

**Environment, Climate Change
and Low Carbon Economy
Programme**

'Environment Programme'
European Economic Area (EEA)
Financial Mechanism
2014 – 2021



Annual Report no. 1

09#3_period: November 12, 2020 to November 11, 2021
November 2021

09_CALL#3

Biosphere Reserves

Sustainable territories, resilient communities.

*Accordingly, with the Articles 25.2.j) and 29.4
of the 'Applicants Guide for Financing of Projects Supported by Environment,
Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy Programme'*

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After a year of activity, the "Biosphere Reserves, sustainable territories, resilient communities" Project has reached a stage of achievement of some of its key objectives, particularly concerning the creation of projection and proximity dynamics to the Biosphere Reserves and the public, promoting these territories and their relevant stakeholders. The difficulties imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic were addressed by strengthening of direct communication with the managers of the Biosphere Reserves (BR), thus compensating for the impossibility of presenting and promoting the Project in face-to-face sessions in each BR as initially planned. However, this presentation was gradually carried out as the limitations were reduced with the improvement in the general situation of COVID-19. The project team was physically present in practically all the BRs, except for the Biosphere Reserves of the Autonomous Region of the Azores – due to changes in the BR managers whose replacement is still to be completed.

The presence of the project team in the BR corresponded to the development of different initiatives related to public presentations bringing together the main local stakeholders in each territory, highlighting the widespread participation and general interest in matters regarding the BR. Within the scope of the Project's specific activities, this physical presence was predominantly associated with the work of gathering essential information pertaining to the analysis of socio-economic trends, memories and identity, heritage, identification and mapping of ecosystems and identification of relevant assets for activities, such as itineraries and the analysis of training needs.

In terms of communication, the Project assumed its visual identity, integrating it into the different communication channels established in the meantime and in full operation, such as the website and social networks, deserving a significant and very positive general adhesion, to which is added interest of national and local media.

Complementing the specific dynamics of the different partners there is growing integration between the different teams, underlining the multidisciplinary suggested by the initial proposal, also including an excellent articulation and presence of international partners in the day-to-day running of the Project.

As a result of this cooperative positioning, opportunities have been created to extend the scope of the Project in the field of scientific cooperation with international partners, in the interest of the secretariat of the UNESCO MaB Programme, which has followed and advertised some of the Project's actions. It was also officially integrated with the commemorations of the 50th anniversary of the MaB Programme and in the promotion of initiatives, such as the exhibition on CPLP's BR and the Conference bringing together CPLP's BR promoted in collaboration with the Serralves Foundation.

The project provides for a total of 81 activities, of which 60 have already started. However, some have already been completed, particularly those relating to the surveying and organisation of basic information or the framing of more specific components. Although not assuming a general visibility, some of the activities concluded in the meantime are already determinant for the Project's goals, such as for example the Marketing and Communication Strategy for the Portuguese SRBs, or the definition of the concept and structure of the future Sustainable Development Plans, or the proposals of participative methodologies to be used in different Project activities. The identification, inventorying and mapping of key ecosystems in all the BRs and the extensive collection work within the scope of the inventorying of memories and heritage, as well as the socio-economic dynamics are central activities that support the determinant axes of the Project, associated to the pillars of knowledge and communication.

The organisation and public launch of the National Olympics of Biosphere Reserves is another relevant activity in this phase of the Project, given its national scope and the target audience it addresses. Wide participation is expected in this initiative that combines knowledge, valorisation, and promotion of national BRs.

I would like to thank the whole project team for their commitment and skills and for the tremendous availability that ensured the general fulfilment of the work programme, promoting an excellent environment of internal and external cooperation that contributed greatly to overcoming the natural difficulties of this type of project and those imposed by the circumstances associated with COVID-19. We also thank the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Action, the EEA Grants Programme team and the MaB National Committee for their availability and support. Finally, a special word to the Biosphere Reserves, their managers and other associated entities and the communities with whom and for whom we work better to promote their territories, as living laboratories of sustainability.

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	8 Partners

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Universidade Nova de Lisboa – Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas	Maria Fernanda Rollo
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Kari Natland	Degree in Travel and tourism business, with specialisation in territorial planning and development	Responsible for the participation of the Head of Nordhordland Utviklingsselskap IKS
Icelandic National Commission for UNESCO		
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The Project Promoter

Name

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Date and Signature

Position

Management of Quaternaire Portugal

The Programme Operator – Secretary General for Environment

Name

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Position

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1 INTRODUCTION

This document corresponds to the 1st Annual Report of the **09#CALL3 - Biosphere Reserves: Sustainable Territories, Resilient Communities** project and aims to present information on the progress of technical and financial execution of the Project. The assessment was reported to the period between November 12, 2020 and October 31, 2021¹.

With a view to its rapid reading and clear perception of the Project progress, the document is organised following the model structure proposed by the EEA Grants Programme and used in the Interim Reports:

- Chapter 2 is dedicated to the detailed description of the activities, which includes:
 - the identification of activities started and in progress in the period under review and their development schedule;
 - the summary of activities developed, focusing on technical and financial progress, as well as the involvement of partners and other participants;
- Chapter 3 is dedicated to the results achieved;
- Chapter 4 is dedicated to the description of costs and assessment of the financial impact;
- Chapter 5 is dedicated to the description of the Project's contribution to achieving the overall objectives of the EEA Grants and the Environment Programme.

Attachment A presents the model activity sheet used in the Interim Reports, where all the information on the technical and financial progress considered relevant is systematised for each activity under evaluation.

The approach followed in this document reflects the development of the Project and its scope at the end of its first year of implementation, not only providing the sum of the four-months periods results, which may be analysed in the respective Interim Reports.

A particularity of this evaluation period is the end of the participation in the project of the partner PC&A - Consultores de Marketing Estratégico, Lda on April 30, 2021. As a result, all activities that were under its responsibility passed to the Project Promoter. This change was formalised with the conclusion of the Addendum to the Contract, dated July 12, 2021, which was preceded by the delivery of the PC&A Execution Report in June.

¹ It is noted that the evaluation period differs from the Project annual to report full months, as per information received from SGA on March 5, 2021.

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2 DETAILED DESCRIPTION

2.1 IDENTIFICATION OF ACTIVITIES

Following the identification of the contracted activities, the following table presents the activities started and in progress over the period under evaluation, highlighting the expected dates for their development, updated in accordance with Interim Report no. 2, as well as the partners responsible for their execution.

Activities associated with the general management of the Project, including the preparation of this report, are considered regular tasks and therefore, given their nature, are considered transversal activities.

Table 2.1 – Activities started and in progress in the period between November 12, 2020 and October 31, 2021

ID	Name of activity	Beginning Date	Date Order	Executing entity
1	Collection and organization of information related to the nomination of all Biosphere Reserves (BR)	12-11-2020	30-04-2021	QP
2	Survey of existing BR action plans, objectives and priorities	12-11-2020	30-04-2021	QP
3	Framing the geostrategic context of BR in existing UNESCO BR networks	01-01-2021	31-03-2021	QP
4	History of Biosphere Reserves	12-11-2020	01-11-2022	UNL-FCSH
5	Elaboration of a data management plan: FAIR data - open access	12-11-2020	30-06-2021	UNL-FCSH
6	Auscultation / Perception and identification of heritage	12-11-2020	11-05-2023	UNL-FCSH
7	Development of the Sustainable Development Plan (SDPs) concept for BR	01-03-2021	31-10-2021	QP
8	Development of the participatory planning methodology for the SDPs	01-05-2021	31-07-2021	QP
9	Consultation and validation of the methodological structure for the SDP	01-08-2021	30-09-2021	QP
10	Digital Infrastructure - distributed management model	01-01-2021	30-12-2021	UNL-FCSH
11	Digital Infrastructure - Biosphere Reserves Website	12-11-2020	11-05-2023	UNL-FCSH
12	Digital infrastructure - Indicators management dashboard	12-11-2020	11-05-2023	UNL-FCSH
13	Digital Infrastructure - Research Data Catalogue	01-05-2021	11-05-2023	UNL-FCSH
14	Digital guides of cultural and natural heritage of the Biosphere Reserves	01-01-2021	30-01-2023	UNL-FCSH
15	Mapping the BR ecosystem diversity	12-11-2020	30-09-2021	UC-CFE/ Univ Bergen
16	Identification of potential Ecosystem Services (ES) associated with ecosystems	01-01-2021	30-11-2021	UC-CFE/ Univ Bergen
17	Analysis of the dynamics of the socio-economic sector	01-01-2021	31-10-2021	QP
18	Identification of key actors in the socio-economic sector in the BR	01-01-2021	31-12-2021	IPN
19	Identification of existing R&DT, innovation and entrepreneurship best practices aligned with sustainable development	01-01-2021	31-12-2021	IPN
20	Identification of priorities and projects in the areas of development and sustainability	01-05-2021	31-12-2021	QP
21	Selection of key ESs for sustainable development of RBs	01-03-2021	30-04-2022	UC-CFE/ Univ. Bergen/ RB de Nordhordland
22	Selection of indicators and development of methodology for assessing the condition / status of ES	01-06-2021	30-04-2022	UC-CFE/ Univ. Bergen
23	ES condition / status assessment	01-09-2021	30-06-2022	UC-CFE/ Univ. Bergen

ID	Name of activity	Beginning Date	Date Order	Executing entity
24	ES valuation proposal (add value)	01-09-2021	31-08-2022	UC-CFE/ Univ. Bergen/ RB de Nordhordland
25	ES valuation (assigning value) and its interconnection with the associated economic sectors - pilot action	01-08-2021	31-10-2022	UC-CFE
26	Mapping BR ES	01-09-2021	31-10-2022	UC-CFE/ Univ. Bergen/ RB de Nordhordland
34	Selection of 11 pilot actions to	01-08-2021	30-09-2021	QP
35	Tourism "Script" for the Portuguese Biosphere Reserves - pilot action	01-06-2021	31-10-2022	QP
36	Memories and identities - systematic record of memories – pilot action	12-11-2020	30-09-2022	UNL-FCSH
37	Creation of memory and community spaces - (incorporates pilot action catalogue)	01-05-2021	11-05-2023	UNL-FCSH
38	Network of Biosphere Reserves shops and virtual store - pilot action	01-10-2021	31-10-2022	QP
45	Sustainability certification framework - Portuguese Biosphere Reserves	12-11-2020	11-04-2023	QP
46	Assessment of training needs that will support the training planning	01-04-2021	31-10-2021	QP
47	Governance skills reinforcement program for BR managers, partners and local agents	01-10-2021	31-10-2022	QP
48	Training in planning and participatory methodologies for reserve managers regarding the implementation of the SDPs	01-05-2021	31-10-2022	QP
49	Training associated with the implementation of pilot actions	01-08-2021	31-10-2022	QP
54	Programme of visits and transfer of experiences between Portuguese SRs and donor countries	30-09-2021	11-05-2023	QP
56	Marketing Strategy Development	12-11-2020	31-07-2021	PC&A/ QP
57	Communication Plan Design	01-01-2021	31-07-2021	PC&A/ QP
58	Strategy and Brand Identity (Tone, Signature and Communication Messages, Logo and Brandbook)	01-03-2021	31-07-2021	PC&A/ QP
59	Generic Creative Development	01-06-2021	31-12-2021	QP
60	Creative Development of Digital Communication	01-06-2021	31-12-2021	QP
61	Productions and promotional materials - Offline	01-06-2021	31-12-2021	QP
62	Productions and promotional materials - Online	01-06-2021	31-12-2021	QP
63	Productions and promotional materials – Audio-visual materials	01-08-2021	30-11-2022	QP
64	Brand Activations	01-08-2021	11-05-2023	QP
65	Public Relations	01-08-2021	11-05-2023	QP
66	Media Strategy and Planning	01-08-2021	11-05-2023	QP
67	Media Strategy and Planning - Press	01-08-2021	28-02-2023	QP
68	Media Strategy and Planning - Radio	01-08-2021	28-02-2023	QP
69	Media Strategy and Planning - Digital	01-08-2021	28-02-2023	QP
71	Development of Awareness Plan for different audiences	01-01-2021	31-07-2021	QP
72	Local project presentation sessions in each Biosphere reserve including awareness and demonstration actions involving local partners	01-09-2021	31-12-2021	QP
74	Planning of the National Biosphere Olympics	01-02-2021	30-09-2021	OBio
75	Communication and dissemination of the BR Olympics	01-03-2021	30-11-2021	OBio
76	BR Olympics	01-09-2021	31-07-2022	OBio
77	Design and organization of Biosphere Reserve Festivals	01-04-2021	30-09-2022	QP

ID	Name of activity	Beginning Date	Date Order	Executing entity
78	BioKeepers - Club of Friends and caregivers of BR – pilot action	01-09-2021	30-09-2022	Keep
80	Knowledge extension	12-11-2020	30-05-2022	Keep
81	Itinerant exhibition	01-09-2021	11-05-2023	UNL-FCSH
RI	Interim Repor 1	12-11-2020	28-02-2021	QP
	Interim Report 2	01-03-2021	30-06-2021	QP
	Interim Report 3	01-07-2021	31-10-2021	QP
RA	Annual Report 1	12-11-2020	31-10-2021	QP
	PC&A Execution Report	01-03-2021	30-04-2021	QP
	Project management	12-11-2020	11-05-2023	QP

Source: Contract_09_CALL#3_Anexo I_Rev.03 and Interim Report no. 2

2.2 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

In the Interim Reports, all activities are described through a set of indicators that allow a synthesis of the respective levels of technical and financial implementation, enabling the state of implementation of the project to be understood in an objective, integrated and consistent manner that can be monitored. Thus, each activity is characterised in two essential components of its execution - technical and financial progress - with the following descriptive fields (see Attachment A):

- Technical progress:
 - Tasks carried out - identifies the actions developed, the responsible partner and the partners involved, as well as the participants, namely the Biosphere Reserves and other entities;
 - Results obtained – states what has been achieved with the tasks carried out and lists the documents, actions and other forms of evidence of results accomplished;
 - Reorientations and adjustments - highlights the tasks/actions that, for whatever reason, were not carried out, justifies their non-completion and presents corrective measures to overcome possible shortcomings, delays, etc.;
 - Execution barometer - retrieves the indicators, targets and verification sources associated with each activity, as presented in the application/contract, and records its state of execution (executed, in progress, not executed);
 - Execution timeline - records the state of implementation of the activity during the assessment period of the Interim Report under review and projects its evolution for the next assessment period, listing the tasks planned to be carried out.
- Financial progress:
 - Costs of staff assigned to the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.a;
 - Travel and subsistence allowances for staff assigned to the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.b;
 - Depreciation value for new or second-hand equipment purchased – Reg. Art. 8.2.4;
 - Costs of new or second-hand equipment, as long as they are amortised in accordance to the applicable accounting standards - Reg. Art. 8.3.1.c & Art. 8.3.2;

- Costs of consumables and supplies – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.e;
- Costs entailed by other contracts awarded by Project Promoter for the purpose of carrying out the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.f;
- Costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the project contract – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.g.

All these fields specify the following parameters:

- Total Expected: contracted values according to document "Contract_09_CALL#3_Annex I_Rev.3_2021_06_15", which is part of the contract;
- Executed between: value of what was executed in the evaluation period to which the Interim Report refers;
- % of what was executed in the evaluation period to which the Interim Report refers in relation to the total foreseen;
- Accumulated executed: sum of the value of what was executed in the different evaluation periods / interim reports;
- % of the accumulated executed in relation to the total foreseen.

In addition, the transversal activity of "Management" of the Project is considered.

The synthesis of the reading of these indicators is presented in the following sub-chapters.

2.2.1 Technical progress

At the end of the first year of the Project's execution, it can be verified that all the 60 activities covered in this period have started their activities as planned.

The **tasks carried out** are associated with the schedule of activities under evaluation. In the period under review the typification of tasks carried out can be grouped into three major groups:

- Typical tasks of the initial phase of the activities when they started (23 activities from November 12, 2020 to February 28, 2021, corresponding to Interim Report no. 1; 16 activities from March 1 to June 30, 2021, corresponding to Interim Report no 2, and 21 activities from July 1 to October 31, corresponding to Interim Report no. 3), out of a total of 60 activities;
- Continuity tasks for activities started during Interim Reports periods 1 and 2, and which continue active in this first year, with a total of 22 activities carried over from the first four-months period to the second; and 35 activities carried over from the second four-months period to the third;
- Activities closing tasks, for 10 (1 in the first four-months period, 4 in the second and 5 in the third).

In the first group are identified the tasks of information collection and systematisation, including the ones received from the BRs and identified in Interim Report no.1, information search, preparation of databases, interviews and surveys. It is therefore worth highlighting the crossing and interaction between the Partners to reduce the duplication of tasks, namely in terms of information requests and surveys.

In the second group fall the tasks related to the continuity of systematisation of the information received from the BRs. It also includes the definition and consolidation of methodologies and the processing of results from surveys and interviews

carried out in the BRs. Also noteworthy are the field trips carried out by the teams to disseminate the Project locally, holding face-to-face meetings with the managers of the BRs (ID7, ID35 and ID45), presenting and launching activities that directly involve the local population (ID4, ID6; ID36 and ID72), as well as conducting field surveys and inventories (ID21 and ID35).

In the last group, we highlight the task of preparing and editing the reports associated with activities ID1, ID2, ID3, ID5, ID7, ID8, ID9, ID15, ID56 and ID74.

Following on from this, the **results obtained** include the exchange and collection of information, creation of working document bases, benchmarking analyses, surveys and interviews, definition of methodologies, processing of data and preparation of report content, as well as the creation of the Project's graphic line and production and publication of communication items, highlighting the launch of the Project's website www.reservasdabiosfera.pt, among others. It also includes **evidence** in its records, minutes/memos of meetings, responses to surveys, production of various working documents for data processing and editing reports, as well as in communication pieces, such as news, articles, posts that appeared in the media (newspapers, television, and radio) or published on the project website and social networks, and in the printing of pieces for dissemination of the Project (postcards, flyers, executive summary, roll-up).

The diversity of the type of activities and their execution schedule, which justifies different stages of development, leads us to highlight the 10 activities that were closed in this period, with the edition of reports as a product, namely:

- "Collection and organization of information related to the nomination of all Biosphere Reserves (BR)" (ID1);
- "Survey of existing BR action plans, objectives and priorities" (ID2);
- "Framing the geostrategic context of BR in existing UNESCO BR networks" (ID3);
- "Elaboration of a data management plan: FAIR data - open access" (ID5);
- "Development of the Sustainable Development Plan (SDPs) concept for BR" (ID7);
- "Development of the participatory planning methodology for the SDPs" (ID8);
- "Consultation and validation of the methodological structure for the SDPs" (ID9);
- "Mapping the BR ecosystem diversity" (ID15);
- "Marketing Strategy Development" (ID56);
- "Planning of the National Biosphere Olympics" (ID74).

It should also be noted that the "Social Network Strategy and Management" document associated with ID60 was delivered, which, although not a source of project verification, is a project output. Similarly, although it is not formally a project activity, it is also essential to mention the delivery of the "Project Communication Plan", which specifies the Project's communication strategy and objectives, target audiences and communication channels, as well as providing examples of planning and communication actions to be carried out. It is a dynamic document to be updated whenever necessary.

This first year of project preparation took place in the middle of the pandemic, with states of emergency that - right at the beginning of the work - **justified** the suspension of all travel and visits to the RBs, forcing the **reorientation and adjustments** to the initial programming of some of the tasks planned for the development of the activities. Despite the improvement of the situation and the beginning of direct contacts with the sites, communities and territories in the second four-months period, it was necessary to adjust the execution schedule of some tasks/activities to align those not carried out in the planned period. Another reason that justifies the need to propose the rescheduling of activities in this period is due to the change of the Project's communication advisory team at the end of the second four-months period. The new team argues that both the creative development and the productions and dissemination materials should occur throughout

the Project's preparation period, thus presenting a different understanding in relation to the schedule submitted in the application.

Thus, as **corrective measures**, we highlight the intensity of online contacts and meetings, rescheduling of trips and interviews, and adjustments to the initial execution schedule, with the extension of the execution time of some activities (ID15, ID16, ID21, ID56 and ID57 in the first four-months period; ID10, ID59, ID60, ID61, ID62, ID74, ID75 and ID80 in the second) stand out. Considering the above, in the third four-months period, it is also proposed to extend the execution time of activities ID17, ID20, ID34, ID46, ID47, ID49, ID57, ID58, ID59; ID60, ID61, ID62, ID63, ID71 and ID72, and to postpone the starting date of activities ID34, ID47 and ID49, in these cases maintaining or reducing the expected execution time.

The analysis of the **execution barometer** field shows that most activities are under development. All indicators, targets and verification sources are "in progress". However, there are some exceptions listed below:

- ID1, ID2, ID3, ID5, ID7, ID8, ID9 and ID15: activities closed with all execution barometer fields "executed";
- ID56: activity with all execution barometer fields already considered "executed" in Interim Reports 1 and 2, but which remained active until the revision of the document after consultation with the BRs was closed, which happened in the third four-months period;
- ID60: activity, which by being developed throughout the Project, maintains the indicator (communication pieces) and the verification source (final arts) "in progress", but presents the target as "executed" since the number of final arts produced has already been surpassed;
- ID34, ID47 and ID49: activities not started, due to the proposed postponement of their start justified by the need to align other activities, and for this reason present all the fields of the execution barometer as "not executed".

It should also be noted that the planning activity of the Olympiad (ID74) is considered implemented, with the edition of the report and the launching of registrations for schools, while all the fields of the execution barometer remain "in progress" until the verification of the indicator, which will occur with the completion of activity ID76. The verification source will occur on 31/07/2022.

The **execution timeline** shows some progress in the four-month periods, as a result of the activities that have been closed and are now considered as "executed", differing from the majority that remain "in progress". In the third four-months period, is note the fact of the three activities not started (ID34, ID47 and ID49) were considered as "not started".

Still concerning the execution timeline, in the transition to the following evaluation periods, it is possible to retain that most activities remain active, highlighting the "continued implementation of in progress tasks" as the main task of continuity in the development of activities between evaluation periods.

However, the forecast that was made throughout this first year, regarding the completion of activities from one four-months period to the next, presents some lag in the evaluation, justified by the changes to the execution schedule that were made, as mentioned above. Thus, in Interim Report no. 1 it was expected that 11 activities would be completed during the evaluation period corresponding to Interim Report no. 2, but only 4 occurred, while in Interim Report no. 2 it was foreseen to close 8 activities in the third four-months period, but only 5 occurred. The forecast made in Interim Report no. 3 is that among the 49 activities that will continue into the next evaluation period (November 1, 2021 to February 28, 2022), 11 should be completed during the same period.

Finally, in a brief reference to the transversal activity of the **Project Management**, the constant involvement of the Project Coordination – both with all team partners (national and international), and with the Biosphere Reserves themselves, as well as with the MaB National Committee – is worth mentioning. This translates into the continuous monitoring of the development of the technical activities and administrative procedures that a project of this nature is associated with, particularly the entire process of termination of the participation in the Project of the partner PC&A - Consultores de Marketing Estratégico, Lda, which occurred on April 30, 2021.

The role of management in seeking opportunities for partnerships, dissemination and participation in events should also be highlighted, notably the exhibition as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of the MaB Programme. It included the involvement of various elements of the different Project Partners and representatives of the Portuguese Biosphere Reserves and the CPLP countries, and the international colloquium on sharing experiences in sustainability, organised by the University of Coimbra. The colloquium was attended by most of the Portuguese Biosphere Reserves and the Biosphere Reserve of Norway, and representatives of the future Biosphere Reserve of Iceland.

2.2.2 Financial progress

The analysis of the financial progress of the activities under evaluation shows the evolution of the execution of various items in the different four-months period.

It is therefore possible to verify that in Interim Report no. 1 there was no activity with a percentage of implementation in terms of allocation of **staff** equal to or greater than 100%, reflecting the start-up phase of the Project during this evaluation period. This happened in the second and third four-months period, reflecting the closing phase of the activities, as mentioned in the previous subchapter on the analysis of technical progression.

Under this item, in general terms, the following distinct situations can be identified, namely:

- Activities with an execution percentage of 100%, or very close to it, which reflects the phase of completion of the activities already mentioned in the technical progress analysis (ID1, ID2, ID3 and ID5 in the second four-months period, and ID7, ID8, ID9, ID15 and ID56 in the third);
- Activities exceeding 100%, which have exceeded their budget and are likely to propose re-budgeting (ID6 and ID20 in the third four-months period);
- Activities which have not yet affected any expenditure due to delays in contracting processes (ID15, ID16, ID21 and ID80 first four-months period);
- Activities that have not yet affected any expenditure under this item, justified by the proposed postpone of the start of activities due to the need to align with other activities (ID34, ID47 and ID49 in the third four-months period);
- Activities that have not developed tasks in this evaluation period due to awaiting the completion of another activity (ID71 third four-months period);
- Activities which consider the tasks carried out in the different evaluation periods as being actions arising from the competencies and capacities of the entities themselves (ID5, ID6, ID10, ID14, ID36 and ID74 in the first four-months period, ID10, ID14, ID37, ID74 and ID75 in the second, and ID10, ID11, ID14, ID37, ID74, ID75, ID76 and ID81 in the third). Activities ID10, ID14, and ID74 stand out as this situation occurred since the beginning of their activity in the first four-months period.

Also concerning "staff", the University of Bergen and Nordhordeland Utviklingsselskap IKS also presented expenses associated with this item, as a result of their participation in the activities of the University of Coimbra.

Regarding the **travel costs** item, the expenses presented until the end of this first year well reflect the pandemic situation of the period under evaluation and the postponement of trips to the BRs. In fact, in the first four-months period, no expenditure was attributed to this item, even though 11 of the activities started in this period had funds available. This situation changed slightly in the second four-months period, with only 5 of the 18 activities with funds allocated for travel having associated expenses (ID4, ID6, ID21, ID36 and ID80). This continues in the third four-months period with the same activities recording travel expenses out of a total of 28 with allocated funds.

Regarding **depreciation value of equipment purchased**, there was presentation of expenses only in the first and second four-months periods. The accumulated execution rate is about 26% of the available amount.

In relation to the **equipment costs** item, of the two activities with funds allocated, only one has already used the entire amount available (ID15), while ID36 still has 60% of the amount allocated unspent.

It is also noted that none of the in progress activities had expenses associated with the item **costs with consumables**.

Regarding the **costs entailed by other contracts**, of the 26 activities with allocated funds, the communication activities (ID56, ID57 and ID58) and ID80, in the second four-months period stand out as they used up all the funds available at that date. It should also be noted that ID56 and ID57 were then subject to re-budgeting under this item, following the termination of the partner PC&A's participation in the Project and the respective transfer of activities to Quaternaire Portugal.

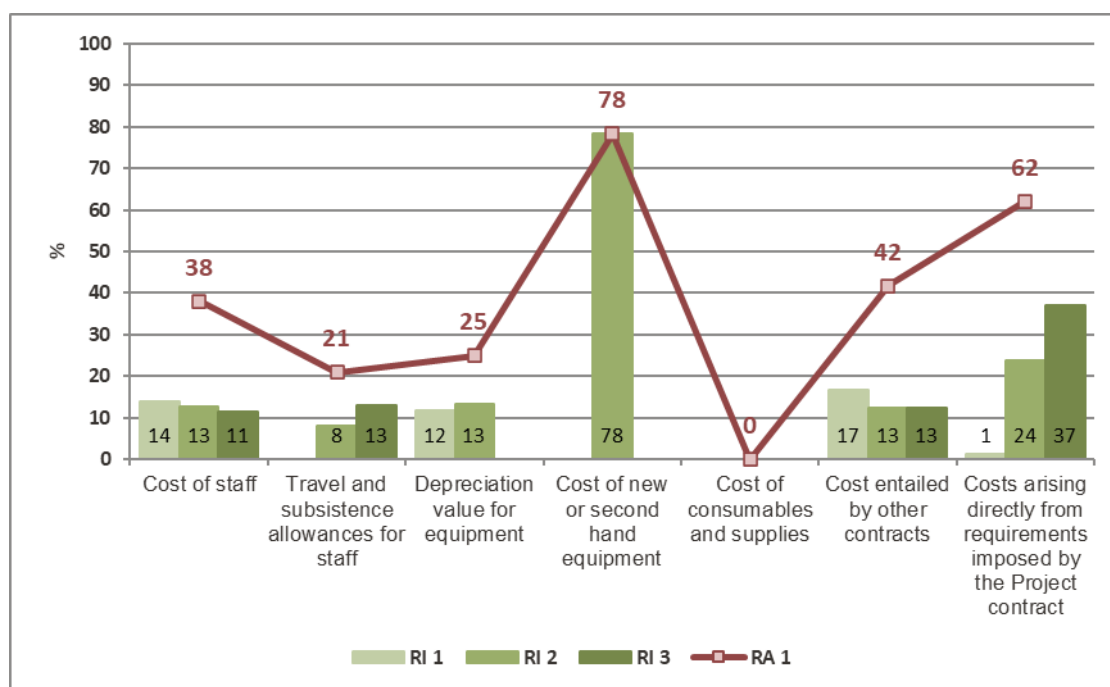
The **cost arising directly by the contract** record an accumulated execution rate at the end of the first year of Project's development of 62%.

In terms of **Project Management**, the total costs already verified at the end of the first year of the Project's development are about 38% of the total amount foreseen (13% in the first four-months period, 14% in the second and 11% in the third).

Table 2.2 – Financial progress. Project management costs

Total forecast	%(period executed under total forecast)			%(accumulated executed under total forecast)
	12 nov. 2020 – 28 fev. 2021	1 mar 2021 – 30 jun 2021	1 jul 2021 – 31 out 2021	
Costs of staff assigned to the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.a				
275 714,10€	13,91%	12,73%	11,41%	38,05%
Travel and subsistence allowances for staff assigned to the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.b				
22 578,50€	0,00%	8,06%	12,94%	20,99%
Depreciation value for new or second-hand equipment purchased – Reg. Art. 8.2.4				
2 902,50€	11,67%	13,33%	0,00%	25,00%
Costs of new or second-hand equipment, as long as they are amortised in accordance to the applicable accounting standards - Reg. Art. 8.3.1.c & Art. 8.3.2				
4 950,00€	0,00%	78,21%	0,00%	78,21%
Costs of consumables and supplies – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.e				
0,00€	0,00%	0,00%	0,00€	0,00%
Costs entailed by other contracts awarded by PP for the purpose of carrying out the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.f				
7 875,06€	16,82%	12,51%	12,51%	41,85%
Costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the project contract – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.g				
2 720,00€	1,26%	23,72%	37,15%	62,13%

Figure 2.1 – Financial progress. Project management costs



Finally, it is important to mention the adjustments to the approved budget, which resulted in the reallocation of funds due to the fact that the programmed missions did not take place in the time foreseen in the application due to the pandemic and due to the change in the communication team, as well as a better allocation of human resources. In the first four-months period, adjustments were made in ID2 and Management, in the second four-months period the re-budgeting occurred in 20 activities (ID4, ID11, ID12, ID14, ID36, ID80 and in all communication activities).

2.2.3 Involvement of partners

In the reporting period all partners were involved, including the international partners (University of Bergen, Nordhordland Utviklingsselskap IKS and Icelandic National Commission for UNESCO), which increased their interaction with national partners during the year. Thus, in addition to their active participation in activities in which they are involved with the University of Coimbra, they took part in the international colloquium “Shared Experiences in Sustainability within UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in Portugal, Norway and Iceland”, organised by the University of Coimbra, enhancing the exchange of experiences and various contacts with different national partners.

Apart from the participation in coordination meetings, the involvement of partners in different activities was as follows.

Table 2.3 – Involvement of partners in activities between November 12, 2020, and October 31, 2021

ID	Name of activity	QP	UC-CFE	UNL-FCSH	PCA	IPN	OBiO	Keep	UiB	Nordh	Iscl
1	Collection and organization of information related to the nomination of all Biosphere Reserves (BR)										
2	Survey of existing BR action plans, objectives and priorities										

ID	Name of activity	QP	UC-CFE	UNL-FCSH	PCA	IPN	OBiO	Keep	UiB	Nordh	Iscel
3	Framing the geostrategic context of BR in existing UNESCO BR networks										
4	History of Biosphere Reserves										
5	Elaboration of a data management plan: FAIR data - open access										
6	Auscultation / Perception and identification of heritage										
7	Development of the Sustainable Development Plan (SDPs) concept for BR										
8	Development of the participatory planning methodology for the SDPs										
9	Consultation and validation of the methodological structure for the SDP										
10	Digital Infrastructure - distributed management model										
11	Digital Infrastructure - Biosphere Reserves Website										
12	Digital infrastructure - Indicators management dashboard										
13	Digital Infrastructure - Research Data Catalogue										
14	Digital guides of cultural and natural heritage of the Biosphere Reserves										
15	Mapping the BR ecosystem diversity										
16	Identification of potential Ecosystem Services (ES) associated with ecosystems										
17	Analysis of the dynamics of the socio-economic sector										
18	Identification of key actors in the socio-economic sector in the BR										
19	Identification of existing R&DT, innovation and entrepreneurship best practices aligned with sustainable development										
20	Identification of priorities and projects in the areas of development and sustainability										
21	Selection of key ESs for sustainable development of RBs										
22	Selection of indicators and development of methodology for assessing the condition / status of ES										
23	ES condition / status assessment										
24	ES valuation proposal (add value)										
25	ES valuation (assigning value) and its interconnection with the associated economic sectors - pilot action										
26	Mapping BR ES										
34	Selection of 11 pilot actions to										
35	Tourism "Script" for the Portuguese Biosphere Reserves - pilot action										
36	Memories and identities - systematic record of memories – pilot action										

ID	Name of activity	QP	UC-CFE	UNL-FCSH	PCA	IPN	OBiO	Keep	UiB	Nordh	Iscl
37	Creation of memory and community spaces - (incorporates pilot action catalogue)										
38	Network of Biosphere Reserves shops and virtual store - pilot action										
45	Sustainability certification framework - Portuguese Biosphere Reserves										
46	Assessment of training needs that will support the training planning										
47	Governance skills reinforcement program for BR managers, partners and local agents										
48	Training in planning and participatory methodologies for reserve managers regarding the implementation of the SDPs										
49	Training associated with the implementation of pilot actions										
54	Programme of visits and transfer of experiences between Portuguese SRs and donor countries										
56	Marketing Strategy Development										
57	Communication Plan Design										
58	Strategy and Brand Identity (Tone, Signature and Communication Messages, Logo and Brandbook)										
59	Generic Creative Development										
60	Creative Development of Digital Communication										
61	Productions and promotional materials - Offline										
62	Productions and promotional materials - Online										
63	Productions and promotional materials – Audio-visual materials										
64	Brand Activations										
65	Public Relations										
66	Media Strategy and Planning										
67	Media Strategy and Planning - Press										
68	Media Strategy and Planning - Radio										
69	Media Strategy and Planning - Digital										
71	Development of Awareness Plan for different audiences										
72	Local project presentation sessions in each Biosphere reserve including awareness and demonstration actions involving local partners										
74	Planning of the National Biosphere Olympics										
75	Communication and dissemination of the BR Olympics										
76	BR Olympics										
77	Design and organization of Biosphere Reserve Festivals										
78	BioKeepers - Club of Friends and caregivers of BR – pilot action										
80	Knowledge extension										
81	Itinerant exhibition										

ID	Name of activity	QP	UC-CFE	UNL-FCSH	PCA	IPN	OBiO	Keep	UiB	Nordh	Iscl
RI	Interim Repor 1										
	Interim Report 2										
	Interim Report 3										
RA	Annual Report 1										
	PC&A Execution Report										
	Project management										

2.2.4 Information regarding Project participants

In the current evaluation period, the Biosphere Reserves (BR) and the MaB National Committee are considered as Project participants.

In the beginning of the Project - at the invitation of the Presidency of the MaB National Committee - the General Coordinator participated in the 11th meeting of the MaB National Committee held on November 20, 2020, for an initial presentation of the Project to the Biosphere Reserves and other members of this Committee (National Council for Environment and Sustainable Development, Tourism of Portugal, and the UNESCO National Commission).

The MaB National Committee - represented by the Chairperson – attended Project meetings and maintained regular contacts with the General Coordinator.

Similarly, the BRs, represented by the members of the management bodies - in addition to participating in several meetings with the Project team - provided a set of relevant information on the BR, responded to surveys already launched by different partners and welcomed and actively participated in the activities that have already been implemented in the field. They were also in regular contact with the Project General Coordinator.

In terms of meetings held, the following should be highlighted:

- Meetings for the general presentation of the Project activities to all BR, which took place in early December 2020, taking the opportunity to request all basic information (application dossier, action plans, protected area plans, local strategies, studies, and scientific reports, etc.) and contacts/communication channels.
- Work meetings with different Project partners, directly related to some of the activities underway and, therefore, with different objectives, such as:
 - Activity ID7 - present and discuss the concept designed by the QP team for the Sustainable Development Plan (SDP), allowing the exchange of ideas, incorporation of contributions and consolidation of the concept to be developed;
 - Activity ID18 - learn about the Reserve work, the most important local actors, and the interaction dynamics between the BR and its main stakeholders;
 - Activity ID19 - identify good practices of R&TD, Innovation and Entrepreneurship aligned with sustainable development;
 - Activity ID21 - Consolidate the participatory strategy for the selection of key ecosystem services for the sustainable development of BR;

- Activities ID35 and ID45 - exchange information on biodiversity, landscape, cultural and historical heritage, infrastructure, accessibility and services;
- Activity ID36 - present the Project and the memory gathering activity.

The involvement and support of the BR and Municipalities to the work developed in the territories, associated to the ID36 activity, should also be highlighted, which has already taken place in the BRs of Castro Verde, Paul do Boquilobo, Berlengas and TBR Meseta Ibérica, and Tejo/Tajo International, bringing together members of the UNL-FCSH, Keep, UC-CFE and QP teams. It should also be highlighted the participation of all the BR, except for the TBR of Gerês/Xurés and the two BR of the Madeira Archipelago, in the participative workshop dedicated to the identification of key ecosystem services held by the University of Coimbra on October 20.

In addition to these participations, the BR provided a diverse set of background information, which is elaborated and summarised in the reports of ID1, ID2 and ID3 activities. The response to surveys on different themes (sustainable economic development, tourism, identification of stakeholders, socio-economic dynamics), as well as the participation with assessments and comments on various documents, whenever requested, also reflect the participation and monitoring of the Project's development.

In international terms, the contacts made under activity ID7, with the BR of Fuerteventura and Príncipe Island, and under activity ID19, with the BR of La Palma, were aimed at consolidating the concept of Sustainable Development Plans and identifying good practices in R&TD, innovation, and entrepreneurship, aligned with sustainable development.

Despite not being directly promoted by the Project, the International Conference 'Biosphere Reserves - Sustainable Territories, Resilient Communities - Lusophone Dialogues' was held - promoted by the Serralves Foundation - as part of the celebrations of UNESCO's global programme - MaB 50th anniversary, which took place on June 28 and 29 at Serralves Foundation, in Porto. This event, which took place in a hybrid mode (face-to-face and online), was attended by the Chair of the MaB Committee of Portugal, the Director of the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences of UNESCO, representatives of the Biosphere Reserves of Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and São Tomé, as well as several members of the Project team, namely the General Coordinator, the Centre for Functional Ecology of the University of Coimbra, and the School of Social Sciences and Humanities of Nova University of Lisbon. A training seminar on methodologies for identifying and recording memories in Biosphere Reserves was held in parallel with this Conference, coordinated by the Project partner Nova University of Lisbon.

Also associated with this conference, on July 18, an exhibition consisting of 27 panels alluding to the MAB Programme and UNESCO, the CPLP Network, the 12 Portuguese BR, the 7 Brazilian BR, the 2 Cape Verde BR and the Guinea-Bissau, Príncipe Island and Mozambique BR was inaugurated.



Schools, local associations and communities, and the public were also involved in the local presentation sessions of the Project (activities ID4, ID6, ID36 and ID72), besides the invitation launched on October 26 to the main stakeholders to answer the survey associated to the topic 'socio-economic dynamics' (activity ID17).

Finally, the international colloquium 'Shared Experiences in sustainability within UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in Portugal, Norway and Iceland', organised by the University of Coimbra took place on October 21, which was open to the public and was attended by Dr. Susana Escária of the Secretary General for Environment.

3 RESULTS ACHIEVED

This chapter shows the evolution of the results presented in the Interim Reports and the evaluation of the accumulated results in the variables characterised.

Regarding the technical dimension of the Project², the overall implementation rate at the end of this first year of development is 38.9%, calculated according to the relative weight of each activity in the overall budget³ of the Project and its implementation schedule updated in accordance with Interim Report no. 2.

According to the previous chapter and to allow a more detailed monitoring of the Project, the results achieved in the technical dimension are structured in two axes. The first is dedicated to the implementation of the Project and the second to its communication and dissemination.

Regarding the implementation of the Project four variables are characterised as follows:

- Activities, both in terms of the progress of activities started and executed, and of the progress of execution of active activities in relation to their development schedule;
- Schedule and budget readjustments, identifying the number of activities that have been adjusted, or are proposed to be adjusted in Interim Report no. 3, in relation to what was contracted;
- Outputs, where the number of products delivered is reported;
- Results indicators, which show the degree of achievement of the Project in relation to its targets.

With regard to communication and dissemination of the Project, it is intended to report for the number of initiatives carried out through the publication of short news items on social networks and the media or by participating in events where there was an opportunity to make reference to the Project and the Portuguese Biosphere Reserves, as happened with the participation of the University of Coimbra and the University of Bergen in the EGU 2021 Congress where the conceptual model for the evaluation of the SE was presented, or as part of the exhibition associated with the International Conference "Biosphere Reserves Sustainable Territories, Resilient Communities - Lusophone Dialogues", integrated in the celebrations of UNESCO's global programme - MaB 50th anniversary, or as part of the international colloquium "Shared Experiences in sustainability within UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in Portugal, Norway and Iceland", event organized by the University of Coimbra.

For a quick reading of the results achieved, they are presented as charts in the following subchapters.

It should be noted that the global reading is not the simple sum of the parts of each Interim Reports, as there are activities that start, others in progress and others that end between four-months periods.

3.1 PROJECT EXECUTION

The progress of activities started/active and executed over the three four-months periods of the Project's development and the first year is shown in the figure below.

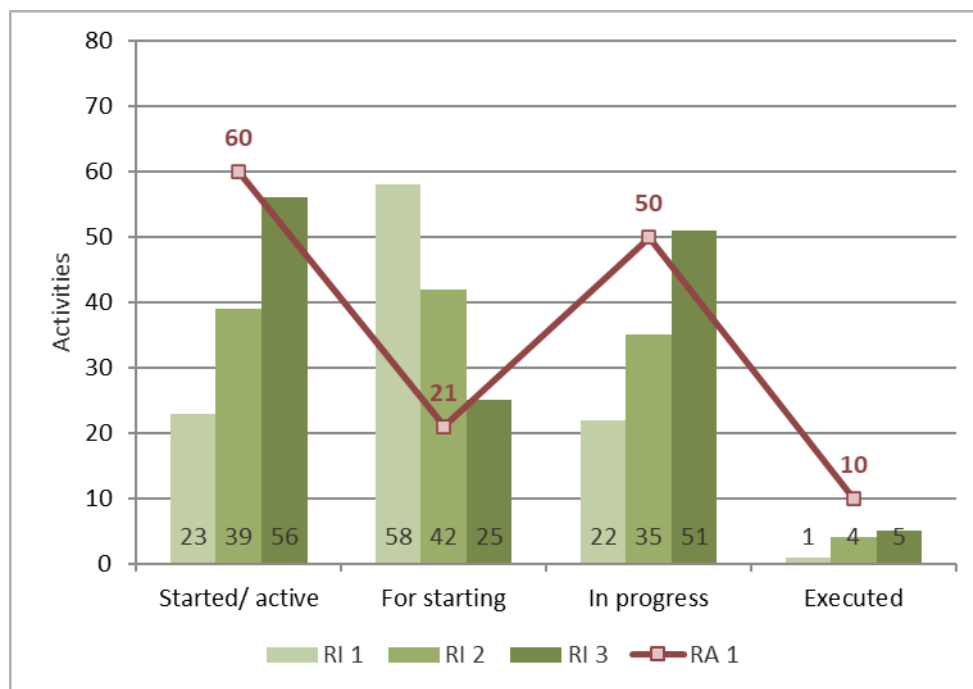
At the end of the first year of the Project's development (November 12, 2020, to October 31, 2021), the activities started correspond to 74% of the total Project activities. The activities in progress represent 62.0%, and the activities executed correspond to 12% (ID1, ID2, ID3, ID5, ID7, ID8, ID9, ID15, ID56 and ID74). The activities to be started correspond to 26%

² The results of the financial execution are presented in the following chapter.

³ Excluded management costs as they are considered transversal.

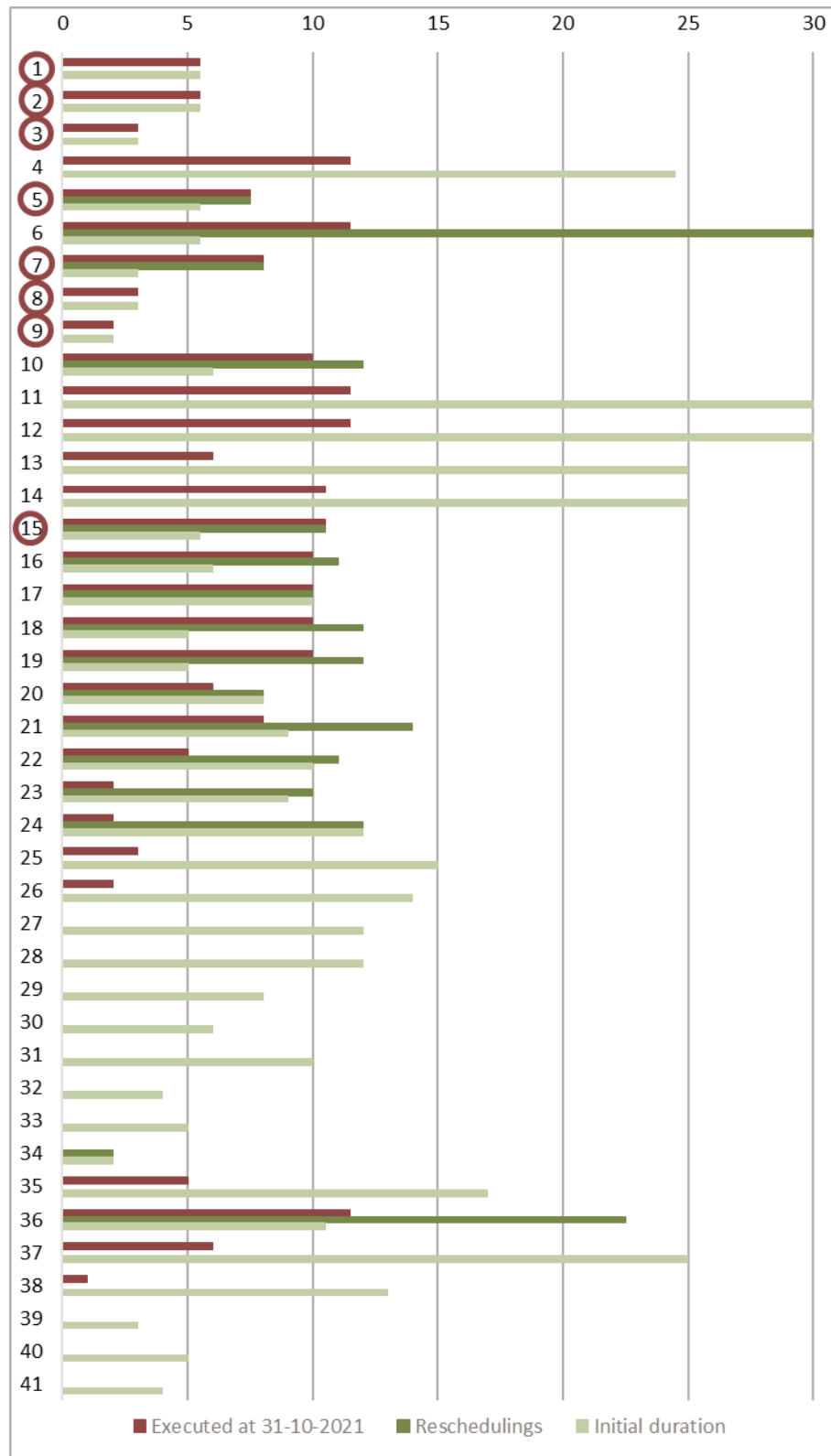
of the Project. These figures reflect the Project's development phase, in which the activities already started and active prevail over those that have not yet begun.

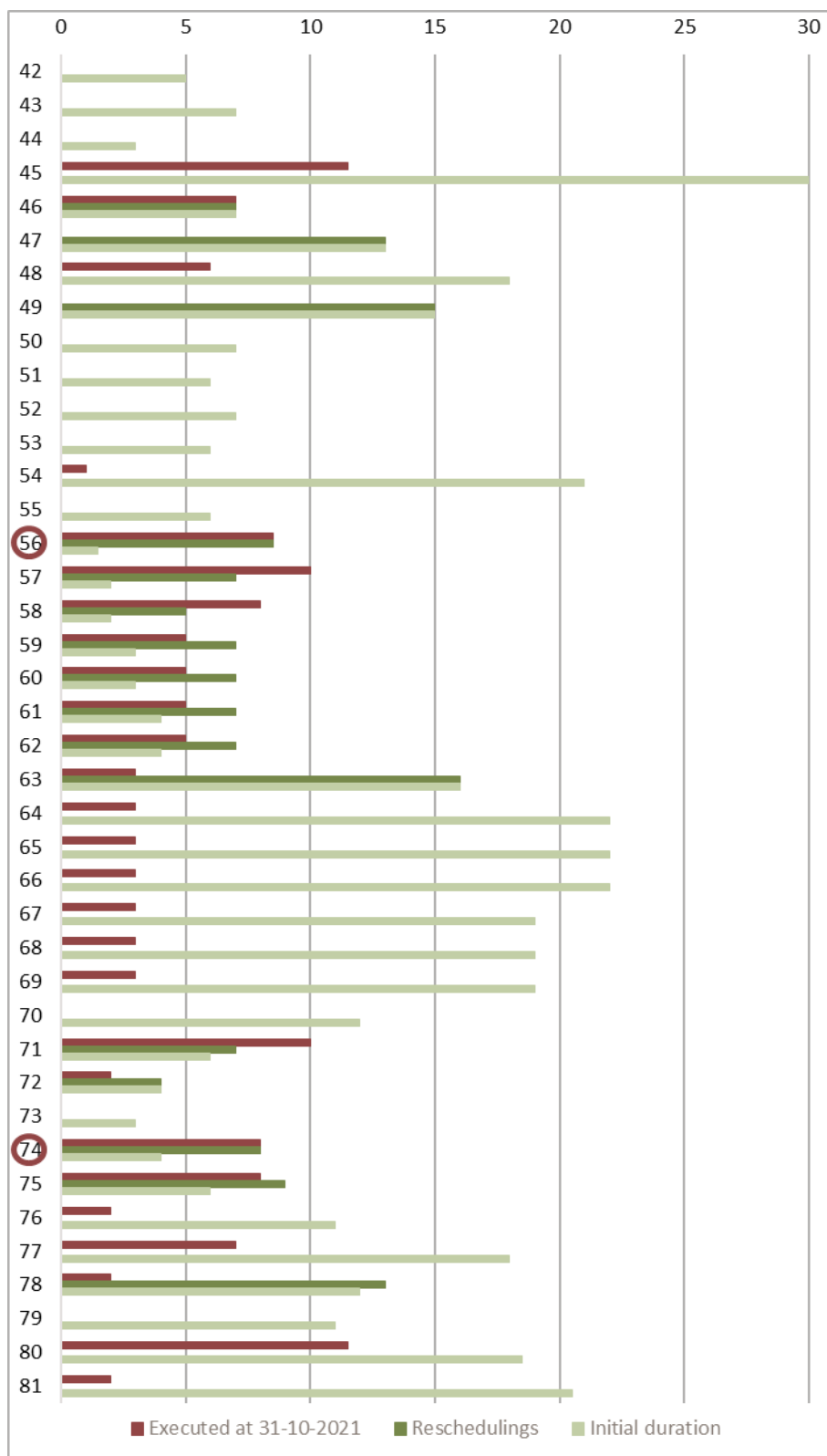
Figure 3.1 – Project execution. Progress of started/active and executed activities



Reading the progression of the execution schedule of active activities (Figure 3.2), reflecting the rescheduling proposed in the Interim Report no. 2, most activities are within the planned schedule. The ones that are already closed are highlighted. However, it is also possible to verify that there are activities that have already exhausted their execution time, but which have not yet been closed (ID17, ID46), and others that should have started and have not yet done so (ID34, ID47 and ID49). Taking only into account the execution time already spent, this corresponds to 33.2% of the time foreseen for all activities.

Figure 3.2 – Project execution. Progress of execution of active activities



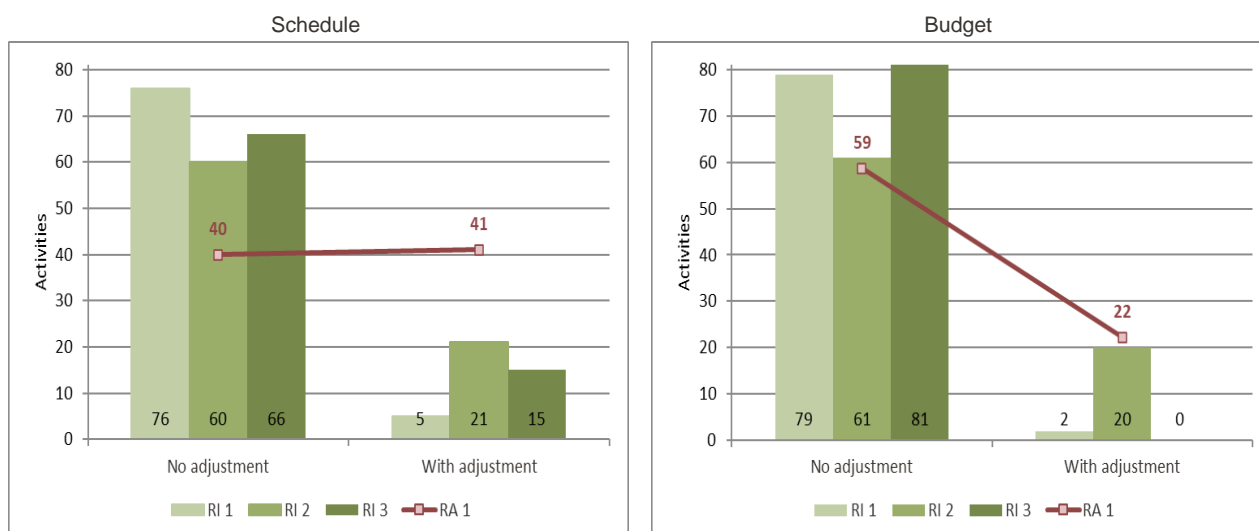


As mentioned and also justified due to the fact that the Project's communication consultancy is being carried out by a new team - with a different understanding regarding the schedule presented in the application - as well as the need for alignment between some activities, namely with the development of the Sustainable Development Plans, among others, as previously mentioned in subchapter 2.2.1, there was a need to propose in the Interim Report no. 3 the rescheduling of 15 activities (ID17, ID20, ID34, ID46, ID47, ID49, ID57, ID58, ID59, ID60, ID61, ID62, ID63, ID71 and ID72), as recorded in the respective activity sheets. This is translated into a reduction of the execution time already spent, representing 28.5% of the time planned for the activities in question.

As a result of this reprogramming proposal, activities ID34, ID47 and ID49 have not been started and therefore do not show any execution.

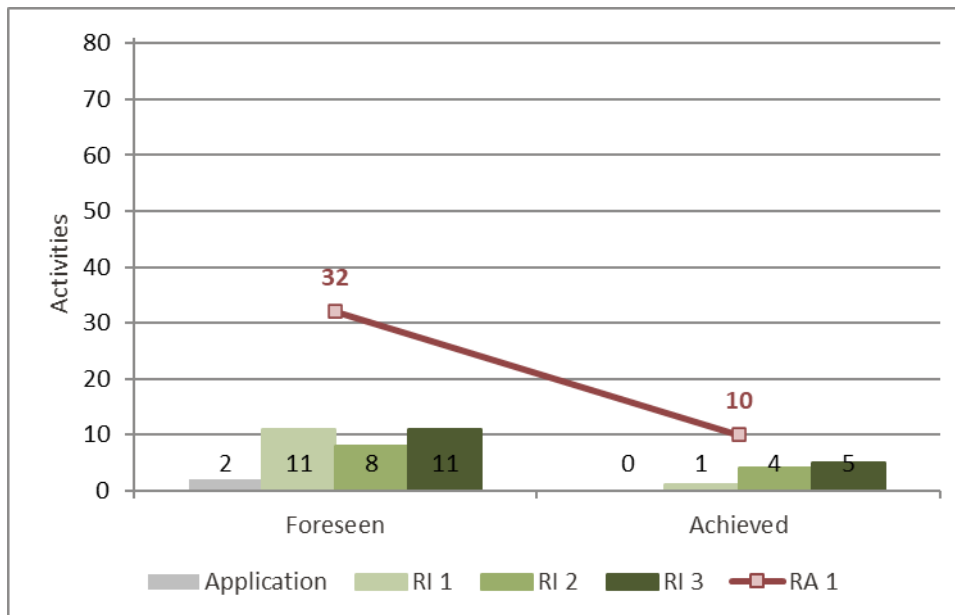
Accordingly, during the first year of the Project's implementation, adjustments were made to the activities development schedule and budget presented in the application. The following figure shows the total changes made, except for the re-budgeting made, in the first evaluation period, to 'Management', as this is not considered an activity.

Figure 3.3 – Project execution. Readjustments to the schedule and budget



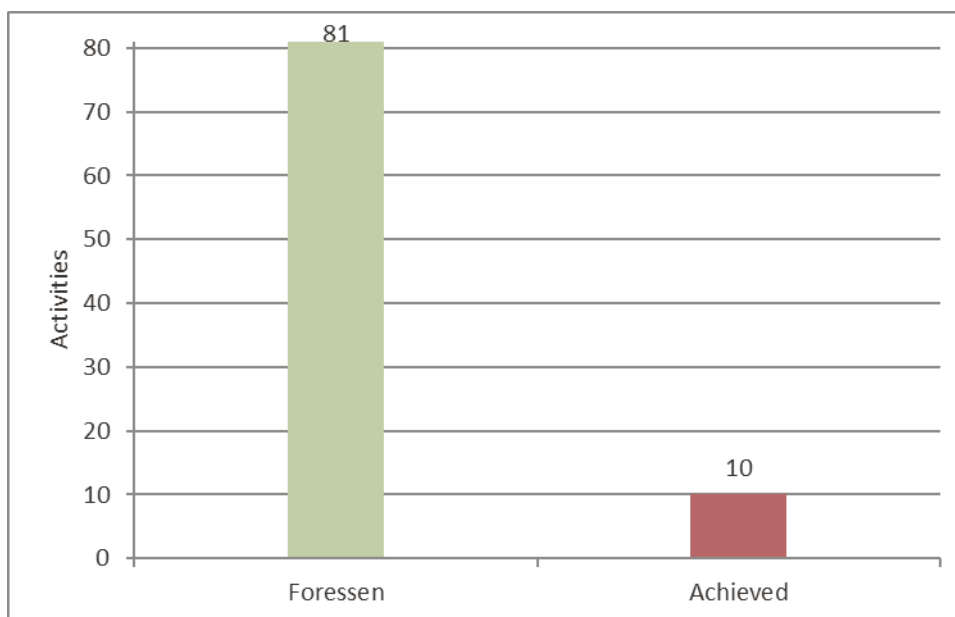
The analysis of the forecast that was made throughout this first year in the respective Interim Reports - regarding the perspective of conclusion of activities that remain active from one four-months period to the next -, reveals, as mentioned in subchapter 2.2.1, a certain time lag in the evaluation. This is justified by the adjustments to the schedule of the activities that were made and justified. The following figure reflects this time lag.

Figure 3.4 – Project execution. Completion of activities planned from one four-month period to the next and what has been achieved



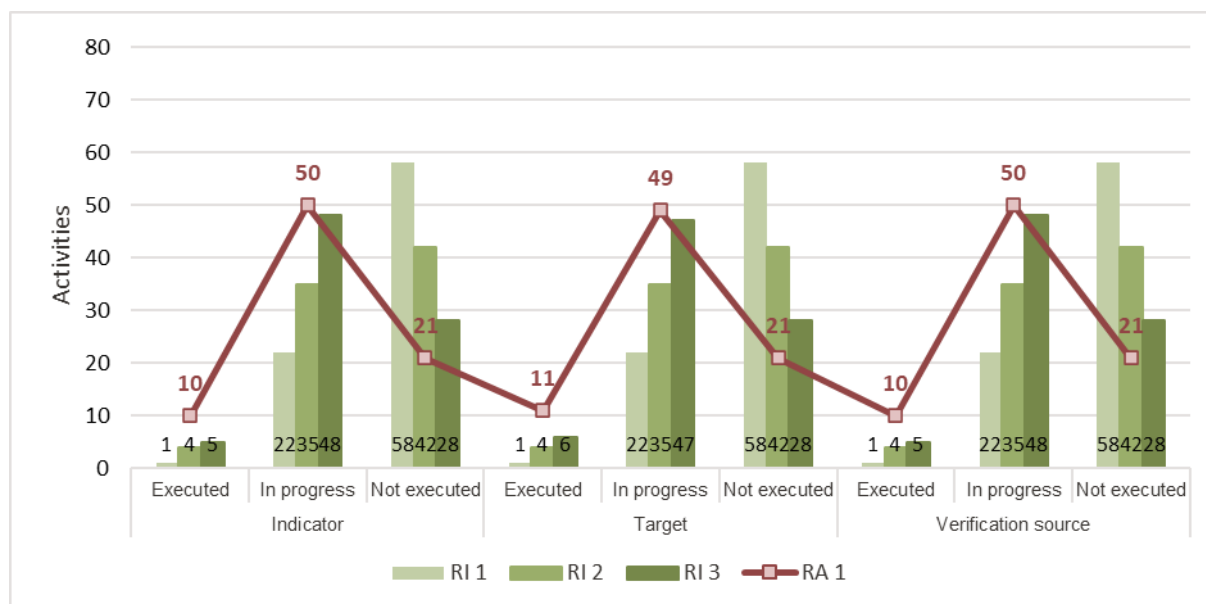
Thus, despite the increase in started and active activities over the three four-month periods, as can be seen in Figure 3.1, there are still few finished products, corresponding to activities ID1, ID2, ID3, ID5, ID7, ID8, ID9, ID15, ID56 and ID74, representing 12.3% of the total outputs. It should be noted that the documents 'Project Communication Plan' and 'Social Network Strategy and Management' are not included here, which, despite having been delivered and constituting Project outputs, are not considered a verification source of the Project.

Figure 3.5 – Project execution. Outputs



Accordingly, the results indicators reflect the above-mentioned. It is thus possible to verify that at the end of the first year of the Project's development, the "indicator" and the "verification source" are 12.3% executed, 61.7% in progress and 25.9% have not yet been started. As regards the "targets" - since it has already been surpassed in ID60 - the percentage increases slightly in the "executed" (13.6%), decreasing in proportion in the "in progress" (60.5%), keeping the same percentage of "not executed".

Figure 3.6 – Project execution. Results indicators



3.2 COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION

Regarding Project communication, there was a positive evolution in the number of communication pieces carried out from the first four-months period to the second, going from a metric of 3 to 5 pieces per month.

However, it is in the third quarter that, following the Project's Communication Plan, delivered on July 1, and the Social Media Management Strategy, delivered on July 12, the Project and the Portuguese Biosphere Reserves begin to appear in the media with a new rhythm and scope, as a result of communication, press advisory and social media management consultancy work that has begun.

Based on identifying opportunities with different media organisations (OCS), monitoring the activities developed by the Project and monitoring relevant news for the Project and network of Portuguese Biosphere Reserves, we started talking about Biosphere Reserves. The Project is publicised, particularities of the Portuguese BRs are communicated, and other UNESCO BRs are made known, extending the knowledge to the international network.

To this end, two important dates are worth highlighting: the launch of the Project's website (www.reservasdabiosfera.pt) on July 8, and the launch of the Project on social networks (Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn - Portuguese Biosphere Reserves) on July 23.

The Project dissemination was simultaneously made through proposals to the media about the Project and its activities, which resulted in the participation of its spokespersons in interviews (radio, television, and printed editions of national newspapers), in the publication of an opinion article, reports and news. As an example, we mention some OCS that communicated the Project and the BRs: Público and Expresso newspapers, local newspapers such as Jornal da Madeira,

Jornal de Leiria or Jornal da Guarda, RTP, SIC, Observador radio, Regional radio of the Centre and several websites, namely the Jornal Económico (sapo.pt)

Figure 3.7 – Examples of publications in the media



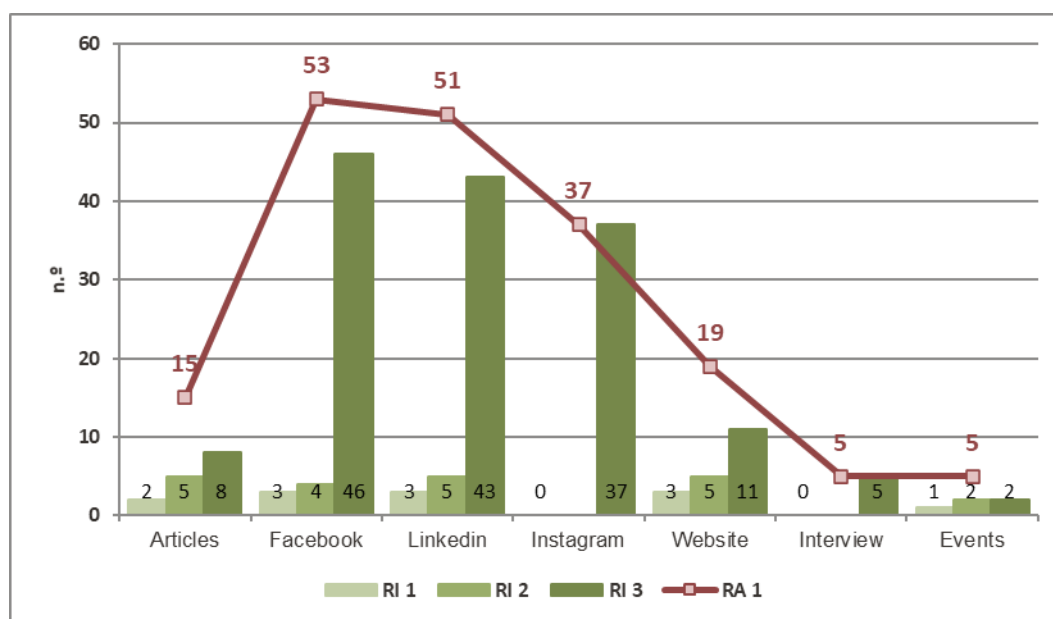
The analysis of the performance in the social networks allows us to note that the growth of the various indicators is positive and follows the usual trends: a growth peak at the time of entry, a sharp decrease in August, a new growth peak (less accentuated) upon return in September, and stabilisation in October. Facebook is the social network par excellence for BRs.

Figure 3.8 – Social media performance metrics



The following figure shows the number of pieces of communication published, whether they were promoted by the Project or appeared in the media through other initiatives. A metric of 13 pieces per month has been achieved.

Figure 3.9 – Communication and dissemination of the Project



4 DESCRIPTION OF COSTS AND FINANCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

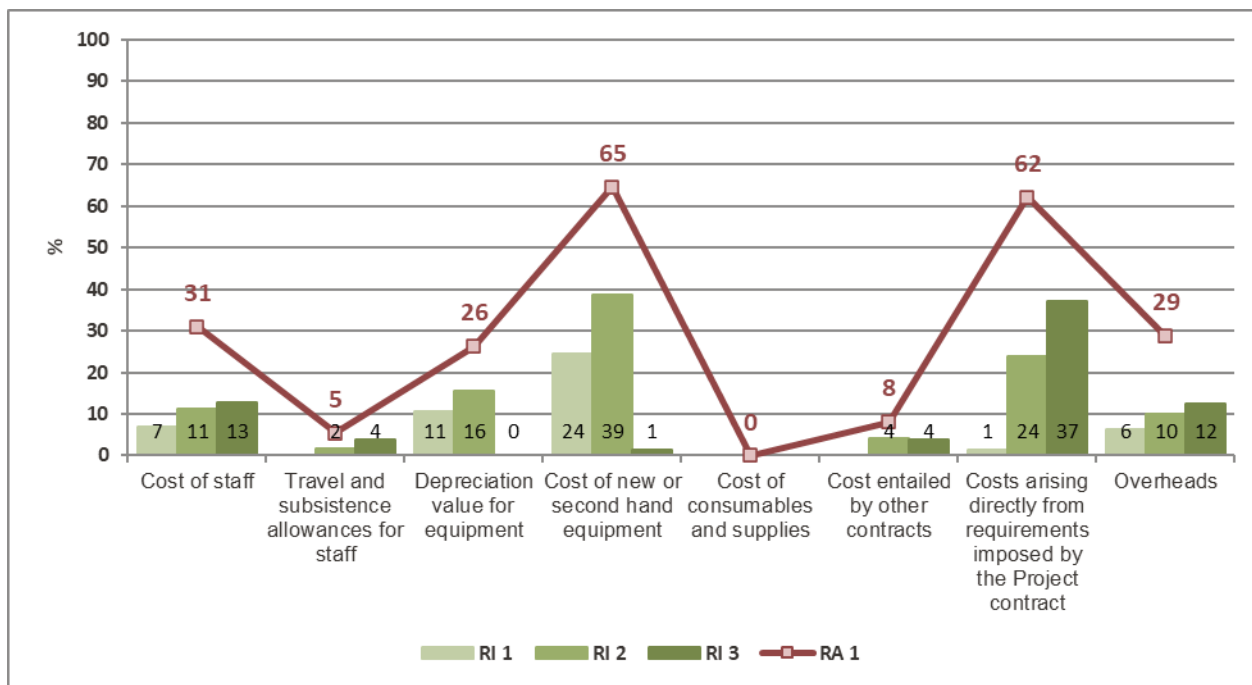
According to Annex 17 – Expenditure documents list, where all the expenses presented by the Promoter and Partners are registered, which accompanies the Interim Reports with the respective justifying documents, it can be observed that the total value of accumulated expenses is €495,298.60. The total costs already executed for the Project represent around 22.5% of the total value foreseen. A summary of the percentages executed by item and by four-months periods is shown in the following table and figures.

Table 4.1 – Financial progress. Project costs

Total forecast	%(period executed under total forecast)			%(accumulated executed under total forecast)
	12 Nov. 2020 – 28 Feb. 2021	1 Mar 2021 – 30 jun 2021	1 Jul 2021 – 31 Oct 2021	
Costs of staff assigned to the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.a				
1 127 932,04€	6,98%	11,31%	12,73%	31,02%
Travel and subsistence allowances for staff assigned to the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.b				
254 460,14€	0,00%	1,62%	3,82%	5,44%
Depreciation value for new or second-hand equipment purchased – Reg. Art. 8.2.4				
4 858,50€	10,68%	15,60%	0,00%	26,28%
Costs of new or second-hand equipment, as long as they are amortised in accordance to the applicable accounting standards - Reg. Art. 8.3.1.c & Art. 8.3.2				
19 007,90€	24,35%	38,77%	1,49%	64,61%
Costs of consumables and supplies – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.e				
12 453,64€	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Costs entailed by other contracts awarded by PP for the purpose of carrying out the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.f				
523 215,06€	0,00%	4,24%	3,83%	8,33%
Costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the project contract – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.g				
2 720,00€	1,26%	23,72%	37,15%	62,13%
Overheads				
254 019,17€	6,19%	9,99%	12,48%	28,66%

Note: The amounts shown include the funds of the partner PC&A, reflecting the totality of the Project.

Figure 4.1 – Financial progress. Project costs



Referring to the evolution by four-months period of the total costs executed in relation to the sums foreseen for the Project, it can be seen, in global terms, that the costs executed in the first four-months period correspond to around 5% of the total value foreseen, rising to around 13% in the second and reaching 23% in the third four-months period.

In all four-months periods, the **Costs of staff** item always has the highest weight (78%, 68% and 70%, respectively, of the total reported in each four-months period), mainly due to the higher involvement of Management in the start-up phase and in the second four-months period, particularly in the process of ceasing the participation of the PC&A Partner. In the third four-months period, the weight of human resources reflects the full development phase of the Project.

As mentioned above, some entities do not present expenditure under this item because they consider the tasks carried out to date actions that fall within the competence of the entity itself, as is the case with Universidade Nova de Lisboa and the Ordem dos Biólogos. In addition, the expenditure of the University of Bergen and Nordhordland Utviklingsselskap IKS is already included under this item.

Regarding the remaining items, the **Costs entailed by other contracts** represent 12% and 10% of the total expenses in the second and third four-months periods, while the item **Travel and subsistence allowances** rose from 2% in the second four-months period to 5% in the third. All other items have a weight of less than 5%.

5 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT'S CONTRIBUTION TO ACHIEVING THE OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF EEA GRANTS AND THE 'ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME'

As part of the EEA Grants 2014-2021, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway, as Donors, fund initiatives and projects in 15 European Union Member States aim to reduce social and economic disparities and strengthening bilateral relations with beneficiary states. According to the Memorandum of Understanding signed with Portugal in 2017, the Project under development falls within the areas of 'Environment, Energy, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy'.

According to the Open Call⁴, this project will contribute to achieve the Programme's Outcome 2 of the 'Environment Programme': "ENHANCE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN BIOSPHERE RESERVES", and the respective Output 2.1 "Increased Biosphere Reserves Management Capacity", through the development of various types of actions and materials that will serve as working tools for better management and implementation of Biosphere Reserves in the territory (...).

The following table describes the indicators and targets to which the project to be funded will contribute.

Table 5.1 – Environment Programme, indicators and targets

PA Number	Expected programme results	Indicator	Unit of measurement	Source of Verification	Frequency of reporting	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value
PA11 Outcome 2	Enhance sustainable development in Biosphere Reserves'	Number of persons benefitting from the promotion of sustainable development in Biosphere Reserves.	Number	Project Promoter's Records	Annual (APR)	0	N/A	314967
Output 2.1	Increased capacity to manage Biosphere Reserves	Number of Biosphere Reserves where the measures were implemented.	Number	Project Promoter's Records	Semi-annually	0	N/A	6
		Number of professional staff trained (disaggregated by gender).	Number	Project Promoter's Records	Semi-annually	0	N/A	22
		Number of sustainable development plans for Biosphere Reserves developed.	Number	Project Promoter's Records	Semi-annually	0	N/A	11

Source: Secretary General of Environment and Climate Action, 2019. Call #3 – Projects to "Enhance sustainable development in Biosphere Reserves".

The Open Call also highlights that *"the major challenges facing Portuguese Biosphere Reserves are the acknowledgment of their significance and the importance of their existence, the increase in their visibility, the need to use new forms of communication, the strengthening of all local actor's commitment and the promotion of the quality and attractiveness of these territories. In this context, Knowledge, Capacity Building and Communication are three essential domains to affirm the identity of Biosphere Reserves in the sense of:*

⁴ Secretary General of Environment and Climate Action, 2019. Call #3 – Projects to "Enhance sustainable development in Biosphere Reserves"

- a) *Value the territories of the Biosphere Reserves as living sustainability laboratories, promoting the quality of life of their inhabitants.*
- b) *Increase the visibility, knowledge, and management capacity of these spaces through instruments that promote the affirmation and identity of the 11 territories classified as Biosphere Reserves.*

In response to the statement and in the context of the application submitted, the proposal developed refers in the section on the demonstration of consistency between objectives, activities, results and expected impacts (Part C), as follows:

The project is organised in order to articulate the priority axes of knowledge, capacity building and communication, in a collective and strategic approach aimed at enhancing the value of the territories of the Biosphere Reserves (BR) as a whole, understood as living sustainability laboratories and models of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, with a view to promote a higher national and international visibility, and boosting an innovative and comprehensive capacity building plan aimed at the quality of life and prosperity of the communities.

The strategic rationale of the Sustainable Development Plans of the BR, understood as instruments for strengthening and innovating local sustainable development strategies, are structured based on initiatives related to mapping, prioritising, and valuing ecosystem services, with a focus on knowledge, with the support of the national scientific and technological system and international networks, incorporating the knowledge transmitted by communities. The initiatives related to the registration and valorisation of the memories of communities and territories will count on the active participation of local actors and will be fundamental to foster a higher ownership of identity - the territories and their resources - and generate opportunities for the local economy. The valorisation of identity and endogenous resources, in a harmonious and synergic reading of Man (culture) and Nature, guarantees the effective promotion of the values perceived by communities and economic agents.

The initiatives associated with the creation and development of a unique and versatile digital platform will constitute from the outset a privileged communication and interaction interface between the BR (national and international networks), with the populations and the public. This management, dialogue and information tool will have multiple valences, registering the collective information of the BR, supporting the development, and monitoring of pilot actions of local economy and commerce, and the tourist promotion of the BR. It will also allow the enhancement of capacity building and knowledge through open science and citizen science dynamics, making the design of a living sustainability laboratory more operational.

The initiatives associated to the capacity building axis are part of a global and coherent plan, directed at all the BR, and are aimed at technicians, administrators, communities, and promoters of the local economy. They aim to meet the interests and expectations of the BR and will be provided by the universities involved, with the support of the three UNESCO Chairs, and by the scientific and technological system, which will be called upon to collaborate in complementary initiatives. The proposed approach in the field of capacity building aims to improve the skills and practices of management and cooperation of the BR, individually and in networks, and linked to areas that can boost the local economy, from sustainable tourism to entrepreneurship, with the valorisation and promotion of the endogenous resources of the territories.

The global communication plan proposed for national BR aims at strengthening their visibility and a more effective articulation of the initiatives to promote the network of BR, and to foster opportunities for national and international cooperation. A plan is proposed to raise awareness among the population and local development players about the importance of biological diversity, which in the school sector is embodied in the Biology Olympics, complemented by the creation of the BR caretakers.

The enormous experience of the project's coordination ensures a higher visibility and presence of Portuguese BR in the UNESCO World Network of BR through cooperation with Norway and Iceland, IberoMaB and CPLP, and with the active participation of several international experts.

This preamble, which demonstrates the Project's alignment with the objectives of EEA Grants and the major challenges launched for Biosphere Reserves, was then detailed by activity, matching it with the specific indicator of the Environment Programme to which each activity more directly contributes⁵.

The following table summarises the number of activities associated with each of the established indicators.

Table 5.2 – Number of activities associated with each indicator of the Environment Programme

Indicator foreseen in the Environment Programme	No. of associated activities
Number of persons benefitting from the promotion of sustainable development in Biosphere Reserves	15
Number of Biosphere Reserves where the measures were implemented	32
Number of professional staff trained (disaggregated by gender)	7
Number of sustainable development plans for Biosphere Reserves developed	27

Source: Application 09/Call#3, May 2020. Part C.

The evolution of the relationship between the active activities over the 3 four-months periods of the Project's execution and their contribution to the 4 indicators set out in the Environment Programme is shown in the following figure.

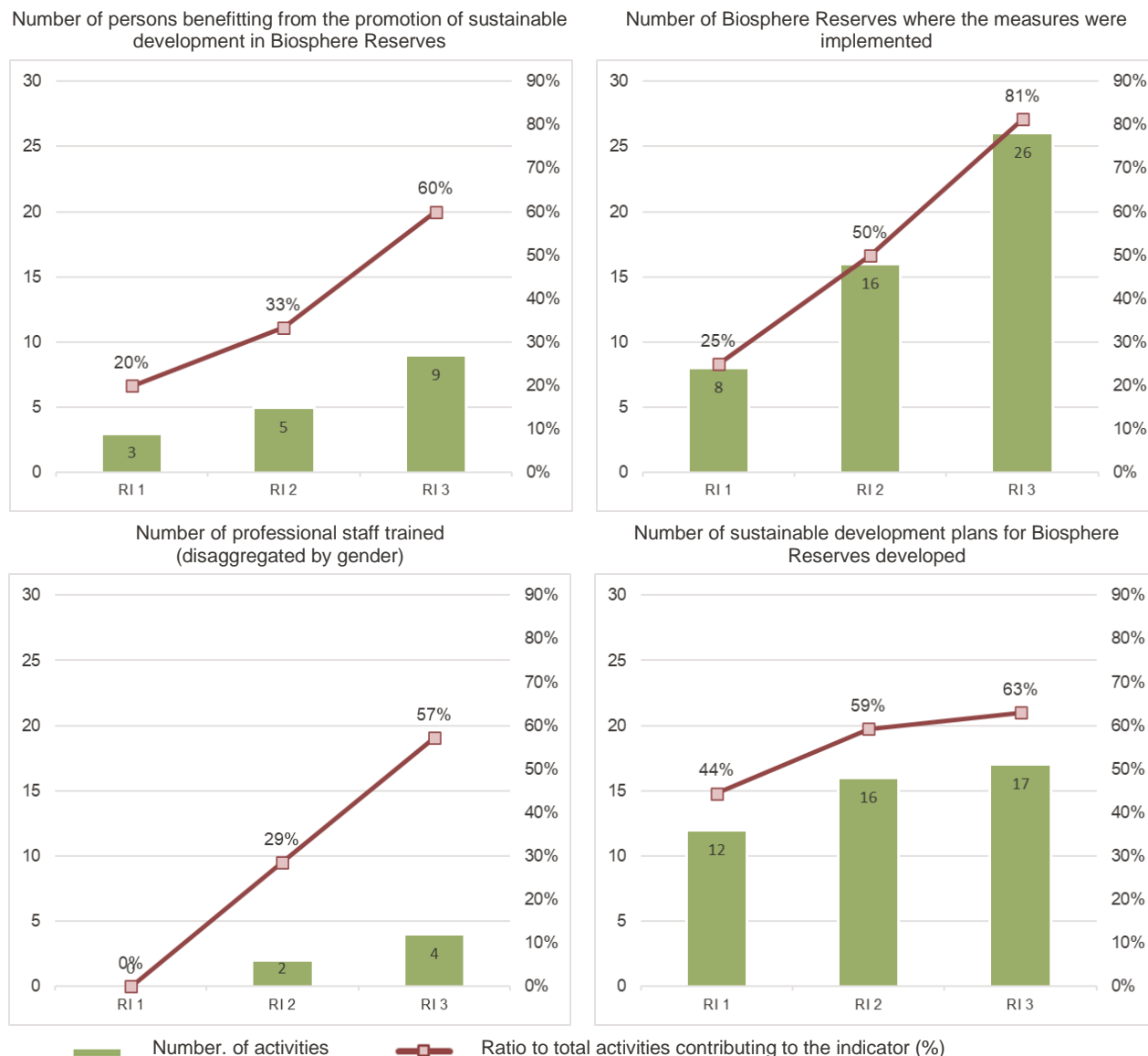
As expected, the evolution registered between the first and third four-months periods is notable, because of the greater number of activities that have been started. It is also possible to verify that all the indicators of the Environment Programme already have more than 50% of the associated activities contributing to the achievement of their targets.

The indicator “number of Biosphere Reserves where the measures were implemented” stands out in this regard, with 81% of the associated activities already contributing to the achievement of its target, because many of the Project's transversal activities have already started, namely those related to the digital infrastructure, tourist routes, sustainability certification benchmark, memories, and identities, as well as all communication activities.

On the other hand, the indicator “number of professionals staff trained (disaggregated by gender)” has the lowest percentage of contribution of the Project at this date, which is justified by the fact that 3 of its activities are only scheduled to begin in September 2022.

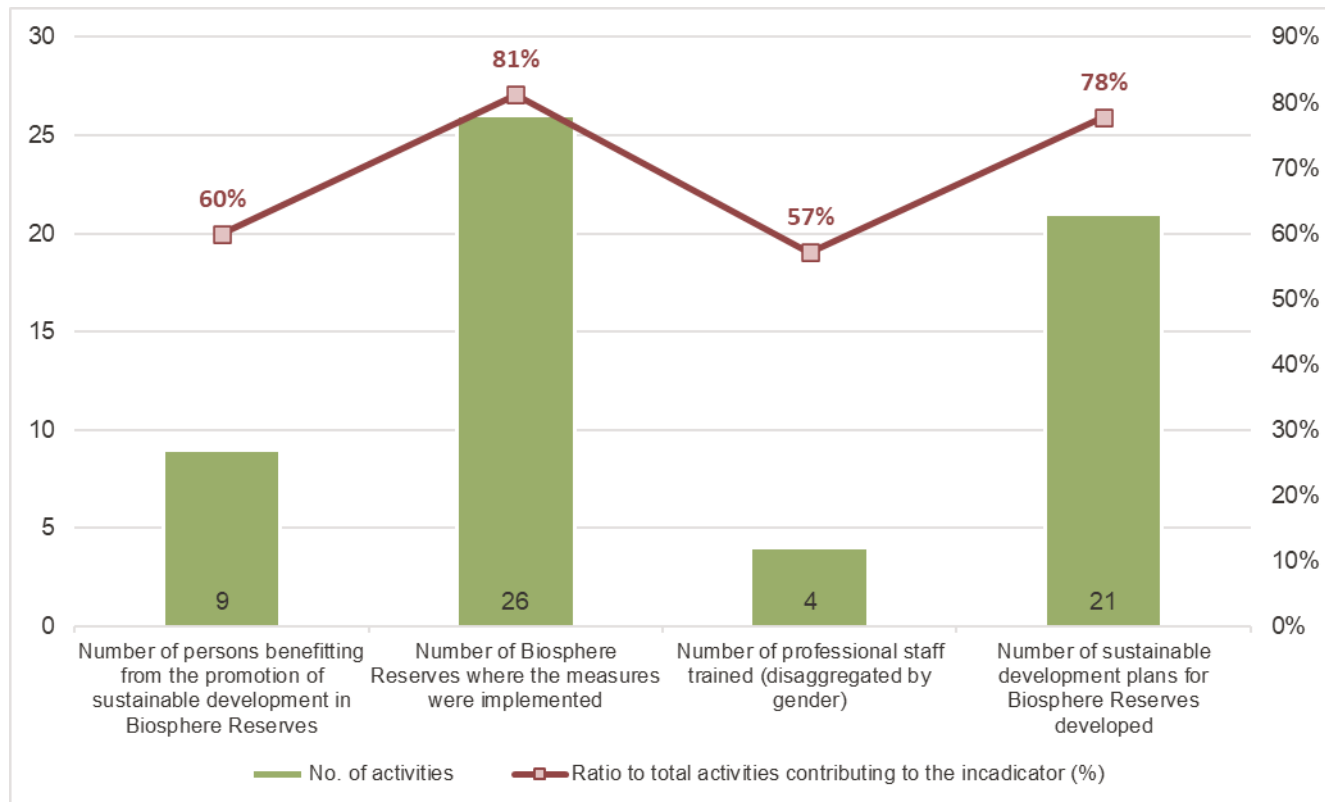
⁵ Application 09/Call#3, May 2020. Part C.

Figure 5.1 – Evolution of the Project's contribution to achieving the Environment Programme indicators, in the first three four-months periods



The global analysis of the Project's contributions in its first year of execution, represented in the following figure, differs from what was previously presented only in the indicator “number of sustainable development plans for Biosphere Reserves developed”, since this includes activities that have been fully executed and therefore closed. We refer to the four activities (ID1, ID2, ID3 and ID5), concluded in the second^d four-months period, which allows for a 15% increase in the percentage contribution of the Project to the achievement of the indicator.

Figure 5.2 – Project's contribution to achieving the Environment Programme indicators in the first year of implementation



It should be noted that, due to the nature of the Project (broken down into 81 activities) and the goals associated with each indicator, the evaluation of the real contribution to the achievement of each indicator can only be carried out at the conclusion of the Project or of the set of activities that contribute to each indicator.

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A. INTERIM REPORT – ACTIVITIES SHEET

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IDX_Name of activity

Beginning
date

dd/mm/yyyy

Date
order

Dd/mm/yyyy

Technical Progress

Tasks accomplished	Implementing involved partners	Participants

Results achieved	Evidences

Reorganisation and adjustments	Justification	Corrective measures

Execution barometer	Executed	In progress	Not executed
Indicator			
Target			
Verification source			

Comments:

Implementation timeline	Scheduled tasks
dd mm yyyy - dd mm. yyyy (period under evaluation)	dd mm yyyy - dd mm. yyyy (next evaluation period)

Financial Progress

Costs of staff assigned to the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.a				
Total forecast	Executed between dd mm yyyy - dd mm. yyyy (period under evaluation)	% (period executed under total forecast)	Accumulated executed	% (accumulated executed under total forecast)
Travel and subsistence allowances for staff assigned to the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.b				
Total forecast	Executed between dd mm yyyy - dd mm. yyyy (period under evaluation)	% (period executed under total forecast)	Accumulated executed	% (accumulated executed under total forecast)
Depreciation value for new or second-hand equipment purchased – Reg. Art. 8.2.4				
Total forecast	Executed between dd mm yyyy - dd mm. yyyy (period under evaluation)	% (period executed under total forecast)	Accumulated executed	% (accumulated executed under total forecast)
Costs of new or second-hand equipment, as long as they are amortised in accordance to the applicable accounting standards - Reg. Art. 8.3.1.c & Art. 8.3.2				
Total forecast	Executed between dd mm yyyy - dd mm. yyyy (period under evaluation)	% (period executed under total forecast)	Accumulated executed	% (accumulated executed under total forecast)
Costs of consumables and supplies – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.e				
Total forecast	Executed between dd mm yyyy - dd mm. yyyy (period under evaluation)	% (period executed under total forecast)	Accumulated executed	% (accumulated executed under total forecast)
Costs entailed by other contracts awarded by PP for the purpose of carrying out the project – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.f				
Total forecast	Executed between dd mm yyyy - dd mm. yyyy (period under evaluation)	% (period executed under total forecast)	Accumulated executed	% (accumulated executed under total forecast)
Costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the project contract – Reg. Art. 8.3.1.g				
Total forecast	Executed between dd mm yyyy - dd mm. yyyy (period under evaluation)	% (period executed under total forecast)	Accumulated executed	% (accumulated executed under total forecast)

PARTNERSHIP AND TEAM





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