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Fostering Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Ecotourism to support sustainable development in Vietnam and the Philippines

Natural Areas and Geotourism

The Portuguese perspective

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- Ecotourism / Nature Tourism in Portugal
- Types of Natural Protected Areas in Portugal
- Evolution of visitors that have contacted protected areas
- Ecotourism Strategy in Portugal – is it possible?
- The Example of Geotourism
- Arouca Geopark
- Conclusion

Natural areas have always attracted the interest of a large part of the population

- It has gone from a desired activity by few tourists, to a more comprehensive activity
- Desire to touch, feel, be inspired and relate to the natural environment
- They are usually passionate about the conservation of natural areas and people and wildlife living in these areas
- They seek authenticity, inspiration, experiences in nature to be closer to the environment
- It is a demand that is currently carried out in all places of the planet

How Nature Tourism is being developed in Portugal?

- Tourism that allows to enjoy the natural, architectural, landscape and cultural heritage, without the degradation of the same
- Main Motivation
 - To live experiences of great symbolic value, to interact and to enjoy nature
- Activities
 - Sports activities
 - Contemplation of Nature
 - Activities of personal interest

Basic Factors

- Diversity of natural resources (ecosystems, flora, fauna, etc.)
- Existence of protected natural spaces (national parks, nature reserves, etc.)
- Good accessibility
- Cleaning and care of surrounding areas

How Nature Tourism is being developed in Portugal?

Nature Tourism National Program (NTNP)

- To contribute to the valorisation of the natural heritage
- To be an asset of the territory and a catalyst for local and regional development.
- to ensure a sustainable tourism in order to guarantee the maintenance of ecological processes essential to biodiversity and contribute to local development.
- Tourism initiatives must be environmentally responsible, by adopting non-polluting technologies, and using scarce resources efficiently, namely energy and water

How Nature Tourism is being developed in Portugal?

Nature Tourism National Program (NTNP) Actions



- Development of a specific Label for Nature Tourism – **Natural.PT**
- Production of content and information material on the natural and cultural heritage of classified areas
- Promoting actions to publicise and raise environmental awareness among local, regional and national players;
- Construction or rehabilitation of infrastructures to support activities associated with nature tourism, namely signposting, trails, infrastructures for observation and interrelation with nature, visitation and visitor support units, thematic routes, information infrastructures, communication and dissemination supports; etc
- Publicising the quality certification associated with nature tourism and other products and services in classified areas.

Available Resources - Protected Areas

Due to its:

- rarity
- scientific value
- ecological value
- social value
- scenic value

biodiversity
or
other natural
occurrences

present a
specific relevance

Specific measures of conservation and management to promote the rational management of natural resources and the enhancement of the natural heritage and cultural, regulating the Interventions liable to degrade them.

- 1 Peneda-Gerês
- 2 Montesinho
- 3 Litoral Norte
- 4 Alvão
- 5 Douro Internacional
- 6 Serra da Estrela
- 7 Tejo Internacional
- 8 Serras de Aire e Candeeiros
- 9 Serra de São Mamede
- 10 Sintra-Cascais
- 11 Arrábida
- 12 Sudoeste Alentejano e Costa Vicentina
- 13 Vale do Guadiana
- 14 Ria Formosa
- 15 Dunas de São Jacinto
- 16 Serra da Malcata
- 17 Paul de Arzila
- 18 Berlengas
- 19 Paul do Boquilobo
- 20 Estuário do Tejo
- 21 Estuário do Sado
- 22 Lagoas de Santo André e da Sancha
- 23 Sapal C. Marim - Vila R. S. António
- 24 Serra do Açor
- 25 Arribas Fósil da C. da Caparica
- 26 Cabo Mondego
- 27 Portas de Ródão
- 28 Pegadas de Dinossáurios de Ourém / Torres Novas
- 29 Careque
- 30 Pedra da Mua
- 31 Lagosteiros
- 32 Pedreira do Avelino
- 33 Albufeira do Azibo
- 34 Corno de Bico
- 35 Lagoas de Bertlandos e São Pedro de Arcos
- 36 Serra de Montejunto
- 37 Paul de Tornada
- 38 Litoral de Vila do Conde e Reserva Ornitológica do Mindelo
- 39 Açude da Agolada
- 40 Açude do Monte da Barca
- 41 Rocha da Pena
- 42 Fonte Benémola
- 43 Fala Brava
- 44 Estuário do Douro



National park

Area that contains mostly representative samples of **natural regions** characteristic of natural and **humanized** landscapes, elements of biodiversity and geosites, with scientific, **ecological or educational value**.

Natural Park

Area containing predominantly **natural or semi-natural ecosystems**, where long-term **biodiversity preservation may depend on human activity**, ensuring a sustainable flow of natural products and services.

Natural reserve

Area that contains ecological, geological and physiographic characteristics, or other attributes of scientific, ecological or educational value, and which is not permanently or significantly inhabited.

Protected Landscape

Area that **contains** landscapes resulting from the harmonious interaction of the human being and nature, and which show great aesthetic, ecological or cultural value

Natural Monument

Natural occurrence containing one or more aspects that, due to their singularity, rarity or representativeness in ecological, aesthetic, scientific and cultural terms, require their preservation and maintenance of their integrity.

Natura 2000

Special Conservation Areas (SACs) - Ensure biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and habitats of species of wild flora and fauna.

Special Protection Areas - Ensure the conservation of bird species and their habitats.

Biosphere reserves

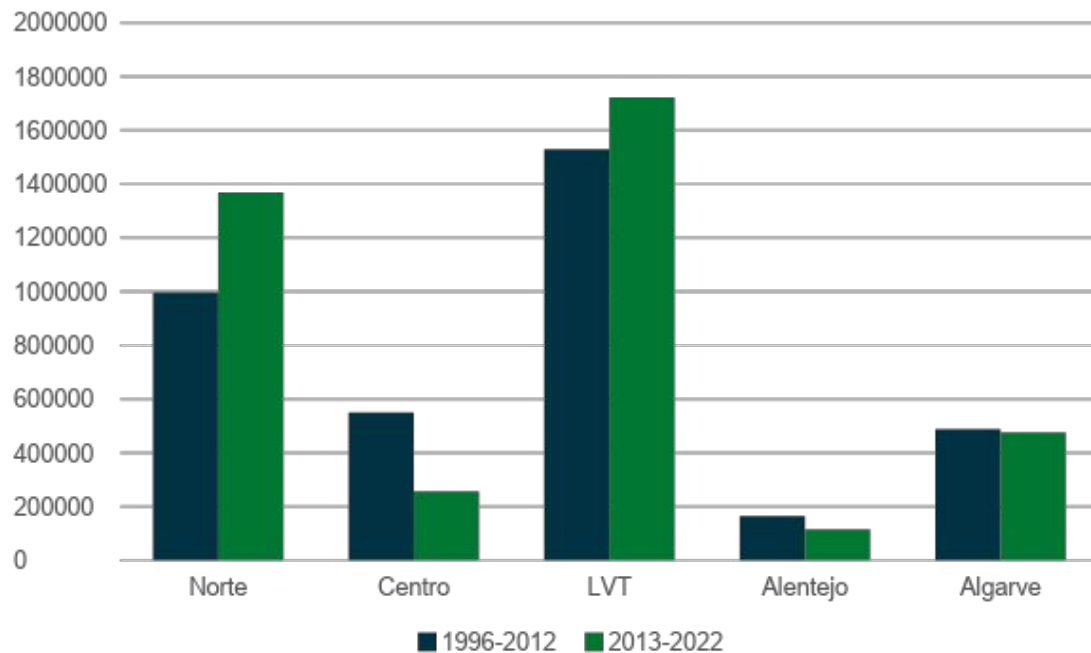
Integrate terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems where interdisciplinary approaches are tested to understand and manage the changes and interactions of social and ecological systems, in particular conflict prevention and biodiversity management.

3 functions:

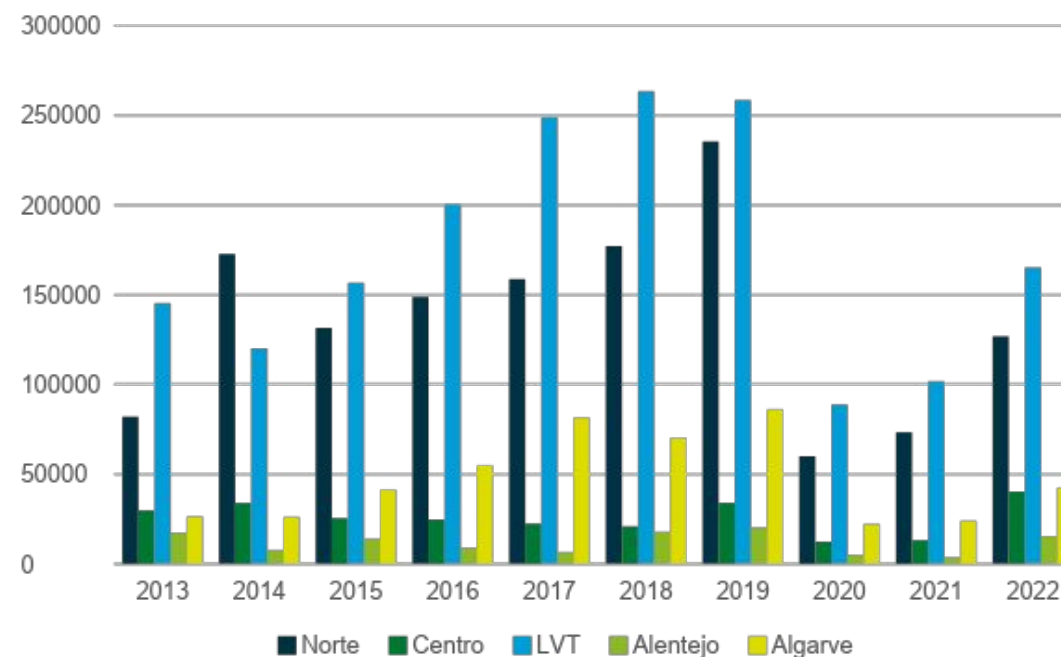
- the conservation of species, ecosystems and landscapes;
- socially, culturally and ecologically sustainable development; and
- research, monitoring, training, dissemination and environmental education and awareness.

In Portugal, there are 12 Biosphere reserves

Visitants that contact the Natural Protected Areas



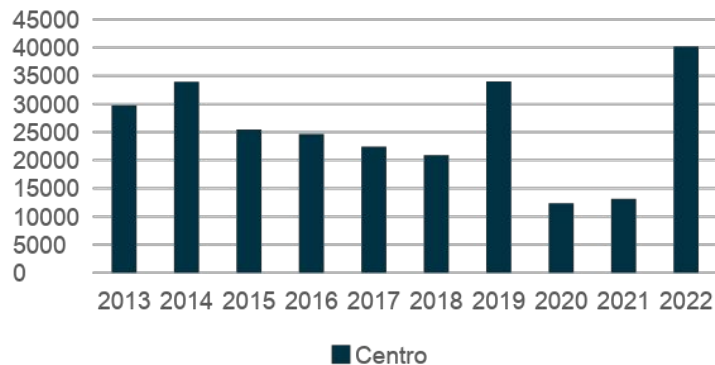
Visitants that contact the Natural Protected Areas



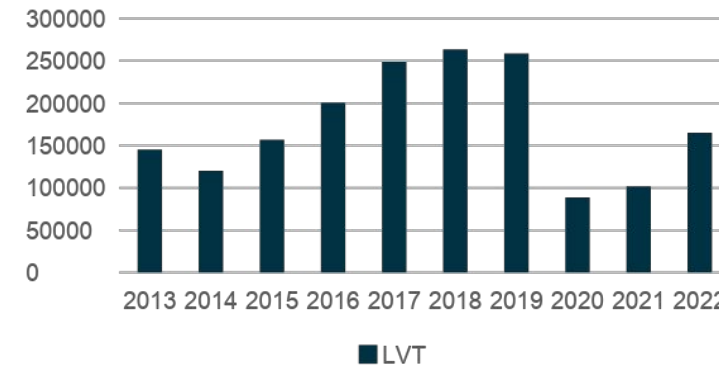
Visitants that contact the Natural Protected Areas



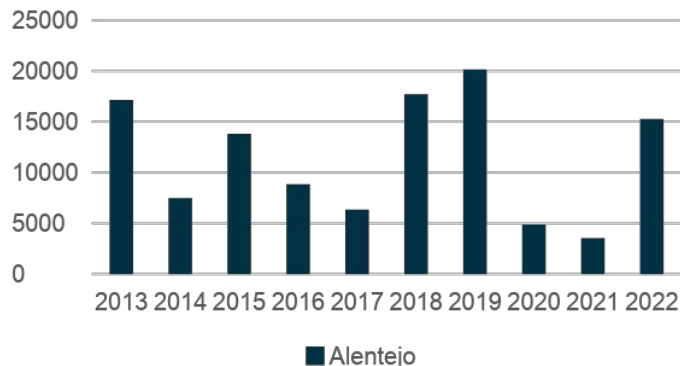
Visitants that contact the Natural Protected Areas



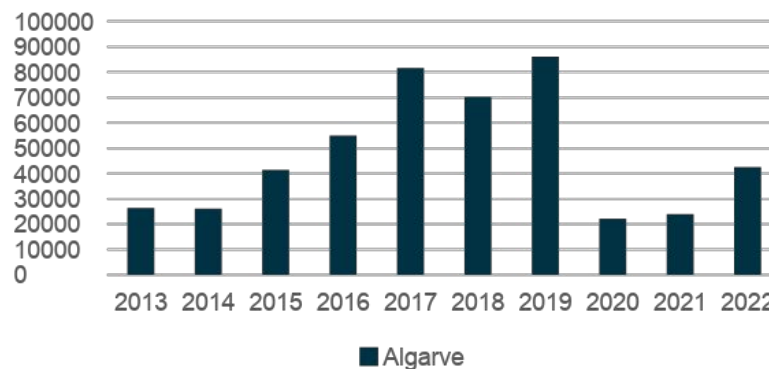
Visitants that contact the Natural Protected Areas



Visitants that contact the Natural Protected Areas



Visitants that contact the Natural Protected Areas



Problems in Ecotourism / Nature Tourism

- Lack of Information
- Lack of regulation and /or control
- Not prepared and suitable for the tourist use of nature
- Inexistence of organized data about
 - Number of visitors
 - Type of activities
 - Use of resources

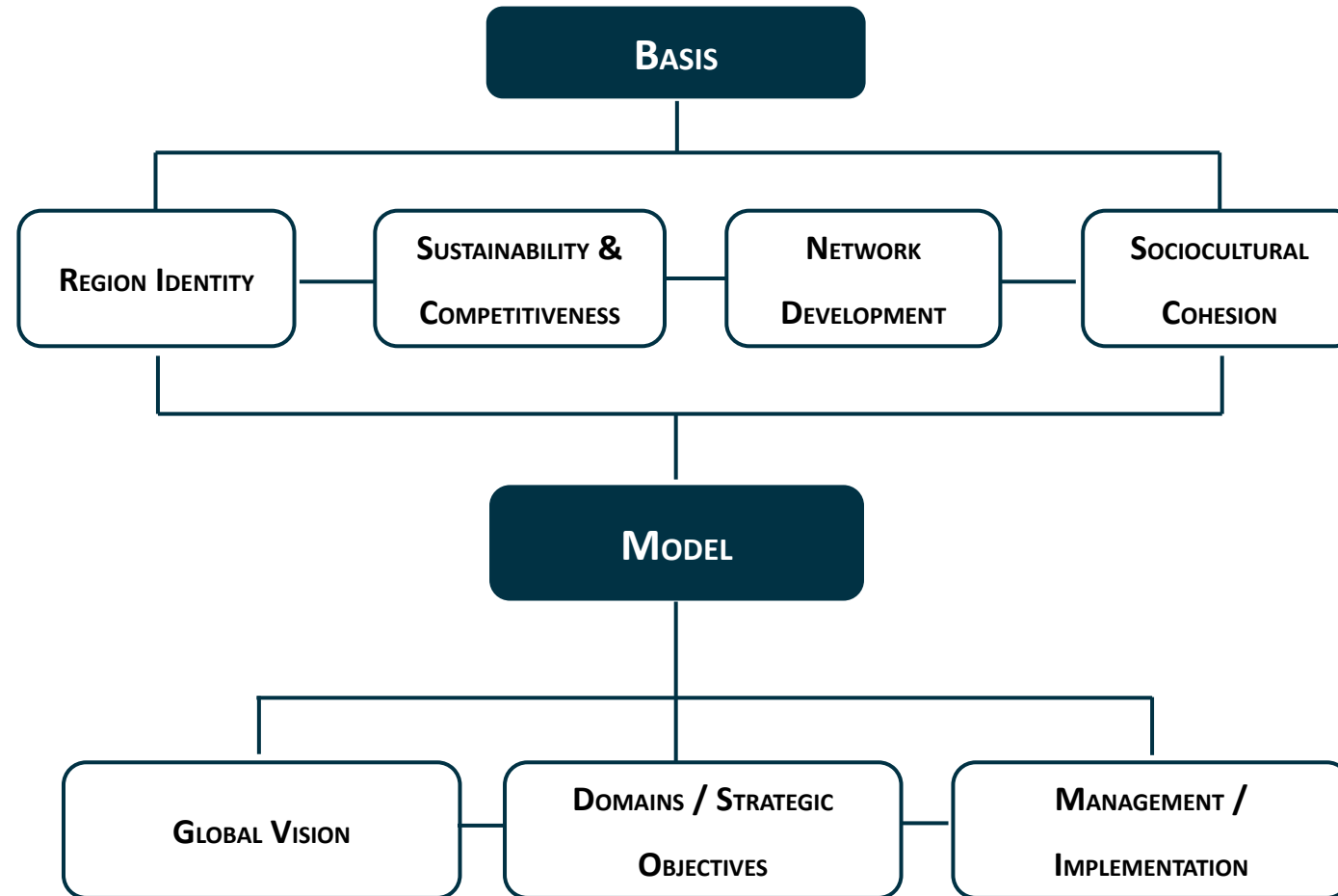
What can/should be done?

- Focus on the diversity and uniqueness of experiences with high recreational content, playful and aesthetic learning
- Develop infrastructures and services that allow the tourist to contemplate the nature of a different perspective (eg cable cars, funicular, balloon rides)
- Outline routes where the tourist can observe traditional ways of working. Ex: visits to protected areas, agricultural houses, saltpans, etc..
- Develop itineraries that pass through sites of high scenic, cultural and historical value. Eg itineraries that pass through picturesque villages, fishing ports, historic villages, archaeological sites, castles, etc
- Organize visits to events related to nature that recreate country traditions and stories



Organize a Sustainable Ecotourism Strategy

[BASIS AND MODEL]



What about Geoparks?

Geoparks promote and enhance their image through their internationally important geological heritage and are essential for consolidating knowledge of the earth sciences, in line with other natural values.

Their management is based on the sustainability of human intervention in the territory, through education, promotion, valorisation and conservation of their geosites, raising awareness and collaborating with local entities and companies, developing geotourism and associated products.

The Legal Framework for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity establishes a set of natural values, which include geological values and consequent concepts. However, there is still no specific legislation to create and regulate these values.

Nevertheless, there are currently 5 Geoparks integrated in the UNESCO Global Geopark Network.

Geodiversity

- Natural variation in geological (rocks, minerals, fossils), geomorphological (forms and evolution of relief) and soil aspects.
- Variety of geological environments, phenomena and active processes that generate the landscape (relief), rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and other surface deposits that form the basis for life on Earth (Azevedo, 2007).
- The result of interactive processes between landscape, fauna, flora and culture.



“Geology and geomorphology determine the distribution of habitats and species and dictate how man organises his geographical space. However, interest in geodiversity is still lower than society's interest in biodiversity”
 (Araújo, 2005)

Intrinsic or existential - associated with their mere existence

Cultural - attributed by society for its cultural significance

Aesthetic - associated with its visual appeal

Economic - related to society's dependence on the use of geological materials

Functional - related to the utilitarian value of geodiversity

Scientific and educational - use of geodiversity for research and education in Earth sciences

Field

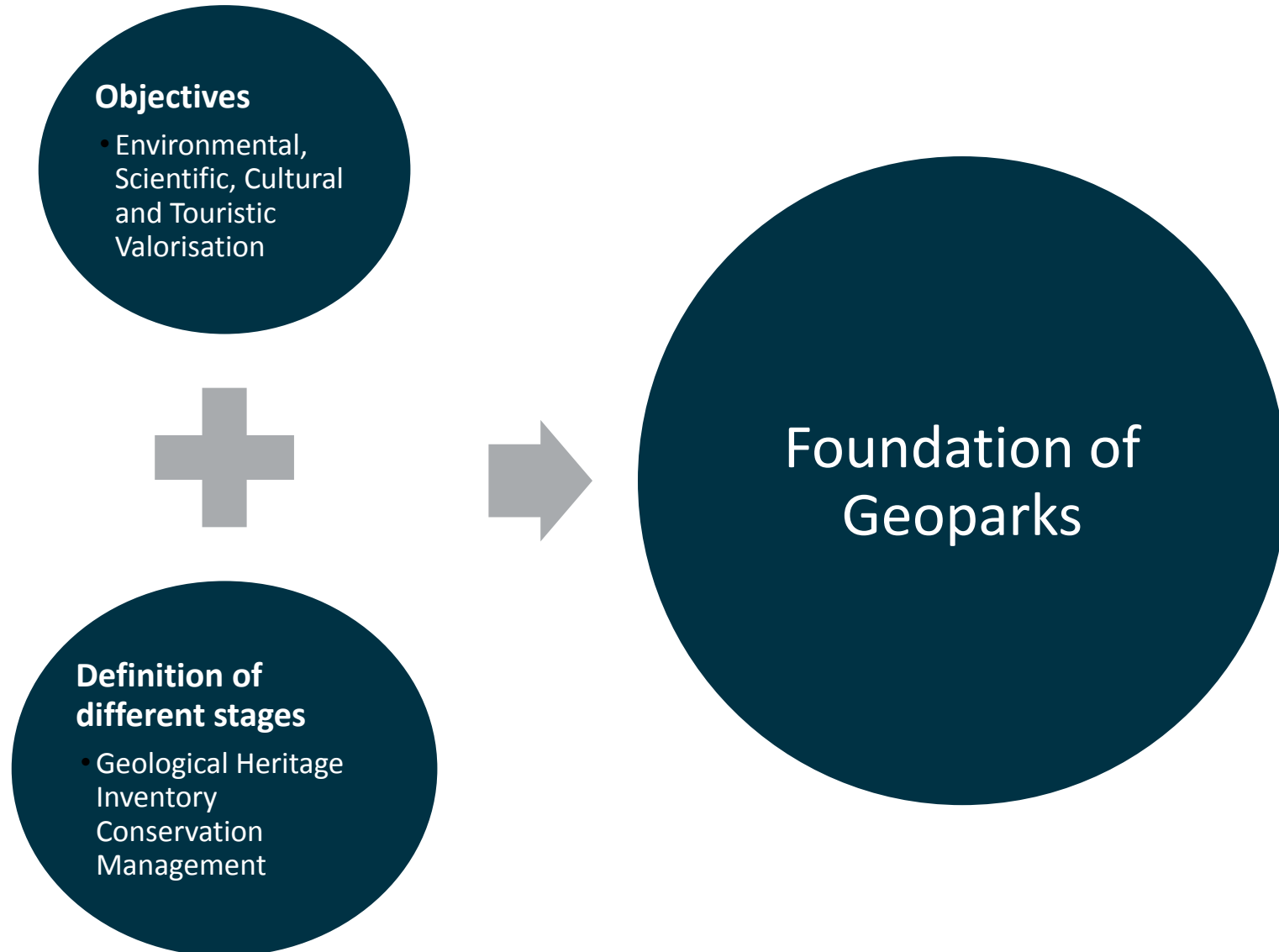
Outdoor Activities

- Formal Educational Potential
- Educational complement to formal education
- Protection and enhancement of geological heritage - geosites and Geoparks

Educational and Tourism Potential

- Outside the school context
- Leisure activity
- Visits based on the motivation and desire of each individual
- Voluntary, spontaneous and personal learning

Geoconservation in Portugal





Integration in the UNESCO World Geoparks

UNESCO World Geoparks are well-defined territories with unique landscapes and a geological heritage of international importance.

This heritage is worked on through a holistic approach, where populations play an active role in creating development strategies, the fundamental principles of which are Geoconservation, Education for Sustainable Development and Tourism.

With the aim of stimulating cooperation between territories, promoting the sharing of information and good practices with a view to protecting geological heritage and promoting sustainable development, the European Geoparks Network (EGN) was created in 2000 and the Global Geoparks Network (GGN) was founded in 2004.

In November 2015, the UNESCO World Geoparks Programme was created, a government recognition of the importance of enhancing and preserving landscapes and sites in an integrated way.



Integration in the UNESCO World Geoparks

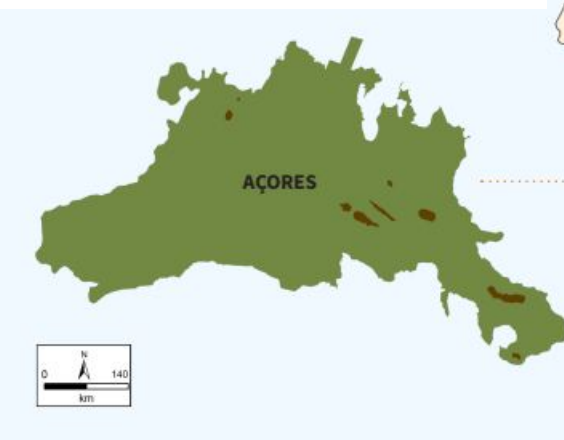
For a geopark to be recognised by UNESCO and subsequently integrated into its World Network, it must meet a number of fundamental requirements:

- Have a geological heritage of international value;
- It must be managed by a body with a recognised legal existence in its country, which includes various relevant stakeholders operating in the territory, whether public and/or private entities (e.g. associations);
- Be territories that promote local development in a sustainable way, namely through geotourism, including the stimulation of scientific tourism, using promotional and publicity initiatives, with a view to visibility and recognition of the target public;
- In addition to networking with its various stakeholders, it also involves co-operation with other UNESCO Global Geoparks, so that learning and experiences can be tested as a network, with a view to improving the quality of the UNESCO Global Geopark label.

Geoparks in Portugal



The Portuguese Geoparks Network began in 2006, with **Naturtejo Geopark** joining the GGN. The second Portuguese Geopark to join the network was **Arouca Geopark** in 2009, followed by **Geopark Açores** in 2013 and **Geopark Terra de Cavaleiros** in 2014. In 2020, the fifth Portuguese geopark was classified, with the integration of **Estrela Geopark**.



Geoparks in Portugal

After joining the Global Geoparks Network, the Portuguese UNESCO World Geoparks and Turismo de Portugal have come together to jointly draw up a code of conduct, accessible to anyone who wants to visit these territories.

Code of conduct and best practices in the Portuguese Geoparks

For your and other visitors' safety

- Prepare yourself properly and in advance for nature tourism activities.
- Bring appropriate footwear and clothing for the activity and/or season.
- Hydrate yourself frequently.
- Whenever you do trails, inform the authorities of your location in advance, in case there are any unforeseen events or accidents.
- When walking, use only the signposted trails and avoid excessively large groups that may disturb nature.
- Please note that the mobile phone network may not be available in more remote locations.
- In case you have little experience in nature tourism activities, for your comfort and safety you may contact a guide who can accompany you.
- Respect the existing signs in the territory.
- Camp only in authorized places.
- Practice nature tourism activities in the signalled places.
- Before the activity, inform yourself about possible risks (fire, meteorological phenomena and other natural risks).
- Stay informed about the access conditions to forest areas and the practice of activities during the critical period of rural fire, or on days of very high or extreme risk.
- Do not make fires. Most rural fires in Portugal result from negligent acts (carelessness or lack of attention) in the use of fire.
- Park your vehicle in the appropriate parking spaces.
- Contact the authorities whenever you detect something irregular.

Respect the territory and local communities

- Respect the silence.
- Respect the local people and their property.
- Respect the traditions and way of life of the population.
- Prioritize buying local products, since it will contribute to the local economy.
- Respect the crossing of domestic or wild animals.

Respect and preserve the natural and cultural heritage

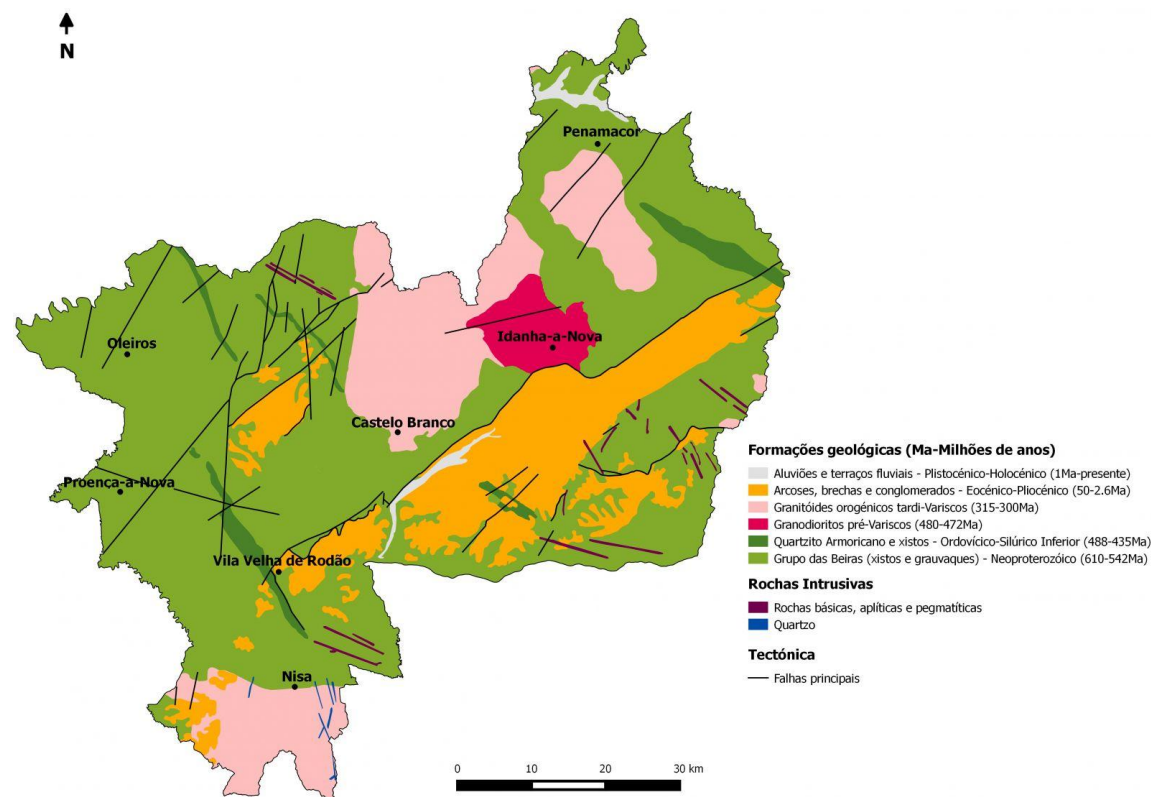
- Do not buy/sell geological heritage.
- Preserve the integrity of geosites (sites of geological interest).
- Do not take samples of rocks, minerals or fossils.
- Do not paint or write on rocks or any other substratum, including trees.
- Do not feed any animals and maintain a safe distance.
- Do not disturb existing fauna, especially during nesting season.
- Do not pick plants or step on vegetation.
- When using motorised vehicles, always drive on roads or public paths.
- Collect the litter you produce and/or find.
- Maintain the integrity of the heritage (museums, churches, mining complexes, archaeological sites).
- Respect the rules and regulations in use for the various monuments.
- If you are in a Protected Area, respect the rules and code of conduct of each one.
- Do not make cairns or piles of rocks.

Geopark Naturtejo

- The UNESCO World Naturtejo Geopark, the first Portuguese geopark, joined the European and Global Geopark Networks in 2006.
- It covers an area of 5060 km² and includes the municipalities of Castelo Branco, Idanha-a-Nova, Penamacor, Proença-a-Nova, Nisa, Oleiros and Vila Velha de Ródão.
- <https://naturtejo.com/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxqp9p2w5Dw>

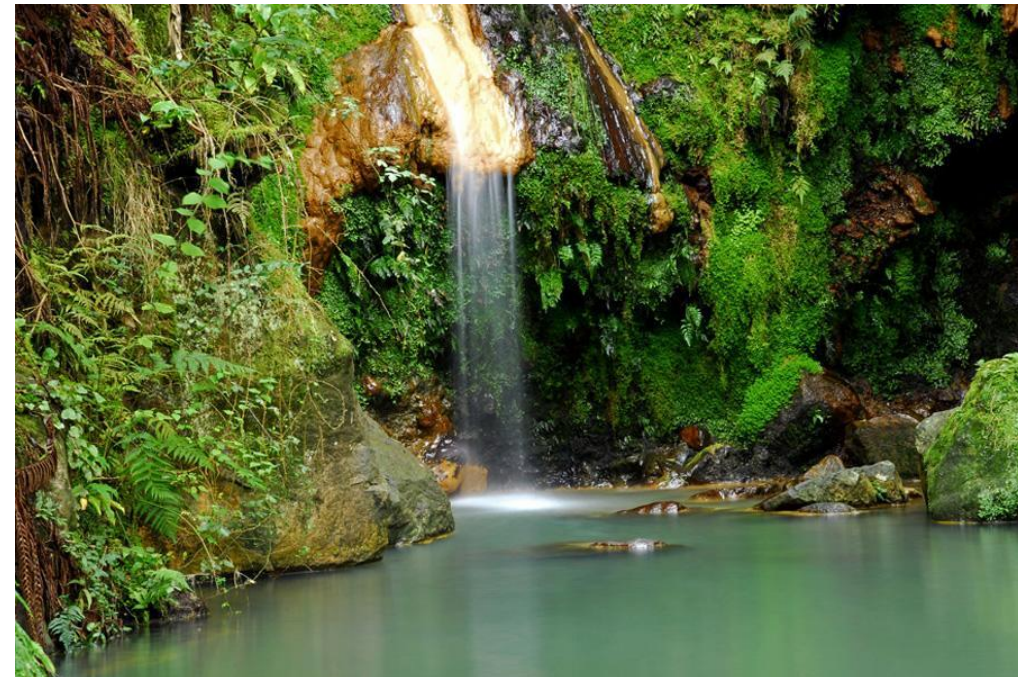


Naturtejo da Meseta Meridional
Geoparque Mundial da UNESCO



Açores Geopark

- Covering 12,884 square kilometres, it is based on a network of geosites spread across the nine islands and the surrounding marine area.
- Volcanoes, calderas, lagoons, lava fields, fumaroles, hot springs, volcanic caves and algars, fajãs, fault scarps and marine fossil deposits, among many others, characterise the region's geological heritage.
- <https://www.azoresgeopark.com/>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWGQOTA0-Kk&feature=emb_logo



Geopark Terras de Cavaleiros

- It covers the entire area of the municipality of Macedo de Cavaleiros, totalling around 700 km² of the north-east of Trás-os-Montes.
- With 42 geosites, it offers various tourist programmes to discover its main cultural events, such as the Entrudo Chocalheiro, the Grelo Gastronomic Festival or the Wild Boar Gastronomic Route, and icons such as the Caretos de Podence or the Pauliteiros de Salselas.
- <https://www.geoparkterrasdecavaleiros.com/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkO3ld eTJ4A> ; <https://vimeo.com/52229399>



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Terras de Cavaleiros Geoparque Mundial da UNESCO



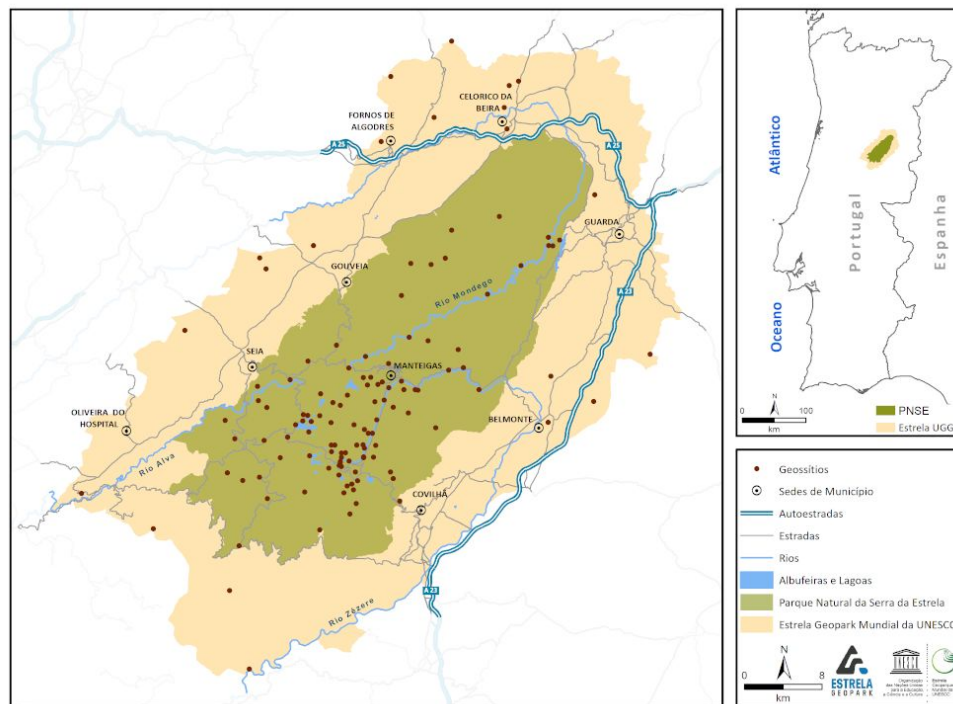
Estrela Geopark

- In 2020, it joined the UNESCO list of World Geoparks
- With an area of 2216 km², it includes all or part of the nine municipalities that are structured around Serra da Estrela: Belmonte, Celorico da Beira, Covilhã, Fornos de Algodres, Gouveia, Guarda, Manteigas, Oliveira do Hospital and Seia.
- 124 sites of geological interest inventoried
- <https://www.geoparkestrela.pt>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIFVbF24gfQ>



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Estrela Geoparque Mundial da UNESCO



- Territory where, based on the existence of a valid geological heritage, relationships are established with other types of heritage (biological, cultural, etc.)
- Development strategy to bring benefits and added value to the populations living within the geopark.
- Diversity of Geosites
 - Trilobites
 - “Pedras Parideiras”
 - Frecha da Mizarela
 - (...)



 AROUCA GEOPARK | *Challenge yourself!*

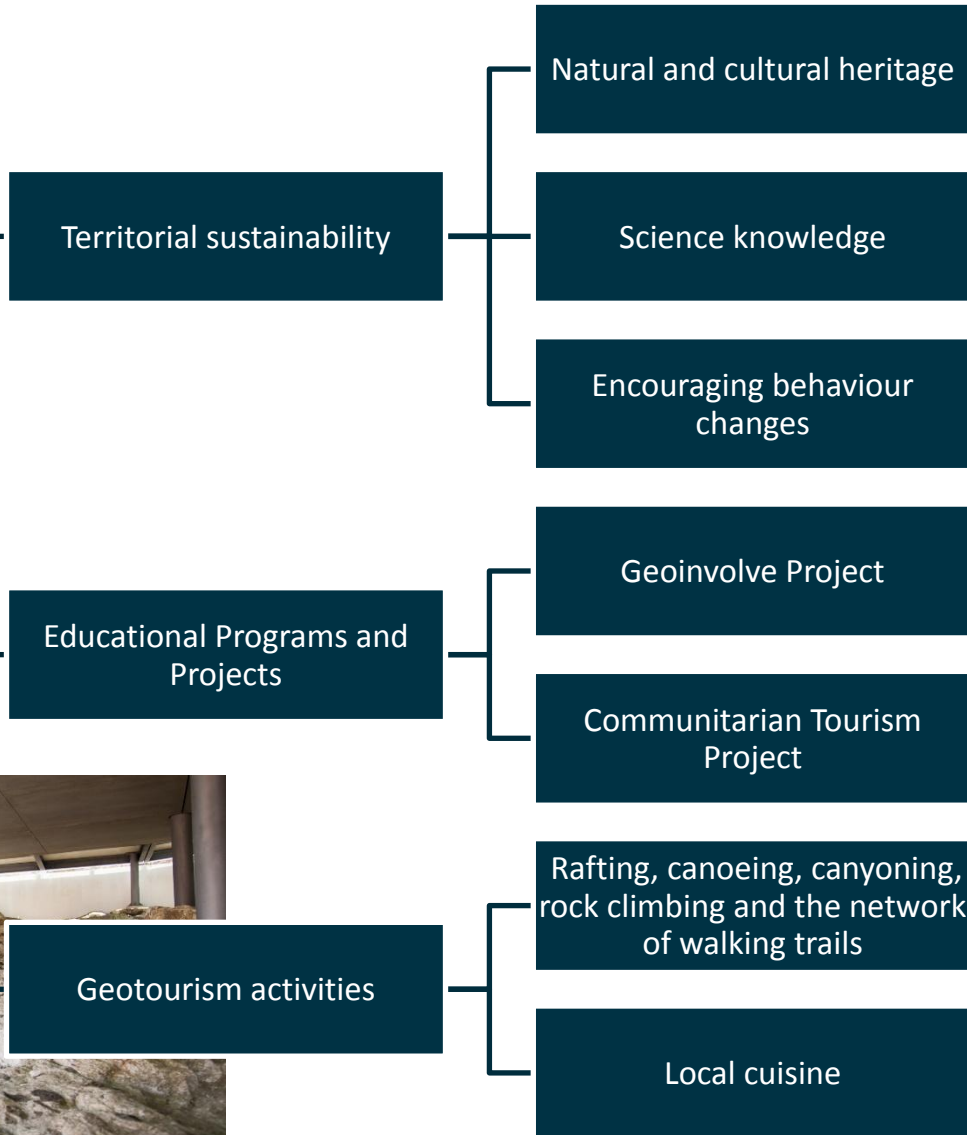








Geopark and Ecotourism



What can we learn with Geoparks?

- Involve local residents in designing development strategies for natural areas;
- Creation of infrastructures of small dimension, built in materials with good framing in the surroundings;
- Creation of interpretation infrastructures in certain places;
- Determine the maximum number of visitors that can be at the destination;
- Define differentiated access policies for different areas of the natural area and for different time periods;
- Implement rates of access to natural areas or in certain regions within these areas;
- Conduct studies to determine and monitor the impacts of nature tourism;
- Create codes of conduct.

Thank you!

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