

## Good Practice Cases in Sustainable Tourism Destinations

### Sintra-Cascais Natural Park - Duna da Cresmina Interpretation Center, Cascais (Portugal)

ITEMS		DESCRIPTION	PICTURES
Name of the organization submitting this practice case	Name	Coastal and Marine Union EUCC and Cascais Municipality	
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Name (in EN) of the destination	Name (in EN) of the destination	Cascais	
	Administrative Organizations and country	Cascais municipality is located in the district of Lisbon, in central Portugal. It consists of six parishes: Cascais, Estoril, Parede, Carcavelos, São Domingos de Rana and Alcabideche. One-third of its territory is a natural park: the Sintra-Cascais Natural Park, which also extends over the municipality of Sintra.	
	Tourism Organizations	Estoril Coast tourist region	
	Surface	97,4 Km <sup>2</sup>	
	Resident population	206,479	
	Tourism Arrivals	N/A	
	Tourism nights	1.136.943 nights a year	
WHO	Name	Cascais Ambiente	
	Website	<a href="http://www.cm-cascais.pt">www.cm-cascais.pt</a>	
WHY	The reason for action	Sintra-Cascais Natural Park (PNS-C) is located in a region subject to great urban and tourist pressure - the Estoril coast, which is a preferred destination for many domestic and foreign visitors. Situated within the park, the Cresmina-Guincho dune system is an important asset to the area due to its natural values and biophysical characteristics and dynamics. The degradation of this fragile natural system requires the implementation of protection and recovery measures in order to preserve this area and the ecosystem services that it provides. In this way, the Sintra-Cascais Natural Park Visiting and Interpretation Network, developed by Cascais Natura and the ICNB, promotes the natural heritage of the region, framing it in the vast and rich heritage of the coast and the Sintra Mountains. Besides this, environmental awareness and scientific research are recognized to be crucial to the conservation and protection of this area.	
	Issues and challenge	Strong urban and tourist, demographic pressure on Natura 2000 priority habitat, unregulated tourism, degradation of natural spaces (dune cord and coastal cliffs).	

<b>HOW</b>		<p>The rehabilitation works of the Cresmina-Gincho Dune System began in the last quarter of 2010 and focused initially on the recovery of the dune ridge and the establishment of vegetation cover through diverse habitat management actions. These included the placing of seals; eradication of invasive alien species (e.g. <i>Acacia</i> spp., <i>Carpobrotus edulis</i>); installation of sand fences made of dry willow branches or wicker in embryonic and primary dunes; plantation of autochthonous species on mobile dunes (e.g. <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> subsp. <i>australis</i>, <i>Lotus creticus</i>) and fixed dunes, where characteristic vegetation was wiped out by non-native species (<i>Rhamnus alaternus</i>, <i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>, <i>Phillyrea angustifolia</i>). Aiming to protect the native flora and fauna, permanent fences have been established to avoid the entrance of vehicles into the area. In order to regulate the pedestrian access to the dune, 2000 metres of elevated pathways, equipped with stopping platforms for observation, were installed along all the dune system. These wooden pathways provide an easy and controlled access to the beach and to the new Interpretation Center “Duna da Cresmina”. This center includes explanatory panels, maps, a multimedia application and a virtual viewing point. Guided tours of the dune system with a digital guide are also available.</p>	
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<p>The works undertaken in the Cresmina-Gincho Dune System have restored 90 acres of habitat in the area. By creating a network of interpretative trails visitors are able to access and enjoy this natural space without causing negative impacts on the environment. These trails attract around 5000 people per month. The Interpretation Center “Duna da Cresmina” and the numerous information boards present along these trails, allow them to learn more about the flora and fauna associated to this dune system and the natural values of these ecosystems. Since April 2013, this Center has received 4,000 visitors.</p>	
	<b>Recognition and Awards</b>	<p>QualityCoast Silver Award 2013</p>	
<b>Coverage of GSTC criteria for destinations</b>		<p>C1 Attraction protection, C2 Visitor management plans, C3 Visitor behaviour and interpretation in sensitive sites, D2 Ecosystem protection</p>	
<b>REFLECTION</b>	<b>Multiplier effect and transferability</b>	<p>The restoration works sparked a great interest and curiosity of the scientific community and the media. The methodology used to restore this areas was widely presented at scientific meetings and the intervention site is regularly visited by the scientific community. It is considered as a reference of dune restoration in Portugal.</p>	
	<b>Lessons learned and critical success factors</b>	<p>It was noted that it is essential to promote the ecological recovery of the sites before upgrading and allow visitation, in order to generate their resilience to visitation and interpretation process.</p>	