



TERRA AGORA

FOUNDATION

Financial Viability & Regenerative Business Models

2026



Building Economic Resilience for Landscape Guardianship

Why Financial Viability Matters

The long-term protection of land requires more than vision, goodwill, or grant funding. While early-stage guardianship projects may benefit from grants, municipal partnerships, philanthropic contributions, and community support, the ultimate objective of the Fundação Terra Agora (FTA) is clear:

> Guardians must develop the skills, partnerships, and business models necessary for projects to become financially self-sustaining.

True regeneration requires economic resilience. Landscapes flourish when ecological health, community vitality, and financial viability reinforce one another.

From Grant Dependency to Economic Independence

Across the world, the most successful regenerative landscape initiatives share a common transition pattern:

1. Initial catalytic support (grants, philanthropy, public funds)
2. Development of regenerative enterprises
3. Creation of hybrid financial models
4. Long-term self-sustaining revenue streams

Pure grant dependency rarely leads to durable stewardship. Instead, projects that thrive combine ecological regeneration with viable economic activity.

FTA supports Guardians in developing precisely this transition pathway.

Core Financial Pathways for Landscape Projects

Financial sustainability in a bio-regional context can emerge through multiple complementary models:

1. Regenerative Product Premiums

Creating market value for regenerative products (food, oils, fibres, herbal products, native crops) that command a premium due to soil restoration, biodiversity recovery, and traceability.



2. Landscape-Linked Brands

Developing strong territorial brands that connect consumers to landscape restoration outcomes.

3. Ecosystem Service Payments

Carbon sequestration, biodiversity credits, watershed protection, and results-based ecological compensation mechanisms.

4. Ethical Land or Real Estate Structures

Separating land ownership from speculation while enabling productive use through long-term leases.

5. Citizen Investment & Solidarity Capital

Mobilising community savings or impact investors to fund regenerative infrastructure.

6. Hybrid Revenue Models

Combining production, education, hospitality, training, ecosystem services, and local processing to create diversified income streams.

There is no single model. Viability emerges through context-specific combinations.

Global Examples of Financially Viable Regenerative Models

Across the world, landscape initiatives have demonstrated that regeneration and financial sustainability can reinforce one another:

AIveIAI & La Junquera (Spain)

Operating across one million hectares, AIveIAI built a regenerative agricultural network supported by commercial companies that market almonds, olive oil, and other regenerative products. Rather than relying solely on grants, they created value chains that fund landscape restoration.

Wide Open Agriculture (Australia)

Partnering with Commonland, Wide Open Agriculture launched a premium regenerative food brand ("Dirty Clean Food"), enabling farmers to transition away from extractive practices while sustaining operations through market demand.



Terre de Liens (France)

A solidarity investment structure that removes farmland from speculation. Over 25,000 citizens pooled capital to acquire over 200 farms, leasing them long-term to organic farmers and creating stable, regenerative land use.

Sierra Gorda (Mexico)

Developed a locally financed carbon and ecosystem service mechanism, supported by state-level taxation, compensating landowners for forest restoration.

ExRotaprint (Germany)

Separated land and building ownership to prevent speculation, funding its restoration through rental income rather than long-term subsidy.

Baviaanskloof (South Africa)

Created regenerative value chains around native products such as Honeybush tea and aromatic oils, generating income directly tied to landscape recovery.

Lessons for Guardians in Portugal

These examples show that long-term viability requires:

- Entrepreneurial capacity
- Financial literacy and scenario planning
- Strategic partnerships
- Market positioning
- Blended finance models
- Transparent governance

FTA works with Guardians to develop:

- Business model experimentation
- Financial projections and budgets
- Revenue diversification strategies
- Access to aligned capital and advisory networks
- Bio-regional economic integration



The Role of the Foundation

While Guardians build project-level viability, the Foundation:

- Ensures perpetual land protection
- Provides governance structure
- Connects projects to advisory networks
- Supports access to impact capital
- Facilitates knowledge exchange between projects

The aim is clear:

- > **Landscapes protected in perpetuity.**
- > **Projects economically viable.**
- > **Communities empowered.**

Regeneration is ecological — but it is also economic.

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