



Regenerative Action Network

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The Portuguese version of this document is the binding version.

A network of people who care for land, in Portugal and beyond it

Purpose

The Regenerative Action Network is a network of people who care for land. It exists so that those carrying that responsibility, and they almost always carry it alone, can find others in the same position, learn from them, and speak with a common voice where that is needed.

No connection to Terra Agora Foundation is required to belong to the Network. Nor is caring for Foundation land. Nor, for that matter, is owning land at all.

The Network is open to those who care for land on their own account or on behalf of others, to technicians, consultants and facilitators who work alongside them, and to people interested in this work who want to learn before committing to anything.

The Foundation convenes the Network and carries it through its early stage. The Network has its own dynamic, and is designed to stand on its own, with an agenda belonging to those who care for land rather than to any one organisation.

The framework described in this document is settled. Comparable monitoring and reporting across landscapes is being built in stages and reaches full operation during 2027. The Network's first initiative is planned for 2026.

Who belongs

- People who care for land, with or without a link to the Foundation
- Guardian Entities, under contract with the Foundation
- Terra Agora Labs, where approaches are tested in practice
- Technicians, consultants and facilitators working alongside those who care for land
- Researchers and practitioners at landscape scale
- Municipalities, public agencies and aligned institutions

One distinction is worth keeping clear. A Guardian Entity is a body that has entered into a contract with the Foundation to care for a Strategic Asset. It is a contractual status with determined obligations, not a way of taking part in the Network. Membership of the Network is open to anyone who cares for land, whatever the title under which they do it.

No Guardian Entity and no Lab is operating yet. The first Contrato Guardião is in preparation and the first Lab initiative is planned for 2026.

Why the Network matters

Portugal faces challenges that cannot be solved parcel by parcel:

- Fragmented land ownership

- Ageing owners and rural depopulation
- Soil degradation, water stress and fire risk
- Policy instruments designed for short cycles, not long horizons

Those who care for land face all of this in isolation, and usually with little time and few resources. The questions repeat from landscape to landscape: how to keep water in the soil, how to reduce fire risk, how to pass land on to whoever comes next, how to withstand an offer to sell in a bad year, how to know whether what is being done is actually working.

They repeat from country to country as well. That is the underlying reason for a network to exist: answers found in one landscape transfer, with adaptation, to another, and nobody has time to work everything out alone.

What the Network does

1. Shared learning across landscapes

The Network gathers learning from several territories: patterns of ecological recovery, social and governance dynamics, and economic models for regenerative livelihoods. Learning then travels horizontally, between the people doing the work, rather than only through reports.

2. Support for those who care for land

Peer exchange, accompaniment by people who have been through the same thing, access to specialist knowledge, and shared tools for observation and record keeping. The aim is plain: less isolation, less exhaustion, fewer avoidable mistakes.

3. The Learning Pathway

The Learning Pathway is the capacitation programme for care of the land. It is structured in three tiers: it is a condition for Guardian Entities; it accompanies bodies preparing for that designation; and it opens cycles to people who care for land with no formal link to the Foundation.

The programme is in development. The first cycle begins with the body preparing to become Guardian Entity in the Idanha-à-Vida project, with the open tiers extending progressively.

4. Terra Agora Labs

The Labs are where approaches are tested in practice, with a record of what worked and what did not. Much of the evidence the Network can later carry outward comes from them.

5. Evidence for better policy

Work on the ground produces real data on land use, governance and regeneration, knowledge of the bottlenecks and enablers in regulation, and tested alternatives to short term or extractive models.

An instrument Portuguese law does not have

Anyone trying to protect land durably in Portugal meets the same obstacle. There are voluntary instruments, registrable and in some cases perpetual, but none was designed to carry a conservation purpose. Article 1306.^o of the Código Civil prevents a new real right from being created by contract: the real rights are those the law provides, and none of them has that purpose built into it.

The Foundation works with a perpetual Direito de Superfície under article 1524.º of the Código Civil. The practical difficulty is not duration. It is drafting objectively determinable conditions that allow action when the purpose stops being met.

Civil law jurisdictions have met this same obstacle and resolved it by legislation. Chile created the derecho real de conservación through Ley n.º 20.930 of 2016. The Foundation has prepared a comparative note describing that regime and shared it with other organisations working on the same question.

Stated precisely: the comparative note is complete; assessment of the Chilean case against the indicator matrix used in the existing analysis of Portugal is underway; analysis with external legal counsel has not yet been done. Whether it makes sense to carry a legislative proposal forward, and by what route, is an open question and not a decision taken. Any step in this area will be taken with legal advice.

This is the kind of question where a network is worth more than any single organisation. It concerns anyone who wants their land to go on being cared for after them, whether or not they have anything to do with the Foundation.

Advocacy: from practice to policy

The Network represents the interests of people who care for land, and says so openly.

Representing is not lobbying for commercial interests, and it is not taking sides. The Network is not party political and does not defend the particular economic interest of any member. What it represents is what those who care for land have in common: the need for long horizons, for adequate legal instruments, and for policy that does not force everyone to start again each cycle.

The starting point is not ideology. It is observation of what works in practice, documentation of the constraints created by current regulation, and identification of opportunities to improve frameworks.

Advocacy here means bringing institutions what can only be known from being on the ground, and bringing it with evidence.

What the Network does not do

- It does not replace public authority
- It does not defend the particular economic interest of any member
- It does not promote speculative or extractive models
- It does not impose a single solution on every territory
- It does not speak in any member's name without their agreement

Its role is translation, learning and alignment, not control.

Governance and integrity

While the Foundation convenes and sustains the Network, it operates within the Foundation's ethical framework: clear separation between learning, funding and decision making, transparency in methods and results, and no capture by Mecenas, projects or political agendas.

The Network is designed to stop depending on the Foundation. As it grows it will have its own governance, decided by those who belong to it. The Foundation does not intend to control it.

The same independence runs the other way: what the Network learns or argues for may inform policy, but it does not determine decisions on land protection and Guardianship, which remain with the Foundation and its bodies.

Connections beyond Portugal

The Network begins in Portugal, with the people who care for land here. It is intended to connect later with those doing the same in other countries, because the problems are alike enough for experience to travel.

None of this is established. It is a stated intention, and it is stated because it shapes how the Network is built from the outset: with comparable record keeping, with language that translates, and without assuming the Portuguese framework is the only one that matters.

Why it matters long term

Regeneration does not spread by replication alone. It spreads through coordination, trust and shared intelligence.

The Network exists so that local practice informs national strategy, so that innovation stays anchored in responsibility, and so that learning accumulates across time and place instead of being lost when one person gives up or one property changes hands.

Invitation

If you care for land, if you work alongside people who do, or if you want to learn before deciding what to do, the invitation is to a conversation. There is no condition of entry that depends on the Foundation.

Terra Agora Foundation

Linking land, learning and policy, in the service of long term care.