



2022 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title of the Story: Pateira de Fermentelos – The Enchanted Lagoon

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Country: Portugal

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Submission category: *(Please check one of the boxes that indicates the focus of your story)*

Please find detailed information for the categories below in the Top 100 training module 'Good Practice Story'.

- Governance, Reset & Recovery
- Nature & Scenery
- Environment & Climate
- Culture & Tradition
- Thriving Communities
- Business & Marketing

Find detailed instructions for submitting good practices in the Top 100 training module "Good Practice Story".

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DESCRIBE YOUR GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.

Issues faced

What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice?

Pateira de Fermentelos lagoon (hereinafter "Pateira"), a natural ex-libris of the region, is an important wetland of international interest, classified as a RAMSAR Zone and Natura 2020 Network (ZPE and SIC). It is one of the largest natural lagoons of the Iberian Peninsula, with about 5 km², where habitats, ecosystems and species with protected status occur. With more than 150 identified species of birds, it is a very popular place for birdwatching, nature photography, sport fishing, nautical sports and activities, or simply for leisure and socializing in the leisure parks that surround its shores. Known locally as the enchanted lagoon, for all the natural and landscape environment, this unique place supports important ecosystem services and activities linked to the social and economic components of local communities.

The challenge resides in promoting the sustainable development of the Pateira lagoon, in harmony with good practices of nature conservation and biodiversity, the promotion of nature tourism, respect and integration of local communities. Another fundamental aspect is the need to develop initiatives that promote accessibility and inclusion, making this enchanted lagoon a space where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy the landscape and natural values in the same way.

Methods, steps and tools applied

How was the good practice implemented?

Águeda is one of the top 100 sustainable destinations in the world. Nevertheless, it wants to be a destination for everyone, promoting the improvement of accessibility and inclusion, not only in the activities it organizes, but also in the experiences it provides and in the spaces it manages. In this context, and along with the implementation of the development plan for the Pateira de Fermentelos, aligned with the sustainable tourism strategy for the area, measures are also implemented to improve access to information, enjoyment and interpretation of natural values, or even to provide inclusive experiences in natural spaces. Of these stand out:

- Tourist/interpretative brochures in Braille and simple and enlarged writing, for the blind and visually impaired, with the support of ACAPO - Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired of Portugal.
- Collaboration with Accessible Portugal for the promotion of Óis da Ribeira and Espinhel leisure parks (lagoon shores) as areas accessible to all, conducting a study of the accessibility conditions and possible improvements to be implemented, integrating the parks mentioned in the Tur4All platform.





- Acquisition of the E-Car, an electric traction equipment (Swiss Trac) and compatible wheelchair, which aims to support people with reduced mobility in the enjoyment of the network pedestrian routes, particularly those along the shores of Pateira, freely available.
- Acquisition of a multiformat kit, developed by Accessible Portugal, containing a brochure with information in simple writing, information printed in Braille and 2D images, information in Portuguese Sign Language, an A4 board with a 2D1/2 image and respective subtitles in Braille and an audio description recorded on an MP3. The theme of the kit is focused on the key elements of Pateira, allowing people with visual impairments to form an image of the lagoon and learn about its fundamental characteristics, which can be consulted for free at the Águeda Tourism Office.
- Implementation of a bird observatory and an accessible walkway adapted for all, as well as the promotion of inclusive birdwatching workshops.
- Promotion of nautical activities and adapted sports in the lagoon.
- Development of a website and documentary about the "enchanted lagoon".

Combining the tourism promotion of the territory and the enhancement of nature, there is also being developed a project that aims to implement an adapted walkway, connecting the shores of the lagoon. The new route will be a pedestrian pathway, implemented closer to the water, allowing for more direct enjoyment of the natural beauty of Pateira, and constituting a sports, cultural, and landscape attraction pole. This path will enhance the promotion of adapted tourism in the area, attracting visitors who seek new experiences.

In a classified area such as Pateira de Fermentelos, the awareness and environmental education actions about the preservation and conservation of the natural environment, directed to residents and visitors, is a key point. In this sense, are organized lectures, introductory courses in birdwatching, interpretive walks, workshops, among other activities promoted by the municipality and involving all stakeholders.

Key success factors

What helped you tackle the issues?

Among the various success factors is the determination of the Municipality of Águeda to safeguard and preserve the ecosystems of the Pateira Lagoon, but also to promote balanced, sustainable and inclusive local development. To this end, it has allocated financial resources and qualified technicians as well as promoted the establishment of partnerships for the implementation of the development plan, as provided in ODS 17 (Sustainable Development Goals 2030). These include the involvement of local communities and institutions





such as the APA, the CCDR.C, the ICNF, the parish councils and associations, among other private entities that also seek to promote the lagoon as an area of unparalleled beauty, with natural and landscape values to be preserved, by encouraging good practices of nature and inclusive tourism. The involvement, support, and concern shown by the local community is another success factor for the preservation and enhancement of Pateira, as it is these riverside communities that are daily close to the lagoon, vigilant and attentive, as well as willing to be active agents of its promotion and valorization, as for example the exploAPPateira project.

Lessons learned

While implementing the Good Practice what challenges were faced, and how were they overcome?

One of the factors that contributes the most to solving the problems and respective solutions previously indicated is the network of mutual help implemented between the Municipality, the partnerships, and the local community. The involvement of the local community leads to the interventions being well accepted and reflecting their durability over time. Also the integration and adaptation of several projects for accessible and inclusive, leads to the next projects and interventions to be implemented are already designed with the necessary characteristics for the enjoyment of all.

Results, achievements and recognitions

What were the qualitative and quantitative results of the good practice?

The lagoon of Pateira gains new charm every day! It is a stronghold of biodiversity and unique habitats, whose preservation and valorization will continue, if this were not the nesting place of one of the largest colonies of purple heron in the country. The results achieved can also be seen by the increase in the number of visitors that the lagoon and adjacent area has received, as well as the increase in the number of tourism and leisure projects that have emerged in the area, and the very involvement of the local community in them.

Additional references

Provide links to further information. Pictures and videos should be available for download either from YouTube, Vimeo or other Cloud-based (Google/ One Drive) download URL (not WeTransfer).

<https://www.tur4all.com/> | <https://accessibleportugal.com/> | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7r72tJJArl>
| <https://www.cm-aqueda.pt/visite/turismo/turismo-de-natureza-e-rural/pateira-de-fermentelos-turismo>

