



Autonomous Region of the Azores

Regional Secretariat for the Environment and Climate Action

LIFE IP Azores Natura (LIFE17 IPE/PT/000010)

Action Report – E5 Phase II

Reporting date

31/12/2023

Project:



Coordinating Beneficiary:



GOVERNO
DOS AÇORES

Secretaria Regional do Ambiente
e Alterações Climáticas

Associated beneficiaries:



GOVERNO
DOS AÇORES

Direção Regional do Ambiente
e Alterações Climáticas



GOVERNO
DOS AÇORES

Direção Regional
de Políticas Marítimas



Secretaria Portuguesa
para o Estado das Águas



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1. Technical Context

Action E5 of the LIFE IP AZORES NATURA project (Public engagement and volunteering program) which includes the promotion of citizen science for conservation of flora and a volunteering program. This report aims to present the progress made in the first phase of the project, between 2022 and 2023.

This action is divided in two tasks

Task 1 - Promoting Citizen Science for Conservation of Flora:

Engages tourists in active data gathering on wild flora distribution, complementing existing mechanisms for detecting invasive alien species (IAS) and marine Non-Indigenous Species (NIS) conservation efforts.

Task 2 - Volunteering Program:

Engages local stakeholders, tourists, schools, and the public in specific conservation tasks through a volunteering program, enhancing conservation goals and cost-effectiveness.

How

Task 1:

Contracting external services to develop and deploy a mobile app similar to Invasoras, enabling data collection on flora distribution.

Disseminating the app across island parks, raising awareness among tourists and conducting yearly contests to promote engagement.

Continuously updating app functionalities to cover all flora species listed under the Habitats Directive (HD).

Task 2:

Promotes active participation in conservation tasks through volunteer days, focusing on controlling invasive alien species and collecting/seeding native species.

Targets various groups, including the general public and schools, through interpretive visits and the "Parque Escola" initiative.

Public engagement activities in the LIFE IP AZORES NATURA project serve as a vital bridge between the project and the community, fostering collaboration and promoting environmental stewardship. Through citizen science initiatives and volunteering programs, participants actively contribute to biodiversity conservation efforts, ensuring the sustainability and success of the project's objectives.

2. Overall progress

2.1 Task 1: Promoting Citizen Science for Conservation of Flora

Regarding the use of a mobile app for reporting and consultation of flora species within the Azores, the app iNaturalist is already being used and with a considering number of users reporting and finding of new locations of invasive flora in all islands. Since the creation of the project (23/02/2023), 19 993 observations have been recorded on the app.

We also promoted the app in our website and social media.

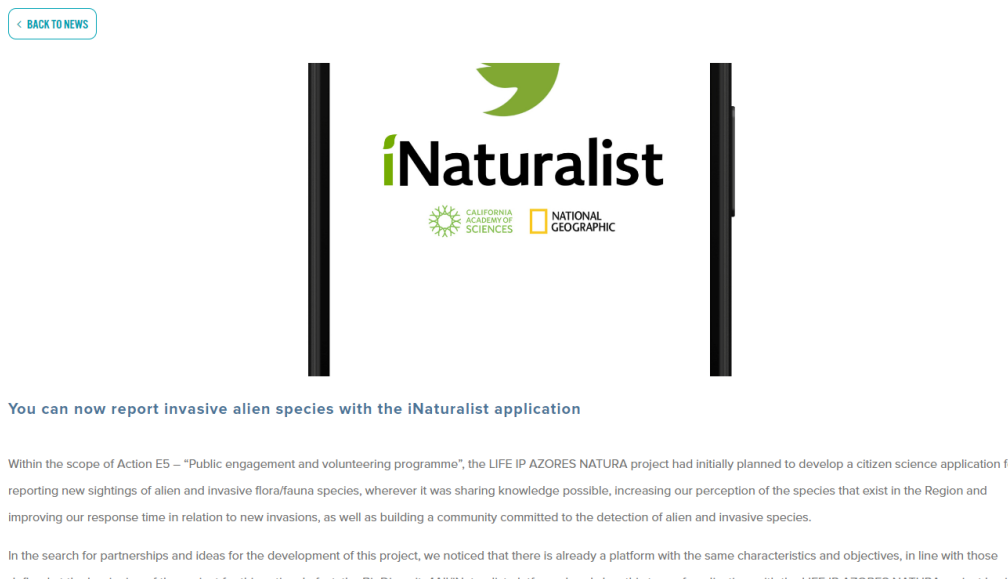


Fig. 1 – Promoting the iNaturalist app

In our website the app is already available for download by reading the qr code:

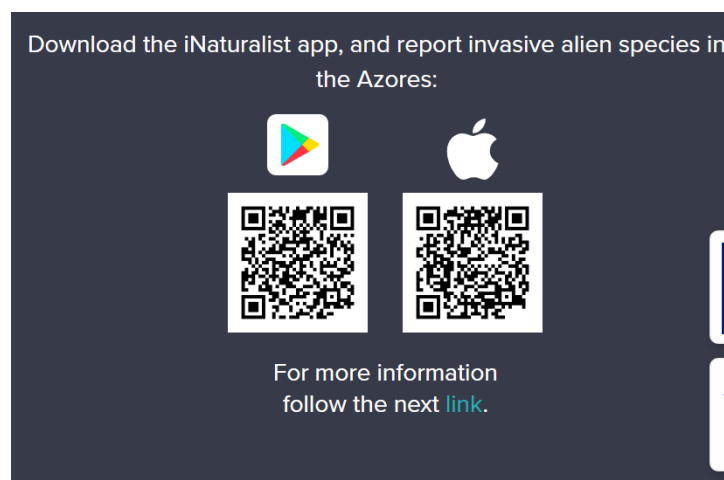


Fig. 2 – iNaturalist app in the website footer

Also, as one of many ways that we are promoting the iNaturalist app, the “Dobble invasoras” which is a game of environmental awareness for the invasive flora in the Azores that the LIFE IP AZORES NATURA developed for students regarding the Action C11 and E4, the mobile app is one of the characters that can help detect and prevent the spread of invasive alien species. In this way, we are contributing to the wide spreading of the iNaturalist app to the schools and also encouraging the citizen science by talking about this powerful tool that we have at our disposal.

In the table below, we can see the number of activities of the “Dobble invasoras” game which is an indicator of the amount of times that we talked about the iNaturalist app.

Table 1 – Number of activities of the Dobble invasoras

Date	Island	Nº de sessions	Participants
2023.02.16	Terceira	1	22
2023.03.09	São Miguel	1	24
2023.03.22	Pico	1	11
2023.03.23	São Miguel	1	23
2023.03.29	São Jorge	2	23
2023.03.30	Pico	2	30
2023.04.14	Faial	1	12
2023.04.26	São Miguel	1	24
2023.04.27	Santa Maria	1	16
2023.05.04	São Jorge	1	16
2023.05.04	São Miguel	1	26
2023.05.19	São Miguel	1	17
2023.05.31	Graciosa	1	19
2023.06.01	Faial	3	950
2023.06.15	Faial	2	38
2023.06.16	Faial	2	37
2023.07.13	Faial	1	21
2023.07.20	Faial	1	21
2023.08.03	Pico	1	15
2023.08.17	São Miguel	1	10
2023.08.17	São Miguel	1	35
2023.08.18	Faial	1	21
2023.09.05	Faial	1	7
2023.09.06	São Miguel	1	50
2023.12.06	Corvo	1	9

2023.12.11	Pico	1	16
2023.12.20	Terceira	1	19
2024.01.11	Graciosa	1	15



Fig. 3 – The mobile app is one of the characters in “Dobble invasoras”

Ferramenta de controlo

A única forma de combatermos as espécies invasoras é com a ajuda de ferramentas de controlo. Uma das mais importantes é o conhecimento que podes adquirir através deste jogo! Outras são as que te apresentamos como símbolos, sejam elas ferramentas de controlo físico, como a máquina de roçar ou a motosserra, ou de deteção precoce, como a vigilância e aplicações móveis onde é possível fazer denúncias e localizar espécies invasoras.

Estas ferramentas são os nossos aliados na deteção e combate a espécies invasoras, para que o nosso património natural não fique ameaçado pela sua presença.

Fig. 4 – The mobile app is one of the characters in “Dobble invasoras”

2.2. Task 2: Volunteering Program

Volunteering activities continued across the islands, involving the removal of invasive exotic species, planting of endemic and native species, surveying endemic flora, coastal clean-ups, among other types of work. Volunteers included students, scouts, stakeholders, residents, and tourists. Between 2022 and 2023, a total of 369 volunteers were involved. More than 765 individuals of endemic and native species were planted, and over 7000 kg of invasive species were removed from protected areas and habitats. On the table below there

Table 2 – All volunteering activities between 2022 and 2023

Date	Activity description and location	Nº of volunteers
2022.03.19	Volunteering plantation at Lagoa do Negro - Scouts	90
2022.06.08	Coastal Cleanup at Fajã dos Cubres - São Jorge	11
2022.09.22	Ecology Day - Volunteering at Lagoa do Fogo	12
2022.10.07	Coastal Cleanup Nordeste	5
2022.10.29	Removal of <i>Gunnera tinctoria</i> - Pico do Carvão - São Miguel	11
2022.11.03	Plantation of Azorinas by Students from São Roque do Pico School	3
2023.02.13 -17	Removal of invasive species at Corvo - Les Ami'go TS School Management and Nature Protection	4
2023.02.16	Removal of IAS and native plantation at Pico do Carvão - 2,3 Maia School - São Miguel	13
2023.03.13	Invasive species removal at Flores - Les Ami'go TS School Management and Nature Protection	4
2023.03.21	Invasive species removal - Praia da Vitória Professional School (Terceira)	15
2023.05.16	Invasive Species Week - Invasive species removal in Terceira	22
2023.05.17	Invasive Species Week - Invasive species removal in Terceira	15
2023.05.25	Visit and conservation work at Lagoa do Fogo - Students from Rottenburg University of Natural Sciences	27
2023.06.05	World Environment Day on Pico - Coastal cleanup	26
2023.06.05	World Environment Day in São Miguel - Coastal cleanup at Caloura	33
2023.06.05	World Environment Day Faial - Coastal cleanup at Porto Pim Beach	23
2023.09.07	Plymouth University Volunteering - Pico do Carvão (São Miguel)	28
Total of volunteers		369



Fig. 5 – Volunteering activity with scouts – plantation of endemic species



Fig. 6 – Volunteering activity with students – removal of invasive alien species