



2021 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title of the Story: Azores – Graciosa, the Model Island

Destination Name: *Autonomous Region of the Azores*

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Country: Portugal

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Position: Azores DMO coordinator

Nomination Category: *(Please check the boxes that indicate the focus of your story)*

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

- Localizing the destination supply chain
- Decarbonizing the destination supply chain
- Culture & Communities
- Environment & Climate
- Nature & Ecotourism
- Tourism Reset & Recovery
- Other

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

Should you have any questions on your submission please refer to our FAQ page or contact top100@greendestinations.org

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

Analyzing the sources of electricity production in the Azores, the strong dependence of the Region on fossil fuels becomes evident.

Despite the investment in alternative renewable sources for the production of electricity in the Autonomous Region of the Azores, in the period between 2008 and 2016, it continues to be heavily dependent on the thermal component. In 2016, approximately 67% of the electricity produced came from thermal sources and 33% from renewable sources.

Methods, steps and tools applied

The development of electricity production from renewable energy sources in the Azores goes back as far as the year of 1900, when Fábrica da Vila – a hydroelectric production unit – was installed in the island of São Miguel. This was the starting point of a journey towards decarbonization that has led to the installation of several production units across the islands of this archipelago, taking advantage of the eclectic natural characteristics that each island provides in order to produce electricity. Over a century later, the year of 2020 witnessed an encouraging number of over 40% of electricity produced from renewable energy sources.

Attending to the specific characteristics of each island, the Azores have taken a very goal-oriented approach when it comes to energy. Taking Graciosa Island as an example, the Graciólíca project has allowed for over 60% of renewable energy integration. This private project consists in a hybrid production unit, relying on wind and solar power, together with an innovative energy storage system, that can supply the island with over 24-hour consecutive periods of electric energy.

Key success factors

In order to take maximum advantage of the clean energy coming from this project, the Government of the Azores has been working towards promoting Graciosa as a Model Island through a number of measures and initiatives, namely:

- PROENERGIA; a system of incentives through which citizens can actively participate in the production and storage of clean energy for self-consumption. Though this project is available in all nine island of the archipelago, Graciosa benefits from an extra 12 percentual points when supporting its citizens, resulting in an incentive of 47% for equipment purchased on this island.
- Electric mobility is also one of the major focuses of the Government of the Azores at the moment. Through the installation of more charging points for electric vehicles it is possible to encourage even more citizens to partake in decarbonized mobility. With this in mind, the system of incentives for the purchase of electric vehicles has come to include rent-a-cars and taxi companies in the island of Graciosa.
- Together with the Municipality of Santa Cruz, the Government of the Azores has acquired an electric minibus that will allow citizens to choose public transportation while contributing towards the decarbonization of the



island.

- At the moment, an electric bike sharing system is in the final stages of development. It will allow both locals and tourists to ride electric bikes through the streets of Graciosa.

- Lastly, the Government of the Azores has been optimizing its fleet through prioritizing electric vehicles over internal combustion ones and through the management of an organized sharing system.

Lessons learned

The project presupposes a high level of investments, and a parcel came from community funds.

The penetration of renewable energies and the shift to the use of more efficient energy sources also requires a change in behavior on the part of the local population. That's why we've launched a set of incentives to accelerate this transition.

Results, achievements and recognitions

Graciosa is leading the way in the decarbonization of the Azores, tackling land transport, citizen self-consumption and optimization of the electric grid. A model to be implemented on the other islands of the archipelago.

Energy sustainability is a goal we aim to achieve in each and every one of our islands. The Government of the Azores aims to provide clean, reliable and competitive energy through the steady and sustainable development of energy in a compromise to all citizens of the archipelago.

In the years foreseen for the operation of the new infrastructures, it is expected that the use of renewable energy will allow a reduction of 100,000 tones in CO2 emissions into the atmosphere.

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.