



TERRA AGORA

FOUNDATION

Terra Agora Labs

2026



Living Laboratories for Long-Term Regeneration

What Are Terra Agora Labs?

Terra Agora Labs are real places where regeneration is tested, learned, and proven over time.

They are **land-based living laboratories** embedded in landscapes under guardianship or in active partnership with landowners, Guardians, municipalities, and institutions. Unlike research centres or pilot projects, Labs operate **inside real ecological, social, and economic conditions**, over **long time horizons**, with full accountability to land, people, and future generations.

Labs are not demonstrations.

They are **sites of responsibility**.

Each Lab exists to:

- Test regenerative practices in real landscapes
- Generate practical knowledge grounded in lived reality
- Support Guardians, communities, and institutions in learning what works — and what doesn't
- Build evidence, capability, and trust for long-term land care

Why Labs Matter

Portugal faces systemic challenges that cannot be solved through short projects or abstract research:

- Fragmented land ownership and unmanaged territory
- Ageing landholders and lack of new entrants
- Soil degradation, water stress, and biodiversity loss
- Declining rural populations and fragile local economies

Terra Agora Labs respond to this gap by creating spaces where:

- Regeneration can unfold at landscape scale
- Learning is cumulative rather than extractive
- Ecological, social, and economic dimensions are held together
- Knowledge is generated *with* land and communities, not *about* them

Labs turn uncertainty into learning — without putting land at risk.

What Happens Inside a Lab

Each Terra Agora Lab integrates four core dimensions:



1. Ecological Practice

- Regenerative land-use approaches adapted to local soils, water, climate, and biodiversity
- Long-term ecological monitoring (not short-term indicators)
- Learning how landscapes respond over years and decades

2. Social & Community Processes

- Working with local communities, municipalities, and neighbours
- Testing participatory governance and shared stewardship
- Rebuilding social connection to land as a living system

3. Economic Viability

- Exploring regenerative livelihood models rooted in place
- Testing financial sustainability over 10+ year horizons
- Understanding what makes guardianship economically viable without extraction

4. Governance & Responsibility

- Applying guardianship agreements, standards, and oversight
- Learning how governance holds under pressure, conflict, or change
- Generating insight into long-term institutional design

Labs are **places where responsibility is exercised**, not simulated.

How Terra Agora Labs Generate Value

Terra Agora Labs generate **multiple forms of value**, aligned with the Foundation's **4>Returns framework**:

Natural Capital

- Improved soil health, water retention, biodiversity, and ecological function
- Evidence of regeneration that unfolds over time, not snapshots

Social Value

- Stronger local relationships and shared stewardship
- Increased community capacity to care for land collectively
- Reduced conflict through clear roles and governance

Economic Value

- Viable regenerative livelihoods and land-based enterprises



- Reduced long-term public and environmental costs
- Demonstration of alternatives to extractive land economics

Inspirational & Institutional Value

- Practical learning for Guardians, policymakers, and investors
- Replicable insights for land trusts and institutions
- Credible evidence that long-term care is possible and workable

Value is not extracted from Labs.

It **accumulates over time**.

Who Labs Are For

Terra Agora Labs serve multiple audiences:

- **Guardians** — to learn, adapt, and strengthen practice
- **Landowners** — to understand what long-term care can look like in reality
- **Investors & Funders** — to see tangible value created beyond financial return
- **Institutions & Policymakers** — to access grounded evidence for long-term land policy
- **The Learning Circle** — as places of real-world learning and mentorship

Labs act as a **bridge between land, practice, learning, and governance**.

How Labs Are Funded & Governed

Labs are supported through:

- Foundation core funding (via the GROVE Circle)
- Purpose-bound funds (e.g. Monitoring, Learning, Research)
- Legacy partnerships supporting learning, research, or dissemination

Key safeguards:

- Labs do not compromise land protection or asset-locks
- Donors do not control land use or outcomes
- Learning is transparent, ethical, and accountable
- Financial support never overrides ecological or social integrity

Labs exist **inside the Foundation's governance framework**, not outside it.

Why This Matters for Investors & Partners

Terra Agora Labs allow supporters to:

- Invest in **long-term value creation**, not short-term outputs



- See how regeneration performs under real conditions
- Support learning that benefits entire landscapes and systems
- Contribute to institutional knowledge that outlives any single project

Supporters are invited to act not as sponsors, but as **partners in responsibility**.

A Closing Note

Regeneration cannot be proven in theory alone.

It must be **lived, tested, monitored, and carried through time**.

Terra Agora Labs exist so that:

- Land is not experimented on without care
- Learning does not happen without accountability
- The future is built from practice, not promises

Labs are where regeneration becomes credible.

Terra Agora Foundation

Holding land, learning, and responsibility, across generations.

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