



PORTUGUESE TRAILS for a sustainable tourism

**Institutional collaboration in
Portugal: infrastructure and
tourism promotion**

**“International Conference on Greenways as
a Tool for Sustainable Industrial Tourism”**

Bilbao, 9th and 10th November 2025



PORTUGUESE TRAILS | THE

PROJECT

By promoting cycling and walking routes across Portugal's diverse landscapes, *Portuguese Trails* addresses the climate imperative through **soft mobility** and a reduced carbon footprint.

Through collaboration with **public and private stakeholders**, the initiative integrates sustainable practices, local development, and environmental preservation.

The diversity of routes help distribute tourists **all over the country** and **all year round**.





PORTUGUESE TRAILS | THE PROCESS

Coordination: Turismo de Portugal in collaboration with public partners (ex. IP Património) and tourist companies

Common focus on **Nature Tourism:** Cycling & Walking routes to promote experiences across the country, with carbon-free mobility

Aligned with **national and regional tourism strategies**

PORTUGUESE TRAILS | RESULTS

- 39 routes covering **20,000 km** all over the country
(5 Ecopistas /Greenways)
- **300+** tourist SMEs involved
- “*100% Responsible Programs*” initiative: 151 Cycling & Walking programs (50% of total)
- Dedicated international promotion **website**: www.portuguesetrails.com



PORTUGUESE TRAILS | RESULTS

- **Financing programs** to develop and improve routes and facilities
- Cycling & Walking routes contribute to **local business** growth, increase **tourist demand** and improve **residents' satisfaction**
- **International recognition** of Portugal as a destination for sustainable experiences (Cycling & Walking)

PARTNERSHIP with

• Greenways

- Since June 2022, **Turismo de Portugal and IP Património** have been actively promoting the **Portugal's Greeways Network**
- **Goals:** Enhance the value of sustainable mobility routes by:
 - Sharing best practices among municipalities and intermunicipal communities
 - Organizing technical meetings to foster collaboration and strategic planning
 - Engaging residents and tourists through promotional and educational activities
 - Promote environmental stewardship and regional growth through soft mobility solutions



PARTNERSHIP with

Greenways Portugal's Greeways Network activities

- 8 Network Meetings
- Development of the “Good Practices Code for Greenways”
- Discussion of technical and operational challenges
- Coordination between local, regional and national entities
- Identification of financial programs for new Greenways
- Presentation of best practices – management, signage, promotion
- Diagnosis of accessibility in Greenways and Training on Accessible Tourism (2026)



PARTNERSHIP with

Greenways

OUTCOMES OF THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

- Participation in the **National Strategy for Active Mobility**

Goals:

- Assumption of the importance of cycling and walking routes for a sustainable development of territories
 - Promotion of cycling and walking routes for leisure and tourism
 - Data collection and mapping (including *portuguesetrails.com* and *ecopistas.pt*)
- Turismo de Portugal **financing of Greenways projects**
("Crescer com o Turismo" 2025-2026)



PARTNERSHIP with

GREENWAYS

Heritage and Infrastructure Renewal

Refurbishing abandoned railways recovers historical heritage and creates new social and economic roles in local areas

Economic Stimulation

Greeways attract visitors and foster tourism businesses like rural lodgings, cafes, bike workshops, and regional shops

Health and Well-being Promotion

Greeways provide safe, accessible spaces encouraging physical activity and enhancing community health and wellness

Environmental Sustainability

Gentle mobility on Greeways reduces ecological footprint and supports transport decarbonization and environmental preservation





NATIONAL
RAILWAY
NETWORK
≈ **2.600 Km**

NON-OPERATING
NETWORK
≈ **1.000 Km**

763 Km
CONTRACTED

518 Km
IN USE

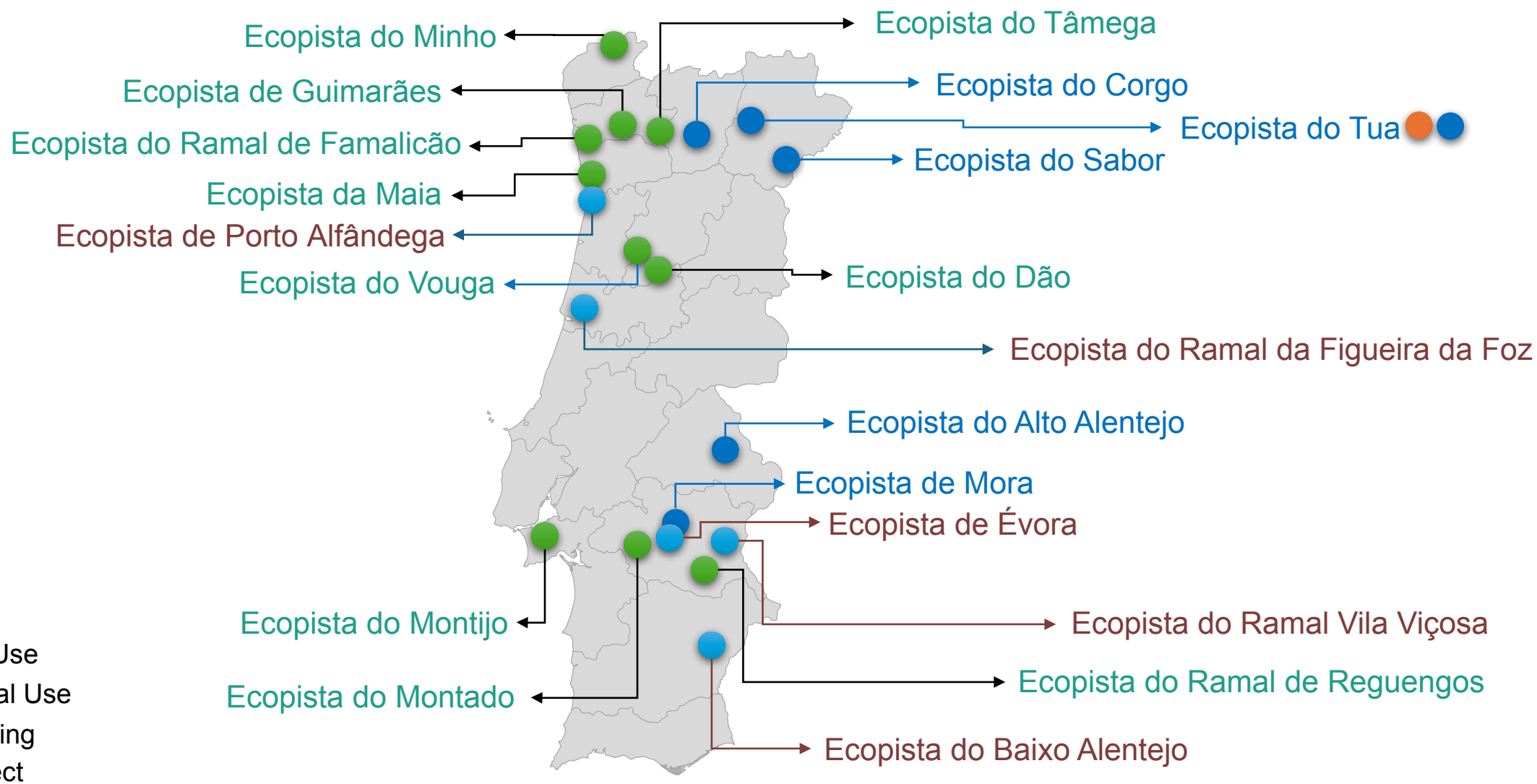
180 Km
IN PROJECT

20
LINES

15
GREENWAYS

15 Km
RAIL BIKE





Mapa ibérico de Vías Verdes y Ecopistas de España y Portugal Mapa ibérico das Ecopistas e Vias Verdes de Portugal e Espanha



Portugal



Spain



Infraestruturas
de Portugal

ecopistas

www.viasverdes.com



www.ippatrimonio.pt/pt-pt/ecopistas



VIA VERDE



GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA
MINISTERIO DE TRANSPORTES Y MOVILIDAD

MINISTERIO DE TRANSPORTES Y MOVILIDAD

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

- **Successful combination:** Tourism development and sustainable mobility on a national scale
- **Key support:** Tourist SMEs (to develop sustainable practices and programs); and public entities (to preserve natural and cultural heritage and landscapes)
- **Essential commitment:** Public-private partnerships and resilience in achieving sustainable goals (long-term)



MAIN CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Training SME's and destinations on sustainable practices
- Adaptation to climate changes
- Monitoring demand
- Routes management
- New trails and programs
- Responsible tourists



**PORTUGUESE
TRAILS**

ecopistas 

**TURISMO DE
PORTUGAL**



**Infraestruturas
de Portugal**

Thank you

joao.portugal@turismodeportugal.pt

paulo.prodrigues@ippatrimonio.pt

