associated with training (promotion of training, registration, promotion of sessions, sharing of documents, issuing of certificates, among others).

HOW WILL WE ACT?

Development of online platforms + Valuing and promoting Azorean heritage + Rewarding good results sustainability practices + Resident involvement campaigns and initiatives + Raise awareness in the school community about environmental and cultural sustainability

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

Regional Directorate for Culture + Regional Directorate for Science and Digital Transition + Regional Secretariat for Environment and Climate Change + Regional Directorate for Education + Regional Directorate for Tourism + Regional Directorate for Youth + DMO + Hotel and Tourism School.

KEY ACTIONS

- Raise awareness and involve young people in environmental education campaigns.
- Reformulation of the “Cultura Açores” website.
- Azores Online Training and Qualification Platform.
- Platform for the Digital Cultural Heritage of the Azores.
- Upgrade and recognition by the GSTC of the Miósotis certification.
- Promotion of the “Espírito Verde” Award.
- Training actions for assets.

9. ECONOMY

COMMITMENTS

Engage companies in the tourism value chain in sustainable practices, promote the sustainability of the RAA's agricultural and fisheries processes and behaviors, and continue to blur seasonality.

GOALS

- By 2021, complete the installation of the marine megafauna observation and monitoring point.
- Annually, train 100 professionals through the Escola do Mar dos Açores.
- By 2023, prepare the strategic plan for the use of fishery by-products.
- By 2027, increase the number of tourism companies that integrate smart technologies into management of your business.

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

The economic activity of the Azores should reflect the proposed sustainable development goals. Thus, these activities should be encouraged to integrate sustainable practices into their daily lives, increasing its positive impact on land management.

Agriculture and fisheries are two of the main economic drivers of the RAA. In recent years, efforts have been made by the RAA so that these activities can also be sustainable. Through measures that favor good practices and the adoption of more environmentally friendly behavior are fundamental, so that there is a quality relationship between economic activity and the environmental impact it generates.

At the same time, it is essential that companies follow a path of constant updating and innovation, ensuring a competitive position in the market. The integration of new technologies that facilitate daily management and increase the profitability of companies should, therefore, be a bet for the region.

HOW WILL WE ACT?

Technological training of companies + Professional training + Promotion of Azorean fish + Azorean Fishing Certification + Tourism enhancement of fishing communities + Campaigns to promote agricultural "good practices" + Program to reduce tourist seasonality

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

Regional Secretariat for the Sea and Fisheries + Regional Directorate for Fisheries. + Regional Directorate for Science and Digital Transition + Regional Directorate for Qualification and Professional and Employment + Regional Directorate for Maritime Affairs + DMO

KEY ACTIONS

- “Lixo Zero” campaign on fishing vessels.
- Campaign to publicize fish with low commercial value along the HoReCa channels.
- Installation of a marine megafauna observation point at Monte da Guia (Vigia do Monte da Guia).
- Strategy for the use of Fishery By-products.
- AzDIH and SMATBLUEF projects.
- Professional training for the blue economy through the Escola do Mar dos Açores.
- Program to continue to reduce Seasonality.



10. TERRITORIAL PLANNING

COMMITMENTS

1. Empower the territory with measures that mitigate the impacts of climate change and prepare the region to react more efficiently to meteorological phenomena extremes, changes in rainfall patterns, or other associated natural events.
2. Study and better manage the maritime space and the activities promoted.
3. Guide economic agents and discipline administrative action, defining the strategic tourism products and the evolution of the tourism offer.

GOALS

- During 2021, finish the Flood Risk Management Plan.
- By 2025, complete the study of behavior against marine erosion during major storms, detrital fajãs compared to lava fajãs.
- By 2024, publish a template for Monitoring Plan for Adjacent Maritime Spatial Planning to the Azores archipelago (OEMA) and a guide for licensing in this context.
- By 2022, publish the RAA Tourism Planning Plan (POTRAA).

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

Climate change is a reality that territories must be prepared in order to mitigate the impacts that these weather events will have. The sea level rise, and changes in rainfall patterns are two elements that, aggregated or isolated, can provide - more often floods events, having a direct effect on the destruction of public spaces and infrastructure, private households, commercial establishments, affecting the Azorean population economically and socially. Studying the expected impacts in the Azorean reality and implementing prevention measures represent two essential aspects to combat this phenomenon for the future.

On the other hand, it is important to guide public and private actions in terms of tourism, ensuring the correct use of natural and cultural resources, enhancing them in a sustainable way, and benefiting from the experience tourism, making it compatible with the experience of local communities.

HOW WILL WE ACT?

Specialized studies + Development of management plans + Implementation of prevention measures

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

Regional Directorate for Maritime Affairs + Regional Directorate for Spatial Planning and Water Resources + Regional Directorate for Tourism + Research Groups + University of the Azores

KEY ACTIONS

- Study on the resilience of the Azores fajãs to global climate change.
- Review of the Flood Risk Management Plan.
- PLASMAR+ program.
- MSP-OR Program.
- Publication of POTRAA.
- Implementation of the Plan for Rapid Intervention and Assistance in Hiking Trails.



11. OTHERS

COMMITMENT

Monitor sustainability indicators and manage the certification process of the Azores as sustainable tourist destination

GOALS

- Monthly update indicators related to economic, environmental, and social activities
- Develop annually a report that evaluates the initiatives developed throughout the region.

WHY SHOULD WE ACT?

Certifying the Azores Destination in sustainability is a continuous process that must be undertaken by everyone, but understood by those who visit the territory. The external perception of tourists will allow measuring their satisfaction with the destination and the implemented practices, which may be essential to identify and promptly correct situations that undermine the good tourist reception.

Simultaneously, the RAA's performance indicators should be monitored, so that the criteria defined by EarthCheck's certification can be continuously observed and, if necessary, promote corrective measures aimed at achieving the established goals.

HOW WILL WE ACT?

Monitoring of KPA's + Development of action implementation reports + Documentary update and promotion of corrective measures

ENTITIES TO INVOLVE

DMO

KEY ACTIONS

- Development of Annual Sustainability Report.
- Development of destination performance analysis dashboard in environmental and economic sectors and social.

2.3 ACTIVITY MAPS

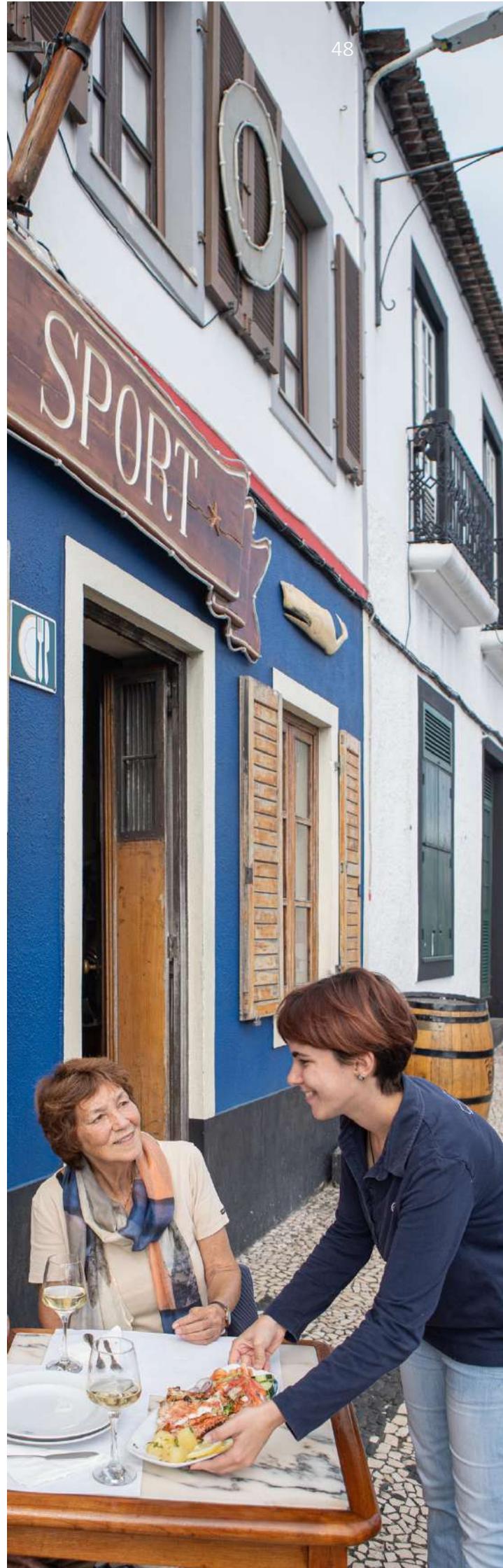
The 2019-2030 Action Plan of the Azores Sustainable Destination, published in September 2019, foresaw the development of 50 actions, distributed by the destination's sustainable commitments, in the short, medium and long term.

In September 2020, 22 actions had already been carried out planned to comply by the end of 2022. The remaining 28 actions were in progress, and only 8 were rescheduled for 2021/2022, due to the impossibility of carrying them out in a time of pandemic.

The status of the actions planned for the 2019-2027 Action Plan can be found in the 2019/2020 Sustainability Report.

In the tables below is possible to find the planning of actions which are part of the updated version of the Action Plan, named the 2019-2030 Action Plan for the Azores Sustainability Destination, and that predict the achievement of the 23 sustainable commitments.

In total, there are 132 actions spread over 10 KPA's – Key Performance Areas – and a section for the management and monitoring of the sustainability process.



1. ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
1.1 - 2019	Promotion of "Meetings with Energy Efficiency"	Raising awareness in the local community:technical staff, engineers, managers, entrepreneurs, regional public administration, municipalities and the general public	- Holding of 4 "Meetings of Energy Efficiency" in 2021	Annual	Internal Resources	DREn
1.2 - 2019	Disclose with the hotel units of the Region a manual of efficiency dedicated energy to the sector	Promote the best energy efficiency practices in the sector, contributing to the increase of its competitiveness	- One dissemination action on social media	Annual	Internal Resources	DREn + DRTu
1.3 2019	Promotion of energy efficiency in the school community	Raise awareness and empower the school community in pre-school, 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycles and secondary education to adopt energy efficiency practices	- In 2021, holding of at least 4 "Meetings with Energy Efficiency in Schools" dedicated to the 3rd and secondary cycles of the region. - Implementation of the "Dreni" activity in at least 10 educational establishments (pre-school, 1st and/or 2nd cycle) of the RAA.	Annual	Internal Resources	DREn
1.1 - 2021	Implement innovation projects namely: V2G; IANOS; RESOR; and EMOBICITY	Provide energy innovation in terms of energy efficiency, electric mobility, and clean energy production.	- Implementation of an innovative solution action per project	Annual	211.220 €	DREn

1.2 - 2021	Heat recovery system within the Life IP Climaz	Improve efficiency in heat recovery systems for the exhaust gases of power plants	- Pilot Heat Recovery System	2024	599.214 €	EDA
1.3 - 2021	Energy Efficiency Measures in Thermoelectric Power Plants	Energy audits, equipment replacement, variable speed drives, thermal insulation of fuel tanks	- Improve TC energy efficiency 5%	2025	<i>To be defined</i>	EDA
1.4 - 2021	Replacement of building frames	Efficient regulation of the building's ambient temperature. Decrease in energy consumption with HVAC.	- Reduce electricity costs by 10%	2022	125.000 €	DRTAM
1.5 - 2021	Energy and Indoor Air Quality Certification of Flores Aerodrome Facilities	Improve the energy performance and building comfort conditions	- Reduce energy consumption by more than 40%	2022	20.000 €	DRTAM + SGA - Flores Island

2. GREENHOUSE GASES / DECARBONIZATION

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
2.1- 2019	Investment in the installation and expansion of electricity production and storage centers using sources renewable and endogenous	Increase production and storage of electricity from renewable sources	- 61% of electricity produced from renewable sources in 2025 (For this goal, the actions planned between 2.1.1 and 2.1.12 will be carried out)	2025	To be defined	EDA
2.1.1 - 2021	Construction of 3 geothermal wells for the power saturation installed in the Geothermal powerplant of Ribeira Grande (Cachaço-Lombadas/São Miguel)	- Increase the emission of source electrical energy geothermal in the Azores, reducing emissions from greenhouse gases and energy dependence of the archipelago. - Overall, it is estimated produce annually 187 GWh of source energy geothermal in the Azores	- Increase by about 7% to geothermal energy on the island of São Miguel, passing the current 40% to 47%. - Avoid estimated annual emission of 67,703 tons of carbon dioxide carbon into the atmosphere.	2025	32.000.000€ (Includes action 2.1.2)	EDA
2.1.2 - 2021	Construction of two new geothermical wells to increase the energy production of Gerthermical Station of Pico Vermelho (São Miguel)	Go from the current 10MW of installed power to 15 MW. - Decrease the emission of greenhouse gases. - Globally produce about 187 GWh of energy per year.	- Increase geothermal energy by around 8% on the island of São Miguel. - Avoid the estimated annual emission of 83 285 tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.	2025	32.000.000€ (Includes action 2.1.1)	EDA

2.1.3 - 2021	Construction of three new wells to expand the installed capacity at the Pico Alto Geothermal Power Plant (Ilha Terceira)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Go from the current 3.5 MW of installed power to 10 MW. - Overall, it is estimated to produce 187 GWh of energy from geothermal sources annually in the Azores. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased energy from endogenous resources on the island, from the current 13% to 33%. - Avoid the estimated annual emission of 57 149 tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. 	2025	23.265.000€	EDA
2.1.4 - 2021	Santa Maria Island Photovoltaic Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the penetration of renewable energies on the island of Santa Maria and contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases and dependence on fossil fuels in the region. - Install a solar-photovoltaic power of 600 kW with the possibility of expansion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guarantee 5.2% of the island's electricity. - Avoid the annual emission of 721 tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. 	2022	1.200.000€	EDA
2.1.5 - 2021	Photovoltaic Park of Corvo island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of renewable energy sources on the Corvo island. - Contribute to the reduction of gases with the effect of greenhouse and dependence on fossil fuels from the island. - Install a power 50 kW solar photovoltaic with the possibility of enlargement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guarantee 4.9% of electricity of the island. - Avoid the annual issuance of 59 tons of carbon dioxide 	2023	300.000€	EDA
2.1.6 - 2021	Wind Farm of Figueiral on Santa Maria island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pass from current power installed of 1500 kW to 2700 kW, with possibility of magnification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the wind production of the island, from the current 14% to 29%. - Guarantee the production of 34.2% of renewable energy in Santa Maria. - Avoid the annual issuance of 4091 tons of carbon dioxide. 	2025	3.200.000€	EDA

2.1.7	Hydroelectric Power Plant of Ribeira Grande- Flores island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hydroelectric exploitation of Ribeira Grande in order to make sustainable the electrical production on the island. - Ensure that at least 90% of the electricity of the island is renewable. - It is intended to be self-sufficient, in electrical terms, with endogenous resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that the thermal emission in the island is residual, passing from current 63% renewable energy to about 90% of energies renovations. - Avoid the annual issuance of 3788 tons of carbon dioxide. 	2027	8.500.000€	EDA
2.1.8	Corvo Island Wind Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Installation of two wind towers with 100 kW power, with a total of 200 kW power. - Contribute to the energy sustainability from the Corvo island and maximization penetration of renewable energy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that 29% of the electric energy of the Corvo is from wind power. - Avoid the annual issuance of 268 tons of carbon dioxide. 	2024	900.000€	EDA
2.1.9	Faial Island Wind Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of installed wind power on the island of Faial, from the current 4250 kW of the wind farm in the Hall to 6050 kW. - Increase the penetration of renewable energy on the island, reducing fuel imports and GEE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that 29% of the island's electricity comes from wind power. Go from the current 14% to 29%. - Avoid the annual emission of 8481 tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. 	2024	2.500.000€	EDA
2.1.10	Terceira Island Battery Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Store renewable energy capable of serving as a synthetic rotating reserve, avoiding the burning of fuels in thermal generators that currently serve as a rotating reserve. - Improve energy efficiency and the quality of energy supplied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase wind energy production from 14% to about 25% on Terceira Island. 	2023	14.290.000€	EDA

2.1.1 1 - 2021	Battery Park of São Miguel Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Store renewable energy capable of serving as a synthetic rotating reserve, avoiding the burning of fuels in thermal generators that currently serve as a rotating reserve. - Improve energy efficiency and the quality of energy supplied. - Reduce fossil energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase wind energy production from 4% to around 9% on the island of São Miguel. 	2024	36.250.000€	EDA
2.1.1 2 - 2021	Battery Park for the islands of Santa Maria, São Jorge, Pico, Faial and Corvo.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Store renewable energy capable of serving as a synthetic rotating reserve, avoiding the burning of fuels in thermal generators that currently serve as a rotating reserve. - Improve energy efficiency and the quality of energy supplied. - Reduce fossil energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase wind energy penetration on these islands by about 5% on each of the islands. 	2025	12.350.000€	EDA
2.2- 2019	Implementation of a public network of electric car recharging points on every island	Fostering the usage of electric vehicles cuts the consumption of fossil fuels	Installing 16 rapid recharging points by 2024 for public access and interconnected with EGME and 118 normal recharging points by 2024 for public access interconnected to the EGME (goals PMEA)	2024	<i>To be defined</i>	DREn + other entities

2.3-2019	Electrification of the passenger fleet of the regional public administration and SPER	Boosting the percentage of electric vehicles in use by the Region's public administration and state corporate sector	33% of electric vehicles in the fleet renewal by 2020 and 50% of electric vehicles in the fleet renewal by 2024	2024	€6,000 per year for each rental electric vehicle	Departments of GRA and SPER
----------	---	--	---	------	--	-----------------------------

2.2-2021	Allocation of financial incentives for the purchase of electric vehicles	Increase the number of electric vehicles in circulation in the Azores, promoting the decarbonization of the sector.	- 435 electric vehicles supported by 2024	2024	300.000 €	DREN
----------	--	---	---	------	-----------	------

2.3-2021	Model island institution to promote innovative solutions for electric mobility - Graciosa Island	Test and implement innovative and emerging electric mobility solutions	- Implementation of a shared management platform for public administration electric vehicles fleet; - Introduction of an electric vehicle in public transport of passengers; - Installation of 1 charging point; - Installation of a bike sharing system.	Annual	88.499 €	DREn
----------	--	--	--	--------	----------	------

2.4-2021	Installation of photovoltaic systems in public and private buildings	Increase energy production from renewable sources	- Increase installed capacity by 12.6 MW	2025	19.000.000 €	DREn
----------	--	---	--	------	--------------	------

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
2.5-2021	Reinforce the commitment to self-consumption of renewable energy, through the reinforcement of incentives for families, companies, cooperatives, IPSS and non-profit institutions.	Increase citizen involvement in the energy transition, encouraging everyone to take an active role.	- In 2021, another 20% of the incentives granted in 2020	Annual	597.623,00 €	DREn
2.6-2021	Implementation of the Regional Climate Change Program under the Life IP Climaz	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 9 electric pick-ups for nature watchers' teams - 1 electric minibus for pilot/demonstration project - 2 electric vehicles for pilot testing fleet of shared vehicles - 1 electric truck 3-5 tons for the daily transport of operational personnel/materials - Charging station for electric vehicles (30 charging stations) - Renewable domestic hot water heating systems (460 systems) 	2027	8.700.000 €	SRAAC/ DREn / Municipalities
2.7-2021	Fuel Emulsification System within the scope of Life IP Climaz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study solutions for fuel emulsion systems in power generators to reduce fuel consumption and exhaust emissions and pilot project installation. - Online system based on ultrasound technology that processes fuels and water producing fuel and water emulsions optimizing engine load, increasing fuel efficiency and reducing emissions and maintenance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study Conclusions - Pilot Project Installation - Online system availability 	2024	192.638 €	EDA

2.8- 2021	Study security of supply of the Electric System within the scope of Life IP Climaz	<p>Promotion and development of a flexibility system, dynamic consumption management and maximization of the penetration of renewables and existing endogenous resources to support the management of the electricity system</p> <p>Define a mix for the local electricity production system (per island) in view of the forecast evolution of demand and the objectives of regional energy policy.</p>	1 Study security of supply of the Electric System	2022	197.600 €	EDA /DREn
2.9- 2021	Study of energy digitization within the scope of Life IP Climaz	<p>Promote the digitization of the electrical system, developing smart electrical networks, installing smart meters and advanced sensing and communication capabilities that allow for increased decentralized electricity production, increased charging capacity for electric vehicle batteries and other stationary storage devices</p>	1 project pilot	2025	87.434 €	EDA
2.10 - 2021	Study of regulations in the scope of Life IP Climaz	<p>Define regulation of the Transmission and Distribution Network to be applied in the RAA that defines the technical requirements to be demanded from production facilities that intend to be connected to the public network in the Region.</p>	1 Study of regulation	2030	250.000 €	EDA

2.11	Battery project under the Life IP Climaz	Install electric energy storage systems to transfer excess production from the shortest hours to the most consumed ones, simultaneously ensuring greater security of operation and supply to each network	1 Battery design study	2030	184.250 €	EDA
------	--	---	------------------------	------	-----------	-----

2.12	Preservation of natural resources and biodiversity, through the continued application of Agro-environmental and Biological Agriculture measures	Decrease GHG emissions	- Agricultural land subject to management contracts that support biodiversity and/or landscapes (6,154 ha)	2023	10.000.000 € (2014-2023)	SRADR
------	---	------------------------	--	------	-----------------------------	-------

3. DRINKING WATER RESOURCES

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
3.1- 2019	Support program for the acquisition and installation of water meters	Strengthening the hydric balance indicator	- 5.000 new meters installed by 2021	2021	300.000 €	ERSARA
3.3- 2019	Awareness campaign for water consumption reduction	Raising local community awareness about the need to adopt water saving practices	By 2021, placing of 19 billboards/outdoors and distribution of 50,000 brochures	2021	30.000 €	ERSARA
3.1- 2021	Installation of flow reducers	Reduction of water consumption, namely in large non-domestic consumers	- Installation of 3000 flow reducers	2023	80.594€	ERSARA
3.2- 2021	Drought and Water Scarcity Management Plan	Organize, guide, facilitate, streamline, standardize, and report on the actions and procedures to be implemented to anticipate risk situations, and in the event of their occurrence, respond to the needs	- Plan Conclusion	2022	165.000 €	DROTRH
3.3- 2021	Requalification, maintenance and monitoring of the Region's hydrographic network	Effective management of water resources, promoting their integrated planning and implementing measures for requalification, conservation and correction of the hydrological network.	- Automation of 9 stations and online data transmission, so that any citizen can access up-to-date information for personal, professional and scientific purposes, contributing to participative management.	2023	70.400 €	DROTRH

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
3.4-2021	Installation of public drinking fountains in public spaces	Reduction of water consumption in packaging, allowing direct consumption and filling of personal bottles	- 19 public drinking fountains (1 in each municipality)..	2022	13.000 €	ERSARA
3.5-2021	Installation of public drinking fountains in the ports of the Azores	Reduction of water consumption in packaging, allowing direct consumption and filling of personal bottles	- Installation of 5 drinking fountains in the Ports of the Azores.	2022	10.000 €	ERSARA
3.6-2021	Management of water consumption in forest nurseries.	Reduced water consumption	- Installation of 30 timer taps	2021	160 €	Forest Services
3.7-2021	Building water efficiency program	Increase the efficient use of water in buildings in the design, rehabilitation or use phase.	- Certify 10 residential buildings in a pilot project	2025	40.000 €	ERSARA
3.8-2021	Best practices manual for hotels for the efficient use of water	Encourage the efficient use of water in hotels with similar units	- Production of 1 Manual and its digital distribution to all stakeholders.	2025	20.000 €	ERSARA
3.9-2021	Installation of a Water Treatment System for the Pico Airport Reservoirs	Improve the quality of drinking water at Pico Airport	- Installation of the treatment system	2022	25.000 €	DRTAM + SGA – Pico Island

4. WASTEWATERS AND SANITATION

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Investemet</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>
4.1- 2021	Training of human resources for the WWTP, ETA and similar	Train the human resources of entities for the storage and management of hazardous materials and definition of legislation for their handling	- 1 training session to be held in person in 2022	2026	50.000 €	ERSARA

5. ECOSYSTEM AND BIODIVERSITY

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
5.2-2019	LIFE IP Azores Natura Program - Protection and conservation of habitats and endemic species	Improving the states of conservation of 24 species and 13 habitats protected in the Region raising community awareness over their preservation	- Creating 124 ha of ecological corridors to guarantee the status of 9 protected habitats;	2027	12.000.000 €	DRAAC + SPEA
5.3-2019	LIFE Beetles Program - Preservation and conservation of fauna	Boosting the populations and improving the conservation status of the populations of three endemic beetles	- Boosting the population of the three endemic beetles by 15% - Expanding their range of distribution by 15%	2024	1.760.000 €	DRAAC
5.4-2019	LIFE Vidalia Project - Preservation and conservation of Flora	Improving the level of conservation of the Azorina vidalii and Lotus Azoricus species to "Favourable"	- Strengthening the populations of Azorina vidalii and Lotus azoricus	2023	1.757.577 €	DRAAC
5.5-2019	Blue Azores Project – Expanding the marine protected areas in the Region	Fostering the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystems through designating more protected marine areas	- Declaring and managing at least 15% of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Azores as protected marine areas	2025	1.000.000 €	DRAM
5.6-2019	Dynamics of volunteer environmental projects	Fostering the preservation of the ecosystems and biodiversity across the Region through voluntary initiative that support implemented of these measures	- Through to 2021, developing at least ten nature conservation actions with volunteer participation	2021	15.000 €	DRAAC

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
5.1-2021	Assessment of the impact of microplastics and emerging contaminants on Macaronesia beaches	Manage data on the impact of microplastics and emerging contaminants on the beaches of the Canary Islands, Cape Verde, Madeira and Azores	- Creation of 1 observatory	2022	162.516,36 €	DRAM
5.2-2021	Creation of the classification of volcanic cavities based on biological records.	Regulate and protect volcanic cavities.	- Publication of a legal diploma with the volcanic classification and respective protection measures.	2022	Internal Resources	DRAAC
5.3-2021	UNESCO Paleopark of Santa Maria	To establish in UNESCO the concept of Paleopark as the paleontological equivalent of Biosphere Reserves in the biological world, and of Geoparks in the geological world	- Achieving UNESCO recognition of the Paleoparks concept	2024	60.000 €	DRCTD
5.4-2021	Promote forestry awareness actions	Raise awareness of civil society on matters related to the use and conservation of forest resources	- 2 forest awareness actions	Annual	Internal Resources	DRRF
5.5-2021	CLIMAZ Program - IT infrastructure and oceanographic equipment.	Training for the creation and management of time series of oceanographic data through Earth Observation methodologies (satellite).	- Installation of an oceanographic monitoring network in the RAA composed of multiparametric buoys. (Parameters to be monitored: Oxygen; Chlorophyll; Temperature; Marine agitation; pH; Underwater noise; Ocean currents.) - Development of a dynamic ecosystem model that allows estimating the distribution of marine species.	2030	2.500.000€	DRAM

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
5.6-2021	INTERTAGUA - Interactive Aquatic Interfaces for Detection and Visualization of Atlantic Marine Megafauna and Vessels in Macaronesia using Radio Transmitter Markers	Monitoring of Coastal and Ocean Ecosystems through the development of low-cost radio-transmission markers to promote the sustainable development of anthropogenic activities in Macaronesia. Development of Interactive Technologies to promote Citizen Science and its awareness of the marine ecosystem and its interaction with anthropogenic activities of interest. Development of New Concepts of Coastal and Ocean Ecological Services through the use of innovative interactive platforms for different users.	- Creation of 1 instrumentation system, fixation, programmed release and recovery of the marks; - 1 test of tightness and resistance to different hydrostatic pressures in a hyperbaric chamber; - 1 test for tightness and resistance to different hydrostatic pressures, abrasion resistance and signal reception at sea; - Implementation of 3 infrastructures for the installation of communication stations, collection and storage of data collected from sensors, based on LoRaWan, namely, one on Faial Island, one on Pico Island and one on São Jorge Island; - Prototype test on 1 sperm whale; - Prototype test on 1 vessel.	2022	135.186,50 €	DRAM
5.7-2021	MISTIC-SEAS III	Development of a coordinated approach to assess Descriptor 4 through its links to D1 and other relevant descriptors in the Macaronesia subregion	- Preparation of a risk analysis for D4 (food chains); - Elaboration of a list of indicators for descriptor evaluation.	2021	136.475,00 €	DRAM

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
5.8-2021	RAGES	Define an approach to define risk analysis methodologies for assessing the environmental status of the marine environment	- Number of environmental descriptors evaluated, 2: D2 – Non-indigenous species; D11 – Marine noise.	2021	75.000,00 €	DRAM
5.9-2021	MARCET2 - Promotion of the ecotourism activity of whale watching as a model of sustainable economic development, through the protection and conservation of these species and their valorization as natural heritage of Macaronesia	Evaluate the threats of anthropogenic origin that affect the conservation of groups of cetaceans residing in ZECs in the region of interest for the activity of cetacean observation, using as indicator species the bottlenose dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	- Definition of 1 protocol for the collection of dead roach bottlenose dolphins (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>) in the RAA; - Definition of the sampling design in a ZEC in the region and 1 strict protocol for the collection of biological samples (biopsies) of bottlenose dolphins; - Provision of 1 raw data package from AIS (Automatic Identification System) for the defined study area (ZEC); - Collection of bottlenose dolphin biopsies, at least 10 samples, and availability of samples collected in the scope of other projects and/or the results of samples previously analyzed. Storage and shipment of samples for further analysis; - Collection of dead bottlenose bottlenose samples (minimum 1 animal).	2022	103.989,09 €	DRAM

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
5.10 - 2021	OCEANLIT - Management of coastal protected natural spaces affected by marine litter in oceanic archipelagos	Reduce marine waste through improved waste management and awareness of users and the general public, for the conservation and restoration of coastal and marine protected areas in oceanic archipelagos	- Promote 60 coastal and underwater cleaning campaigns per year (until the end of the project) through the Ambassador OCEANLIT initiative. - Removal of 4 tonnes of marine litter from the RAA coastline per year (until the end of the project). - Publication of 1 Manual of Good Practices for Waste Management on board fishing vessels.	2022	145.800,00 €	DRAM
5.11 - 2021	Preserving the unique elements and identifiers of the rural landscape	Preservation of natural resources and biodiversity, through the continued application of Agro- environmental and Biological Agriculture measures.	- Agricultural land subject to management contracts that support biodiversity and/or landscapes (6,154 ha)	2023	10.000.000 € (2014-2023)	SRADR
5.12 - 2021	Afforestation with authorized species and compliance with the code of good forestry practices	Continue to promote the restoration, preservation, and improvement of forestry-related ecosystems.	- Forests/ other wooded surfaces subject to biodiversity support management contracts (4,900 ha)	2023	7.000.000 € (2014-2023)	SRADR
5.13 - 2021	Maintain the sustainability of the forest fabric to prevent the spread of invasive species.	Avoid reducing the rate of deforestation to continue to restore, preserve and improve ecosystems linked to forestry.	- Forests/ other wooded surfaces subject to biodiversity support management contracts (4,900 ha)	2023	7.000.000 € (2014-2023)	SRADR

6. TRANSPORTS

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Investemet</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>
6.1-2019	Replacement of the public transport fleet by alternatives with clean fuels	Reduce the number of public transports using fossil fuels in the RAA	- 10 new buses/minibuses related to public transport powered by "green" energy	2024	3.000.000€	DREn + DRT + Municipalities and public transport companies
6.2-2019	Structuring pedestrian and cycling urban networks	Promote the use of smooth travel modes in the RAA	- Increase 30km of RAA pedestrian and/or urban cycling networks	2023	To be defined	DRT + Municipalities

7. SOLID WASTES

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
7.2-2019	Approval of the legislation on single use products, specifically those made from plastic	Reducing the consumption of single use plastic-based products in the Region	- Banning, by 2021, the utilisation by any HORECA outlet of single use plastic products (plates, bowls, cups, cutlery, straws, and stirrers)	2021	Internal resources	DRAAC
7.3-2019	Awareness campaigns and actions for waste prevention and management	Fostering the adoption of bet consumption practice and reducing the production of wastes as well as the good management of waste through reutilisation and appropriate separation	- Undertaking at least 150 education and awareness actions per year	Annual	50.000 €	DRAAC
7.4-2019	Eco-parish, parish clean Program	Involving and raising the awareness of the local population to the need to adopt environment preservation friendly behaviours and running cleaning campaigns along coasts and watercourses	- Involving at least 90% of the parishes of the Azores per year	Annual	500.000€	DRA

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
7.5-2019	PALMA – Action Plan for Marine Rubbish in the Azores: Marine rubbish collection campaigns in coastal and marine habitats.	Reducing the quantity of rubbish of land-based origins entering into the marine ecosystems, minimising the risk of ingestion and ensnaring marine birds, mammals and turtles among other sensitive species.	- Fostering and supporting 20 marine and coastal waste collection campaigns in 2020	Annual	80.000 €	DRAM
7.1-2021	Review of the Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Management of Waste in the Azores, as well as the Legal Regime associated to it	Manage the Azores waste management system	- Publication of the review of the Plan	2021	47.554 €	DRAAC
7.2-2021	Storage system for non-reusable beverage packaging in the Azores (project: "Give another value to packaging")	Stimulate the reuse of packaging and reduce the use of plastic beverage packaging (PET), metal (aluminium) and glass, through financial incentives.	- Installing 25 machines - At least 1 machine per municipality	2021	1.000.000 €	DRAAC
7.3-2021	Empower the systems to collect and recover used cooking oils, used clothing and of organic waste	Promote efficient waste management and foster the circular economy in the RAA	- Requalification of cooking oil collection circuits. - Creation of used clothing collection circuits in all Municipalities of the Region; - Creation of organic waste collection circuits in all municipalities in the region	2025	To be define	DRAAC / Municipalities

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Investemet</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>
7.4-2021	Solid waste management in Recreational Forest Reserves, promoting the implementation of selective waste collection.	Reduce the production of urban and similar waste (code LER 200399).	- Install, by 2022, at least 45 containers for selective waste collection in Recreational Forest Reserves.	2022	1.858 €	Forestry Services
7.5-2021	Management of waste produced in Recreational Forest Reserves	Raising awareness of visitors to Recreational Forest Reserves for the separation of differentiated waste.	- Install 25 awareness panels for the correct separation of differentiated waste near the recycling bins	2023	1.750 €	Forestry Services

8. SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
8.1-2019	Awareness actions and activities within the scope of the "Parque Escola" project, aimed at the school community of the Region	Raising awareness in the school community about the importance of, among other topics, the conservation of nature, bio and geodiversity, the sea, history and culture, and raising awareness of sustainable development practices	- 100 "O Parque vai à Escola" actions	Annual	4.050 €	DRA
8.2-2019	Consulting the local community about their perception of the destination's needs in terms of sustainability	Conduct a survey of residents to receive their opinion and contributions on the certification process of the Azores	- 750 completed surveys	2021	3.000 €	DMO + OTA
8.5-2019	Study of the audience typologies in Regional Museums	Socio-demographic characterization of the audiences who visit the Museums of the Regional Directorate of Culture Identify what brings a resident to the museum and how we can create new audiences	- 9 published studies of the audiences. - Interviews with 0.10% of residents on each island	2022	30.000 €	DRC
8.6-2019	Training actions for Tour Operators	-Valuing the history of the Azores and the history of each island with a special focus on culture, heritage, and cultural expressions - Create specific cultural itineraries on each island	- Conduct 9 courses - Involve 100% of the tour operators on each island - 3 cultural tours created per island	2023	50.000 €	DRC

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
8.7- 2019	Museum employees training course	Develop a set of skills with museum employees: Welcoming visitors Cultural Marketing Digital skills in museums	Carry out 6 training courses for employees of the museums and visitable collections network in the RAA	2023	25.000 €	DRC
8.9- 2019	Adaptation of the "Cultura Açores" Website	Reformulation of the Cultura Açores Website through the introduction of cultural tours, bilingual Portuguese/English content, and the introduction of an online ticket office	- 3 cultural tours per island online ticket office Portuguese/English bilingual content - 400,000 residents and tourists reached	2023	75.000 €	DRC
8.10- 2019	Technical-professional courses in tourism for the qualification of human resources of the sector	Development of skills with aiming to prepare professionals in the sector to provide a better-quality service	- 1225 hours of active training - 39 active training actions	2022	100.000 €	DRTu/ School of Hospitality and Tourism
8.11- 2019	Promotion of the Azores Sustainability Booklet and certification of companies in the tourism value chain	Involve and encourage local businesses in the use of sustainable practices in their daily lives	- At least 10 new entities subscribing to the Booklet, per year	Annual	To be defined	DRTu/DMO/ Private sector
8.1- 2021	Azores Online Training and Qualification Platform	Centralize and create training offer from all the main areas of the Azorean market in a single online public access platform to train the Azorean community.	- Development of 1 online platform	2023	350.000 €	DRCTD

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
8.2-2021	Platform for the Digital Cultural Heritage of the Azores	Promoting culture as a factor of citizenship and valuing information and knowledge, learning, qualification and continuous training, creativity, and innovation as key factors for competitiveness.	- Development of 1 online platform	2030	1.400.000 €	DRCTD
8.3-2021	REDA Platform	Providing a set of digital educational resources for collaborative work (especially between teachers).	- 5.000 registered users on the platform	Annual	<i>To be defined</i>	DRE
8.4-2021	Innovation of existing cultural content about the Azores	Providing information in a more attractive, simple, and easy to understand format, enabling its consultation by both visitors and residents.	- Providing digital content about the Azores (image, sound, and video) in an online database on the new portal "Cultura Açores".	2022	15.000 €	DRC
8.5-2021	Attribution of the Miosotis Azores Award	Distinguishing sustainable good practices in accommodation companies	- Giving out at least 130 awards	Annual	3.300 €	DRAAC

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
8.6-2021	Upgrade and recognition by the GSTC of the Miosotis Azores Award	Promoting the adoption of sustainable practices in companies in the tourism value chain	- Recognition by GSTC	2022	To be defined	DRAAC / DRTu
8.7-2021	Espírito Verde Award	Highlighting environmental commitment and rewarding companies, institutions and personalities that stand out in the RAA/Region for good environmental practices, research, activism, volunteering and environmental patronage, promoting an increasingly active environmental citizenship	- Event completion	Annual	49.500 €	DRAAC
8.8-2021	Project: Educating for a Blue Generation (EGA)	The project seeks to motivate and inspire children about the importance of the oceans and their conservation. This project consists of training for teachers, who are given teaching materials to streamline activities with students	- All primary school students (year 1 to 4) in the Region - All primary school teachers (year 1 to 4)	2022	To be defined	DRE
8.9-2021	Eco-Schools Program	Encouraging environmental actions and recognizing the quality work developed by the school, within the scope of Environmental Education for Sustainability	-Involving 58 Schools -Reaching 15.428 Students	Annual	550 €	DRAAC

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
8.10 - 2021	Young Environmental Reporters	Raising awareness among young people about environmental issues	- Reaching 500 students	Annual	Internal resources	DRAAC
8.11 - 2021	Program to support local environmental and ecological intervention, aiming to develop the Sustainable Development Goals	Developing volunteering in local environmental sustainability, in a “acting locally, thinking globally” logic	-10 local projects -200 volunteers	2022	30.000 €	DRJ
8.12 - 2021	Recovery and preservation of the material cultural heritage of the region (museums, churches, monuments...)	Carrying out and supporting the implementation of interventions for the conservation and restoration of the Region's immovable and movable heritage	- Carrying out 4 awareness-raising actions on cultural heritage and its preservation and conservation. - Carrying out 3 conservation and restoration interventions.	Annual	1.928.000 €	DRC
8.13 - 2021	Azores Routes	Valuing cultural heritage	- Creation of at least 3 thematic routes -Adhesion of at least 20 tourist entertainment companies - Adhesion of at least 20 partners	2022	100.000 €	DRTu
8.14 - 2021	Strategy for Accessible Tourism	Defining a strategy for the development of accessible tourism in the Azores	- Publication of 1 document containing the strategy for the development of accessible tourism for the Azores - Provision of a public database with all the existing offer on accessible tourism Ensure that all DRTu Tourism Information Centres are physically accessible to all	2024	45.000 €	DRTu

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
8.15 - 2021	Implementation of the Tourism Information Centers Dynamization Plan	Raising awareness among the employees of Tourism Information Centers on the topic of Sustainable Tourism so that they can guide tourists to adopt sustainable practices	- Involve 100% of the employees of the Tourism Information Centers in the implementation of the plan	Annual	<i>To be defined</i>	DRTu/DMO
8.16 - 2021	Campaign “Azores&Me – A Lifetime Commitment”	Raising awareness among tourists about sustainable practices to adopt during their stay	- Recognition by 75% of tourists of the Azores as a Sustainable Destination (via inquiry)	2024	75.000 €	DRTu/DMO
8.17 - 2021	Awareness Campaign on Sustainable Tourism	Raising awareness of the school community in primary schools (year 1 to 4) and (year 5 to 6) about the importance of tourism and welcoming tourists, within the scope of the “Parque Escola Program”	- 9 actions developed (1 per island) with at least 1000 students involved	2023	<i>To be defined</i>	DRTu/DMO/ SRAAC

9. ECONOMY

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
9.7- 2019	Certificates of Azorean Fishing	Fostering international recognition of the sustainable practices prevailing in the fishing sector	- Commitment of Regional companies to combatting the IUU (Illegal, unreported, and unregulated) fishing catches	2021	To be defined	DRP
9.8- 2019	Zero Waste Campaign on Fishing Vessels (Eco Vessels) - Follow up on the awareness campaigns carried out in 2020	Decrease the garbage produced on board fishing vessels, as well as raise awareness about waste sorting	- Disclose to all fishing vessels	2021	To be defined	DRP
9.9- 2019	Fishing on the island campaign	Creation of a program to publicize the valorization /consumption of fish across the islands and associate the identity of an island with certain species or fishery products	- Placement of 9 billboards by 2021	2021	2 000 €	DRP
9.10 - 2019	Campaign to promote low commercial value fish along the food service and hotel industry channels	Follow up the campaign started in 2020 to promote low commercial value fish, with an increase in dissemination sites throughout the islands of the RAA	- Creation of teaching material (table base, napkins, etc...) to be used mainly in restaurants - Distribution of materials to 30 RAA restaurants	2021	To be defined	DRP

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
9.12 - 2019	Program to continue to reduce tourism seasonality	Attenuate the effects of seasonality on the profitability of companies and job creation	- Until 2023, increase overnight stays by 10% and revenues by 15% in low season	2023	<i>To be defined</i>	SRAET/DRTu /ATA
9.1- 2021	Fish Week on the island	Promoting local fish with the restaurants	- Hold the event on all 9 islands	2024	<i>To be defined</i>	DRP
9.2- 2021	Strategy for the use of fishery by-products to be defined	Promoting different ways to make the Azores fish profitable to the fishing communities	- Elaboration of a strategic plan for the use of fishery by-products	2023	<i>To be defined</i>	DRP
9.3- 2021	Warranty certificate to battle against the parallel market	Ensuring the consumers that the fish comes from sustainable fishing	- Create a label that identifies the restaurants that fight fish market leakage which represents the quality and sustainability of our fisheries	2023	<i>To be defined</i>	DRP
9.4- 2021	Fishing Tourism - Tourism programs that allow visitors to accompany fishermen during the activity	Demonstrating to visitors that fishing practiced in the Azores is sustainable and environmentally friendly	- 100 participants in these programs	2022	<i>To be defined</i>	DRP
9.5- 2021	Escola do Mar dos Açores (School of the Sea of the Azores)	Training professionals for the blue economy, fishermen and staff of marine tourism companies	- 100 trainees per academic year - 5 courses per academic year	Annual	880.000 €	DRAM

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
9.6-2021	Open Data Platform - Institutionalization of agile and open information in the Region	Increasing the competitiveness of companies through the availability of data for the development of new services or products.	- Creation of Open Data platform	2023	950.508 €	DRCTD
9.7-2021	AzDIH Project - Sustainable Tourism 5.0 in the Islands, in alignment with the Regional Strategy for Tourism and the Smart Specialization Strategy of the Azores (RIS3 Azores).	- Training in future technologies focused on companies in the region, mainly in the Tourism sector. - Facilitation of intersectoral and international cooperation;	- At least 5 training actions per year (at least 35 participants). - At least 1 cooperation project implemented per year (total of 7).	2027	1.000.000 €	DRCTD
9.8-2021	Installation of a marine megafauna observation point at Monte da Guia (Monte da Guia lookout point)	Providing marine tourism companies with an infrastructure that improves the conditions for the practice of their activity - Installing a monitoring point for marine megafauna in a coastal area - Providing Faial Island with an infrastructure that will support the formation of the lookout area	- Construction of the infrastructure by the end of 2021.	2021	50.000 €	SRMP
9.9-2021	Short/medium term training actions aimed at unemployed workers and employees in tourism and agriculture	Qualifying people who work or intend to work in the area aiming to promote quality tourism	Develop between 5 to 10 training actions	2022	To be defined	DRQPE

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
9.10 - 2021	Establish a partnership with the UAc (University of the Azores), Vocational Schools and other RAA certified training entities to carry out training in the blue and green economy	Increasing the qualification level of Azorean people in general by promoting greater awareness of environmental sustainability issues	- Develop 4 to 8 courses related to the area	2022	To be defined	DRQPE
9.11 - 2021	Carrying out double certification professional courses, in tourism and agriculture, aimed at young people, in Professional schools in the Region	Supporting Professional Schools and professional education in the qualification of the Azorean youth	- 10 courses	2022	To be defined	DRQPE
9.12 - 2021	SMARTBLUEF - Consolidation of the Central Atlantic alliance for competitiveness and the blue economy	Increasing the competitiveness of the blue economy by implementing a transnational network of innovation support agents, that promotes internationalization and an innovative culture through synergies, capacities, and shared resources	- Implementation of a network with a minimum of 10 entities.	2022	54.343,00 €	DRAM

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
9.13 - 2021	Azores Clean & Safe	Ensuring the trust in the destination by those who visit us	- Maintenance of the number of companies enrolled in the previous year at 100%	2022	15.000 €	DRTu
9.14 - 2021	Strategic Marketing Plan for the Azores Tourism	Reviewing and updating the Strategic Marketing Plan for the Azores Tourism (PEMTA)	- Review, update, and publication of PEMTA	2022	150.000 €	SRTTE/DRTu
9.15 - 2021	Cycl'in Azores MTB Centers	Promoting bicycle mobility	- Creation of two more Cycl'in Azores MTB centers (São Miguel and Terceira)	2024	150.000 €	DRTu

10. TERRITORIAL PLANNING

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
10.1 - 2021	Study on the resilience of the Azorean fajãs regarding global climate change	Studying the behaviour of detrital fajãs compared to lava fajãs, regarding marine erosion during major storms, and supporting the measures for mitigation of the rise in the average level seawater caused by global climate change	- Production of 1 assessment report on the resilience of the Azorean fajãs regarding global climate change	2025	1.666.667 €	DRAM
10.2 - 2021	Review of the Flood Risk Management Plan	Updating the Flood Risk Management Plan	- Publication of the updated Flood Risk Management Plan	2021	56.500 €	DROTRH
10.3 - 2021	PLASMAR+ - Progress in the sustainable planning of marine areas in Macaronesia	Promoting the progression of the maritime spatial planning processes in the regions of Macaronesia (Azores, Madeira, and Canary Islands), by developing new actions and tools based on scientific and technological knowledge, in order to promote a sustainable blue economy.	- Carrying out 1 study on non-indigenous species in marine protected areas (MPA) in the Azores - Carrying out 1 study on recreational fishing in the Azores - Creation of 1 report on the monitorization of the geographic data infrastructure - Publication of 10 geographic data sets and 20 Geographic Information metadata.	2022	140.018,86 €	DRAM

Ref	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Investemet	Responsible Entity
10.4 - 2021	MSP-OR - Support the Maritime Spatial Planning process, including monitoring and evaluation, licensing, and filling of knowledge gaps (mapping)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joining cooperation efforts among the European Outermost Regions (Azores, Madeira, Canary Islands and French Guiana) to support the implementation of Directive 2014/89/EU, in order to move forward with its regional maritime spatial planning processes. - Improve the management and planning of the maritime space adjacent to the Azores archipelago (OEMA), including aspects of monitoring and evaluation, licensing, filling knowledge gaps (seabed mappings) and management of marine protected areas (MPA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Publication of 1 management recommendations manual for 2 Portuguese oceanic MPAs - Publication of 1 template for the OEMA monitoring plan; - Publication of 1 guide for the licensing process in the context of OEMA - Carrying out 2 actions to involve specialists/ stakeholders interested in OEMA. 	2024	249.478,53 €	DRAM
10.5 - 2021	Publication of POTRAA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Defining the sustainable development strategy for the tourism sector and the territorial model to adopt -Aggregating the efforts and initiatives of regional and local public administrations and the entire Azorean society -Guiding the various economic agents and disciplining administrative action, by defining the strategic touristic products for each island and the evolution of the touristic offer 	- Publication of POTRAA	2022	To be defined	SRTTE/DRTu

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Investemet</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>
10.6 - 2021	Implementation of the Rapid Intervention and Assistance Plan on Pedestrian Routes	Increasing the safety of hikers	- Cover 100% of the Pedestrian Routes network in the Azores	2024	40.000 €	DRTu
10.7 - 2021	Elaboration of the regional strategy for the Management of Pedestrian Routes of Azores	Defining the global strategy for the regional network of pedestrian routes, including the updating of the Regulation of Pedestrian Routes, adjusting it to current needs	- Publication of the strategy and the new Regulation of the regional network of pedestrian routes	2022	<i>To be defined</i>	SRTTE/DRTu

11. OUTROS TÓPICOS

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Investemet</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>
10.1 - 2019	Training action for EarthCheck's "Destination Coordinator" course	Qualifying the elements of the Green Teams in the EarthCheck certification process	- Carrying out 1 training action - 12 participants in the training action	2021	To be defined	DMO
10.2 - 2019	Annual Sustainability Report 2019	Analyze and report the evolution of the destination's sustainability indicators in relation to EarthCheck's criteria	- 1 report produced	Annual	---	DMO
10.3 - 2019	Satisfaction questionnaires applied to visitors in the departure lounges of gateways in the region	Measuring visitors' satisfaction and perception of the Azores	- 1,000 applied	2022	30.000 €	OTA
11.1 - 2021	Dashboard Sustainable Azores	Monitor and report on the destination's performance in economic, environmental, and social matters	- 12 dashboards developed	Annual	<i>Internal resources</i>	DMO

2.4. GREEN TEAMS CONTRIBUTIONS

The contribution of the community in the development of this document was one of the fundamental paradigms for the conclusions and commitments for the future of the Azores as a sustainable tourist destination certified on an international scale.

In this context, throughout the performance of the DMO, several moments of consultation of local agents in the nine islands of the Autonomous Region of the Azores have been promoted, by holding meetings with each of the working groups created on each island – the Green Teams. In these meetings, the focus is to monitor the measures that are being implemented on each respective island and in the region, as well as to identify problems or elements that can support the destination in a process of gradual positive evolution, in terms of sustainability.

Based on the main points being discussed, each green team identifies a set of actions that promote sustainable development on the designated island. The actions must follow these principles: (1) being achievable in the short/medium term, (2) being in line with the KPA's and SDG's taken on by the DMO, (3) allowing for a solution for specific or local situations, and (4) stimulating society for a unified adoption of a more sustainable behaviour on an environmental, social, economic, and cultural level.

In this context, 45 actions are part of the Azores Destination Sustainability Action Plan 2019 – 2030 that will be promoted by the 9 Green Teams.



GREEN TEAM – SANTA MARIA

<i>Ref</i>	<i>KPA</i>	<i>SDG</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>
GT.1 - 2021	7. Solid Waste	SDG 12	Implement the collection of organic waste in food service and hotel industries	Improve solid waste management	At least 20 establishments partaking	Annual	CM Vila do Porto
GT.2 - 2021	8. Society and Culture	SDG 17	Promote quality education	Training actions for tourist agents (geology, flora, HR)	1 per year	Annual	PNI + CCI
GT.3 - 2021	9. Economy	SDG 14	Design of a leaflet with the Santa Maria Viewpoints to decentralise visitors through the different viewpoints of the island	Manage touristic flows and decentralise demand	Publication of the leaflet	2022	CM Vila do Porto
GT.4 - 2021	9. Economy	SDG 14	Improvement of the conditions of the Viewpoints in Santa Maria	Qualify visiting infrastructures	Completion of qualification works	2022	CM Vila do Porto
GT.5 - 2021	9. Economy	SDG 8	Applications for the Leader Pro Rural Program +	Promote the creation of employment	Creation of at least 2 new job positions	Annual	ARDE

GREEN TEAM – SÃO MIGUEL

Ref	KPA	SDG	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Responsible Entity
GT.6 - 2021	2. Greenhouse Gases 6. Transport	SDG 11	Build bike lanes, expand the public transport network, and empower the territory with elements that encourage smooth mobility.	Improving mobility issues through transport networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concession of allocation spaces for e-bikes in municipalities for proximity to other transport network points. - Diversify and expand the transport network that allows for better accessibility. - Construction of a bus station in Povoação - Construction of a bike lane in Lagoa - Construction of the Nordeste bike lane - Construction of the Ribeira Grande bike lane - Creation of an inclusive trail around Lagoa das Furnas 	2023	CMPDL, CMP Cresaçor, PNI
GT.7 - 2021	8. Society and Culture	SDG 8	Awareness raising actions for valuing all professions, through examples of their success in society	Valuing professions and encouraging younger people to pursue a career	1 per Secondary School (year 10 to year 12) (Junior Vigilante program)	Annual	Açores DMO, Municípios, PNI, Associações
GT.8 - 2021	8. Society and Culture	SDG 11	Construction of equipment that promotes health and well-being through physical activities	Promotion of physical activity, leisure, and well-being in the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction of a volleyball field on the beach - Creation of the Sports and Recreation Centre of Nordeste 	2022	Câmaras Municipais, PNI

<i>Ref</i>	<i>KPA</i>	<i>SDG</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>
GT.9-2021	9. Economy	SDG 15	Creation of bilingual information panels 4 panels	Improvement of signage and information available to the visitor and awareness of the preservation of the territory	4 panels	2021	CM Nordeste
GT.10-2021	9. Economy	SDG 14 & 15	Create mechanisms to attract visitors and preserve natural spaces	Improve the management of touristic flows	- Creation of the "Cu de Judas" and "Pico do Ferro Vãozinho" trails - Construction of the panoramic swing over the parish of Água de Retorta	2021	CM Povoação, Junta de Freguesia de Água Retorta, PNI
GT.11-2021	9. Economy	SDG 14 & 15	Requalification of viewpoints in Nordeste	Improve the management of touristic flows	Requalification of 2 viewpoints in Nordeste (Pedreira and Borda da Ladeira viewpoints)	2022	CM Nordeste

GREEN TEAM – TERCEIRA

Ref	KPA	SDG	Action	Objectives	Goals	Deadline	Responsible Entity
GT.12 - 2021	1. Energy Efficiency	SDG 7	Audits and consultancy to hospitality and industry companies for the adoption of clean energy	Encourage sustainable practices for the use of clean energy in Hospitality and Industry	28 SMEs in Terceira, São Jorge and Graciosa	2023	CCAH
GT.13 - 2021	5. Ecosystem and Biodiversity	SDG 15	Opening of Interpretation Centres for Natural Areas	Improvement of conditions for visiting natural areas and improvement of infrastructure for visiting spaces	Opening of 2 Interpretation Centres	2023	CCAH
GT.14 - 2021	7. Solid Waste	SDG 12	Awareness actions for the reduction of waste production	Raise awareness in schools and local accommodation units for the reduction of waste production	- 3000 students reached - All Local Accommodation units reached	2022	CMPV e CMAH
GT.15 - 2021	8. Society and Culture	SDG 11 & 12	Audits and consultancy to companies to assess the need for actions to be implemented to reduce food waste 2022 CCAH	Reduction of Food Waste in the food service and hotel industries channels on Terceira Island	- 30 Hospitality, Restaurants and Cafe companies involved	2022	CCAH
GT.16 - 2021	9. Economy	SDG 15	Inauguration of pedestrian routes	Improvement of the conditions for visiting natural areas	- Inauguration of 5 pedestrian routes - Increase the network of pedestrian routes on Terceira Island by at least 50km	2022	CMAH e CMPV; PNI Terceira; Parish Councils

GREEN TEAM – GRACIOSA

<i>Ref</i>	<i>KPA</i>	<i>SDG</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>
GT.17 - 2021	7. Solid Waste	SDG 12	Distribution of composting containers to the population so that waste can be used for biological fertilization	Reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill	30% of households with containers	2023	Graciosa City Council, Schools, Graciosa Ecoteca, Island Natural Park
GT.18 - 2021	7. Solid Waste	SDG 12	Awareness actions for the accurate procedure of waste separation to the entire school community up to the Primary School (year 1 to 4).	Reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill	- 4 awareness actions per year	2023	Graciosa City Council, Schools, Graciosa Ecoteca, Island Natural Park
GT.19 - 2021	8. Society and Culture	SDG 8 & 11	Training and qualification actions in languages (English, French), and customer service for young people	Promoting training and training for young people (15 to 30 years old) in different areas of the tourism sector	- 8 Training actions (online or in person) by year aiming to reach at least 50 young people	Annual	Graciosa City Council, Schools, Graciosa Ecoteca, Island Natural Park
GT.20 - 2021	9. Economy	SDG 12	Create events that promote local products (food fairs, markets) to increase value for these products	Fostering the consumption of local products	- 2 events per year	Annual	Adega Cooperativa of Graciosa, Graciosa City Council, Business Nucleus /CCAH, GRA
GT.21 - 2021	9. Economy	SDG 11 & 15	Improve the information available online and offline about marine bird watching and carry out FamTrips with specialized operators	Promoting Graciosa as the main sea bird watching destination in the Azores	- 1 brochure produced in 5 languages - Attracting at least 4 operators	Annual	Azores DMO, VisitAzores, Tourism Information Centre

GREEN TEAM – SÃO JORGE

<i>Ref</i>	<i>KPA</i>	<i>SDG</i>	<i>Ação</i>	<i>Objetivos</i>	<i>Metas</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Responsabilidade</i>
GT.22 - 2021	3. Potable Water Resource s	SDG 6	Improve water harvesting, storage, and treatment stations	Improvement of water supply systems, regarding harvesting systems and water quality levels	Monthly monitoring of water analyses. (Velas) - Maintenance/disinfection of water tanks twice a year (Calheta) - All water reservoirs have a water disinfection system installed (Calheta) - Capture of new springs/replacement of water pipes/delimitation of safety perimeters/spring protection	2024	Local Councils
GT.23 - 2021	5. Ecosyste m and Biodivers ity	SDG 13	Promote awareness actions to clean weeds on private land	Eliminate weeds on the island of São Jorge	-Environmental protection activities against invasive species within the scope of 'Parque Aberto' and 'Parque Escola' - 2 actions in each program - 3 actions/year of swidden and cutting of weedy vegetation on the accesses to the fajãs (Calheta)	Annual	PNI and Local Councils
GT.24 - 2021	7. Solid Waste	SDG 12	Awareness actions that alert the local population to the correct separation of waste	Increase the selective collection of waste	- Increase of selective collection routes during the summer period in 5 weekly routes (Velas) - 3 actions for the distribution of reusable shopping bags (2021) in the largest commercial area in Velas; at the municipal market, and on the main street of Velas - 1 awareness-raising action on selective collection aimed at the school community in Calheta - Distribution of flyers on the correct separation of waste - 2x a year (Calheta) - Distribution of domestic containers for the selective collection of garbage by the population of the Municipality of Calheta	Annual	Local Councils

<i>Ref</i>	<i>KPA</i>	<i>SDG</i>	<i>Ação</i>	<i>Objetivos</i>	<i>Metas</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Responsabilidade</i>
GT.25 - 2021	8. Society and Culture	SDG 17	Training/awareness actions for entrepreneurs in the Tourism sector, with the objective of implementing good practices by the various operators	Promoting Sustainable Tourism in São Jorge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 training action “Rota do Queijo” (Cheese Route) at the end of 2021 – reach 13 touristic entertainment companies - Subscription to join the sustainability booklet – 2 companies per month, tourism sector, São Jorge Island 	Annual	Local Councils, DTRu, DMO, Chambers of Commerce, ATA, Island Natural Parks, University of Azores
GT.26 - 2021	9. Economy	SDG 8 & 12	Awareness actions to boost municipal markets and the purchase of local products	Promotion of local products, to encourage the sale and purchase of regional products, and agricultural products produced on the island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reopening of the Municipal market of Velas in Autumn 2021 - Calheta municipal market - twice a month - Promotional actions for the municipal market of Calheta through facebook - Distribution of flyers throughout the island - twice a month - Townspeople of Velas, visitors and other inhabitants of São Jorge 	Annual	Local Councils

GREEN TEAM – PICO

Ref	KPA	SDG	Ação	Objetivos	Metas	Deadline	Responsabilidade
GT.27 - 2021	3. Potable Water Resource s	SDG 6	Construction and/or requalification of water storage reservoirs	Qualify the water collection, treatment, distribution, and storage system	- Construction of the borehole and reservoir in São João (RL10) - Construction of a new reservoir in Almagreira (RL1) and remodelling of reservoir RL3 (Almagreira) - Construction of a transformation station in the RL 9 reservoir (Mistério da Silveira) - Construction of a new cell in the RR4 B reservoir (Arrife)	2022	Lajes do Pico City Council
GT.28 - 2021	7. Solid Waste	SDG 12	Acquisition of waste collection vehicles	Improve the efficiency of the waste collection process	Acquisition of 3 vehicles (one per municipality)	2021	Madalena City Council; São Roque do Pico City Council; Lajes do Pico City Council
GT.29 - 2021	8. Society and Culture	SDG 11	Restoration of the historic vessel "Adamastor"	Preserving and enhancing the historical and cultural elements of the destination	Completion of the restoration of the vessel	2022	Madalena City Council
GT.30 - 2021	8. Society and Culture	SDG 11	UNESCO nomination of the "Culture of the Whale" as a World Heritage Site	Valuing this cultural element of the region's identity, through international recognition	Submission of the nomination dossier to UNESCO	2021	Lajes do Pico City Council
GT.31 - 2021	9. Economy	SDG 8 & 9	Adaptation of the former "Casa dos Médicos" into a business incubator	Fostering entrepreneurs hip and business innovation	Creation of a Business Incubator	2021	São Roque do Pico City Council

GREEN TEAM – FAIAL

<i>Ref</i>	<i>KPA</i>	<i>SDG</i>	<i>Ação</i>	<i>Objetivos</i>	<i>Metas</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Responsabilidade</i>
GT.32 - 2021	2. Greenhouse Gases / Decarboniza tion	SDG 7	Replacement of minibuses with electrical solutions	Promote sustainable mobility	2 vehicles	2022	Horta City Council
GT.33 - 2021	2. Greenhouse Gases / Decarboniza tion 6. Transport	SDG 7	Implementation of a network of bike lanes	Promote sustainable mobility	Add 500 meters to the existing network of bike lanes	2022	Horta City Council
GT.34 - 2021	7. Solid Waste	SDG 12	Acquisition of more than 60 recycling bins of 800L to promote the collection of organic waste	Reduction in the volume of waste	Placement of 60 recycling bins close to homes	2022	Horta City Council
GT.35 - 2021	9. Economy	SDG 17	Development of the Good Practice Guide for the Sustainable Development of Nautical Tourism and the "Good Practice Guide for Tourism Professionals"	Promoting Sustainable Tourism	Publication of the Good Practice Guide	2022	Horta City Council and ATSF

GREEN TEAM – FLORES

<i>Ref</i>	<i>KPA</i>	<i>SDG</i>	<i>Ação</i>	<i>Objetivos</i>	<i>Metas</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Responsabilidade</i>
GT.36 - 2021	4. Wastewaters and sanitation	SDG 13	Painting of gutters with the classes of Flores Primary and Secondary School	Raising awareness in the school community for environmental preservation	3 classes involved	2021	Santa Cruz das Flores City Council, Flores Tourism Information Centre and AmbiFlores
GT.37 - 2021	5. Ecosystem and Biodiversity	SDG 13	Coastline cleaning actions	Environmental awareness and reduction of waste on the coastline	3 cleaning actions	2021	Santa Cruz das Flores City Council, Flores Tourism Information Centre and AmbiFlores
GT.38 - 2021	7. Solid Waste	SDG 12	Creation of a single contact bulletin, with the aim of minimizing unnecessary paper consumption	Reduction in the volume of distributed paper	1 bulletin created and distributed	2021	Santa Cruz das Flores City Council and Flores Tourism Information Centre
GT.39 - 2021	7. Solid Waste	SDG 12 & 13	Participation in initiatives and promotion of actions aimed at reducing produced waste	Decrease waste production and encourage recycling	- Participation in the European Week for Waste Prevention - Disclose monthly the amount of waste produced	2021	Santa Cruz das Flores City Council, Flores Tourism Information Centre and AmbiFlores
GT.40 - 2021	8. Society and Culture	SDG 3 & 10	Promotion of social support programs (birth, housing rehabilitation and reimbursement of medicines)	- Support and encourage births in the island of Flores - Improvement of the basic conditions of the most deprived and disadvantaged people or households in the municipality - Supporting people in need in the purchase of medicine	- 50 people supported through the birth support program - 18 people supported through the degraded housing program - 31 people supported through the medicine acquisition support program	Annual	Santa Cruz das Flores City Council

GREEN TEAM – CORVO

<i>Ref</i>	<i>KPA</i>	<i>SDG</i>	<i>Ação</i>	<i>Objetivos</i>	<i>Metas</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Responsabilidade</i>
GT.41 - 2021	1. energy efficiency	SDG 7 & 15	Energy Efficiency Laboratory (EELABS) - Creation of a specific light pollution regulation for the Region	Promoting Energy Efficiency	Publication of the regulation	2023	SPEA + PNI + Corvo City Council
GT.42 - 2021	3. Potable Water Resources	SDG 6	Construction of a new water retention basin to supply the population and channelling network from the retention ponds/basins to the supply depots	Promote water quality and supply	Completion of the construction of a new water retention basin	2022	Corvo City Council
GT.43 - 2021	5. Ecosystem and Biodiversity	SDG 13	“SOS Estapagado” - Rescue Campaigns	Protect populations of populations of estapagado, spruce, and parrots through passive acoustic monitoring	1 campaign per year	Annual	PNI + Corvo City Council + SPEA
GT.44 - 2021	5. Ecosystem and Biodiversity	SDG 13	General blackout of public lighting during the “SOS Cagarro” period	Protecting Cagarro (shearwater seabird) during its period when it is abandoning its nests and going to sea	1 general blackout per year	Annual	PNI + Corvo City Council + SPEA
GT.45 - 2021	8. Society and Culture	SDG 12	Placement of container to collect used clothes, toys, and shoes	Promote the Circular Economy and raise awareness in the community to reduce waste	10 pallets with materials distributed by people in need	Annual	Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Corvo + PNI

2.5. Monitoring

Monitoring the environmental, social, cultural, and economic performance of the Azores as a tourist destination is the key to improving and achieving the sustainability goals defined in the Action Plan. To make this possible, it is necessary to initially create mechanisms for data collection that will allow responding to the selected indicators.

This takes into account the following mechanisms:

1. Green Teams

Carrying out of regular meetings with key members of the tourism structure of the Azores with a view to sounding out their opinions on destination sustainability.

The Green Teams are also structured for validating the proposals and actions for undertaking by DMO within the scope of boosting the sustainability of the tourism destination.

2. Consultation Committee and Supervisory Commission

The Consultation Committee and Supervisory Commission are DMO structures that, within the framework of their competences, analyse the progress in the indicators for the environmental, social, cultural and economic performance as well as the status of destination sustainability. Taking into consideration how the Supervisory Commission includes various of the Regional Government services, this entity also plays a fundamental role in accessing the data for the various indicators subject to monitoring.

These two structural are also mechanisms for validating the proposals/actions for undertaking within the scope of improving the sustainability of the tourism destination.

3. Resident surveys

The residents are an essential part of the validation of the measures implemented in order to value and preserve the territory. This then thus involves surveying residents and collecting their opinions about the situation in the destination.

4. Visitor surveys

The perception of visitors should, in parallel, serve as a fundamental indicator for measuring the success of initiatives and policies defined for the destination. The level of tourism satisfaction with the destination should be high and whenever there are situations that require improvements, DMO commits to preparing proposals and implementing measures enabling improvements on these aspects.

5. Data from the Portuguese Institute of Statistics and Regional Statistical Services of Azores

Application of the indicator results on the core areas of EarthCheck certification, made available by the national and regional statistical offices and the various regional services so as to accompany their evolution and monitoring the level of compliance with the goals established.



Conclusion

The current Action Plan for the Sustainability of Azores Destination within the horizon 2019/2030 represents the ambition to promote efforts in the territory aiming to achieve an even more sustainable future (and present), which will allow for more quality of life to those who live and work in the Autonomous Region of the Azores, but also to offer more quality to those who visit and interact with the territory.

A win-win relationship, where the territory can be appreciated and cared for collectively by the local community, government entities, and tourist flows, in compliance with a commitment to reduce the environmental impact, and value economic, cultural, and social aspects.

Due to its comprehensive area of activity, tourism represents one of the most important sectors of activity in the Azores, therefore its certification in terms of sustainability (and the continuous commitment in this direction) brings positive impacts not only for the tourism sector and to those involved more directly, but also to the entire economic and social structure of the Region, which, even indirectly, meets the impacts of tourist travel.

The certification of the Azores tourist destination in terms of sustainability, recognized by the GSTC criteria is, thus, a strategic action in territorial development that further stimulates the adoption of more sustainable practices, in compliance to the progress that had been made by the region in more recent decades.

The 23 sustainable commitments and 132 actions presented in this document by the DMO were duly approved by the various Regional Secretariats and respective services, and consulted by tourism agents, reflecting the importance that sustainability has for the Azores and its territorial dynamics designed for future development. This importance is equally demonstrated by all 45 actions which the 9 Green Teams of the Azores are committed to develop.

We are certain that this is an endless process, where "We all partake". The DMO is committed to act as a facilitating agent for the preservation and enhancement of the territory and its people, reaching for the sustainability of the destination, in the present and future.

In this context, our goal is well established: We strive to achieve the Gold certification by EarthCheck as a sustainable tourist destination in 2024, and to reinforce the position of the RAA as a leading destination of international reference!



ACTION PLAN 2019-2030

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE AZORES DESTINATION