

**Associação
Portuguesa de
ECOTURISMO**



The Portuguese Ecotourism Association

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www.apecoturismo.org

Associação Portuguesa de Ecoturismo

The Portuguese Ecotourism Association

1. Our vision of ecotourism
2. Ecotourism in Portugal
3. Why the Portuguese ecotourism association and what we have done?
4. Our work and our future

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Defining the Ecotourism concept

Ecotourism is now defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education” (2015). Education is meant to be inclusive of both staff and guests.

The International Ecotourism Society

- Sustainable and non-invasive form of tourism;
- Oriented to learn from nature;
- Ethical and with few negative impacts;
- It is non-consumptive and locally oriented (in terms of control, benefits and scale);
- Contributes to the conservation of rural and natural areas

David Fennell, 1999

Defining the Ecotourism concept

The seven “Es” that can give us a complete framework of ecotourism

1. Ecosystem (ecossistema)
2. Education (educação)
3. Equity (equidade)
4. Involvement (envolvimento)
5. Ethics (ética)
6. Economy (economia)
7. Energy (energia)

From the concept to the practice

Ways to implement the ecotourism concept

Long stays, slow(s)...

Sustainability in all components of the tourism system

Heritage Interpretation, education

Involvement of local communities and stakeholders

Local and genuine products, Kilometre Zero,

Organic/Bio,

Values

Fair Trade, Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Transfer of knowledge (local, scientific, ecological, ...)

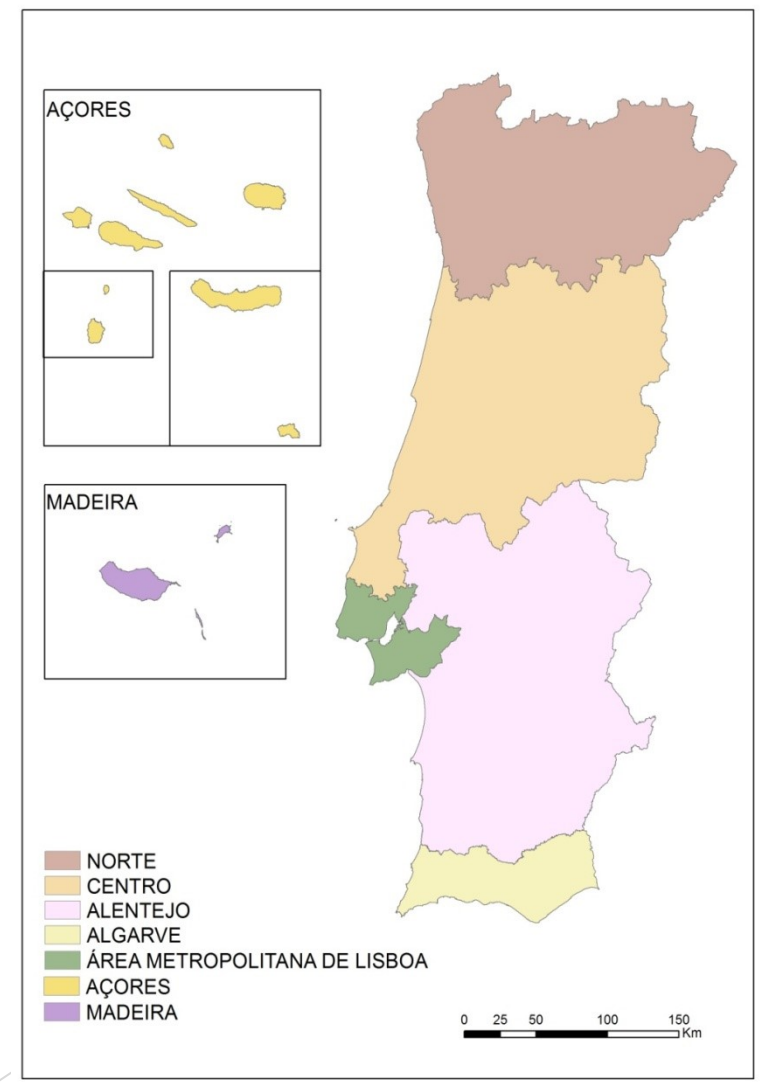
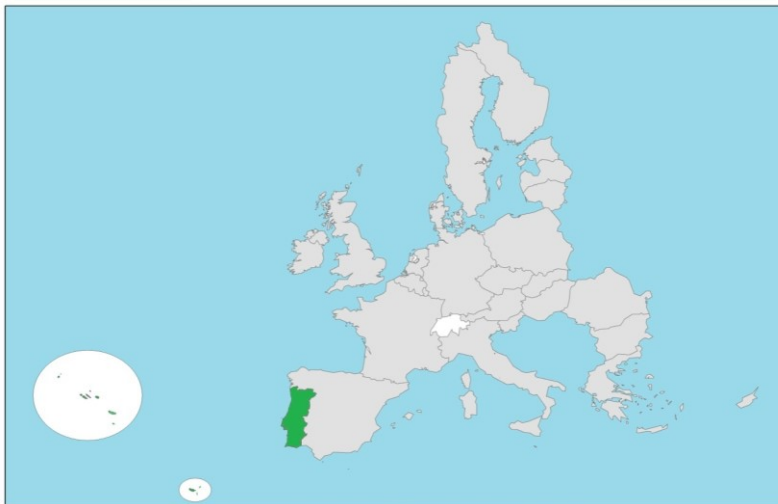
From the concept to the practice

The limits of ecotourism (among many interconnected concepts)

- Sustainable Tourism
- Rural Tourism
- Nature tourism
- Creative tourism
- Responsible tourism
- Regeneration tourism

What drives Ecotourism in Portugal

1. Potential
2. Legislation (and Politics)
3. Tourism stakeholders
4. Training



What drives Ecotourism in Portugal

Barriers:

Greenwashing

Supply and Demand: different times, different trends

Lack of technical and scientific training and dissemination

Disconnection between society and the natural (and rural!) world

Low scientific literacy among citizens

Urgency to understand our dependence on natural resources, biodiversity, ecosystems and their services

Need to address complex problems: food, transport, contaminants, scarcity of natural resources, destruction of ecosystems, danger of wildfires,...To which we also need complex solutions.

An Ecotourism association in Portugal

- There was no ecotourism association in Portugal
- Portugal has a particular potential for ecotourism
- We have an important law dying (Law 86/2019)
- Ecotourism can play a fundamental role in Sustainable Tourism
- It is essential to join all professionals and stakeholders to establish an active voice to support ecotourism in Portugal
- Training and sharing of knowledge is necessary to give strength to ecotourism
- We need to work in networks with both national and international organizations.

An Ecotourism association in Portugal

2021

- In April born in Portugal, aiming to gather practitioners and enthusiasts in portuguese speaking countries
- Participation in public assessment on “Tourism+Sustainable 20-23”, program of Tourism of Portugal;
- Biodiv Summit 2021 - III BiodivSummit: Living Economy – Producing, enhancing territories and conserving ecosystems – common challenge for Organic Agriculture and Ecotourism;
- Association’s Launching Event (On-line) – Speakers and attendants from Brasil, Cabo-Verde, Espanha and Portugal

An Ecotourism association in Portugal

2022

- Lecture on-line for portuguese students “Navigating Responsible tourism”, #Study at home (COVID-19 pandemic...);
- Participation in public assessment on Hydrographic Plan of Tagus river and Oeste streams;
- Presentation to “Historic Route of Torres Vedras Lines” members (Napoleonic wars);
- Partnership on Erasmus Plus: KA122-ADU - Short-term projects for mobility of learners and staff in adult education

An Ecotourism association in Portugal

2023

- Partnership on Erasmus Plus: KA122-ADU
- Ecotourism Workshop on Campo do Gerês, Portugal
- Strengthening the relationship with “Historic Route of Torres Vedras” members network
- Currently APE members in Portugal, Angola, Mozambique

An Ecotourism association in Portugal

Present and beyond

... From an Installing Committee to a directive board

Setting up regional hubs;

Partnerships with organizations and companies, either NGO's and GO's

New projects and financing (Erasmus, courses, publications, etc)

“Regional Ecotourism Plans” intervention, meeting with Regional Tourism Agencies

Training oriented to students, entrepreneurs, service providers

Make better use of social media and networks

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