



**SOCIAL &
ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY
PLAN 2025**



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1. CONTEXT

The Interdisciplinary Centre of Marine and Environmental Research (CIIMAR) is a research and advanced training institute of reference at the University of Porto, working at the frontier of Ocean Knowledge and Innovation. **Sustainability is a central value of the organisational culture of CIIMAR**, that takes on a determining role as a center for the acquisition and diffusion of scientific knowledge, as well as for the education and training of future generations of researchers and society as a whole.

The CIIMAR Social & Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2025 aims to serve as a **guiding framework for best social and environmental practices** within CIIMAR's scope of action in scientific research and in all activities underlying its operations. This plan seeks to integrate concerns and goals from various dimensions - institutional, social, environmental and economic - in the current structure and functioning of the Centre, in order to actively contribute to a more equitable and just society and to a cleaner and healthier environment, in alignment with the goals identified in the European Commission's "Green Paper: Promoting a European framework for Corporate Social Responsibility" (2001).

CIIMAR thus aims to affirm its social and environmental responsibility by voluntarily committing to initiatives that go beyond conventional regulations and regulatory requirements, seeking to raise the standards and procedures related to social development, environmental protection and the respect for fundamental rights. To fulfill these commitments, the goal is to deepen the current understanding of our reality and to identify and implement efficiency measures to reduce the environmental impact of our activities, promote the well-being and safety of our members and invest in raising awareness and providing training for the entire community.

Through its research and innovation activities, CIIMAR strives to develop knowledge, products, processes and services that have a positive social, economic and environmental impact, in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals. Also with this goal, CIIMAR has been preparing the implementation of the ISO/IEC 17025 (General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories) and to be recognized by the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R).

THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

The CIIMAR Responsibility Policy is guided and implemented with consideration of our compromise to economic, social and environmental sustainability, while actively contributing to the implementation and promotion of values associated with numerous Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as defined in The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the United Nations (UN).



Figure 1. Sustainable Development Goals from The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that are particularly relevant to CIIMAR's areas of intervention.

2. PRINCIPLES OF THE CIIMAR RESPONSIBILITY POLICY

The CIIMAR Responsibility Policy is based on a set of principles that guide all our global activities and daily actions, in particular:



Comply with and respect the current **legal, regulatory and normative requirements**, as well as any additional requirements subscribed to or implemented in the various dimensions of Environmental and Social Responsibility.



Adopt a proactive attitude and measures to **reduce the ecological footprint and negative environmental impacts** that result from institutional activities, promote a more conscious and rational use of resources and raise awareness among all stakeholders about the importance of adopting good practices to reduce environmental impact, including sharing scientific knowledge on sustainability with the CIIMAR community and society at large.



Promote the **acquisition of products and services based on clear and impartial responsibility criteria**, namely for selecting suppliers/service providers, in alignment with CIIMAR's commitments to sustainability.



Create a **work environment that fosters respect** and ensures individual and collective rights, diversity, equity, well-being and the continuous improvement of working conditions.



Invest in human capital and promote the **creation of an inclusive and informed community**, fostering recruitment, capacity building, qualification, training and professional development, aiming for sustainable and high-quality professional performance.



3. GOALS OF THE CIIMAR SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The goals of the CIIMAR Sustainability Plan are guided by commitments to sustainable development, economic sustainability and social responsibility, structured around two main dimensions:

3.1. SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

CIIMAR's Social Sustainability lies in its ability to address present and future needs of its community, ensuring respect for human rights, social well-being, quality of life and equal opportunities, in order to foster a fair, diverse, equitable and inclusive society, based on the following specific objectives:

- **Respect for human rights, diversity, inclusion and equity**, through the implementation and promotion of policies and programs that promote the respect for human rights, dignity, freedom, equality, non-discrimination, diversity and inclusion. Create a welcoming environment for the entire community, regardless of ethnic origin, nationality, age, religion, political or ideological beliefs, gender, functional diversity, physical condition and sexual preference orientation.
- **Participation and involvement of the CIIMAR community** in transversal issues and decisions that affect their lives, promoting spaces for sharing and the active participation of staff, dialogue and collaboration between different offices and bodies, aiming for a cohesive, collaborative, safe and open organizational culture.
- **Social well-being**, including the promotion of spaces for socializing, interaction and sharing among the community, the improvement of working conditions and the balance of work and family life for employees.
- **Risk prevention**, including the design and dissemination of the Internal Emergency Plan, regular monitoring of air quality in Offices and Laboratories and the implementation of appropriate improvement measures.
- **Promotion of physical and mental well-being**: provision of physical and mental health support services, sports activities, education, culture and leisure, including occupational health and mental health consultations and the establishment of various protocols for sports or cultural classes and activities under favorable conditions.
- **Solidarity, active citizenship and community development**: promote sustainable development at the local level through the organization of activities, campaigns and volunteer actions within the scope of social and environmental responsibility, in collaboration with local partners.
- **Education for sustainability**: integration of content related to sustainability in institutional communication and educational activities at CIIMAR, providing the internal community and society at large with a comprehensive understanding of sustainable challenges and solutions, empowering and encouraging change.

3.2. ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSION

Environmental Sustainability encompasses how human activities can be carried out in a way that preserves the environment and ensures the responsible use of resources, in order to meet the present needs without compromising future generations. In addition, there is a need to adopt, not only sustainable practices, but also regenerative ones, in order to not only preserve existing resources but also create systems that allow for the restoration of ecosystems and resources. CIIMAR, as a research center in marine and environmental science and technology, recognizes the fundamental importance of adopting sustainable and regenerative development practices in its management and daily activities, as well as in its research outputs.

We seek to integrate environmental value as a determining factor in the creation of the sustainable and regenerative capacity of our research, innovation, advanced training, public policy support and knowledge dissemination activities, supporting and strengthening our strategy and image. With this direction, the environmental sustainability measures outlined in this plan have the following fundamental objectives:

- **Promote the efficient use of resources:** reduce energy and water consumption through the implementation of energy and water efficiency measures and raising awareness about good environmental practices, as well as reducing the use of single-use plastics. The assessment of the progress and efficiency of the actions adopted will be carried out through precise measurements and indicators.
- **Encourage adequate waste management:** implement measures to expand recycling of various waste types at CIIMAR's headquarters, providing more containers and appropriate spaces for selective waste separation and raising awareness within the community about the importance of proper waste separation. CIIMAR is also responsible for managing hazardous chemicals and replacing them with new products or laboratory techniques that have a less significant environmental impact.
- **Promote sustainable mobility:** encourage the use of public transportation, bicycles and ride sharing through awareness campaigns, implementation of a ride sharing system and the installation of suitable infrastructure for bicycle parking with APDL.
- **Raise environmental awareness within the CIIMAR community** through the dissemination of proposed actions, knowledge about environmental challenges and the importance of sustainable practices, to foster a more informed society committed to adopt more sustainable behaviors. Promote scientific literacy, increase knowledge and raise awareness of global environmental issues. Encourage events that promote a circular economy, such as exchange fairs of second-hand items within the community.
- **Promote actions for the protection, promotion and restoration of ecosystems** and biodiversity, as well as collaborate in environmental volunteer actions, such as the creation of small water bodies for biodiversity, land reforestation, marine forest restoration and beach clean-up efforts.
- **Promote the acquisition of products and services based on clear environmental responsibility criteria,** namely for selecting providers and organising sustainable events, in alignment with CIIMAR's commitment to sustainability.



4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CIIMAR SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The implementation of the CIIMAR Sustainability Plan will be ensured through the overall coordination of the CIIMAR Environmental & Social Sustainability Office and the integrated action of various actors, organizational units and internal services, essential for the realization and implementation. This includes, in particular, the active participation of many CIIMAR services and groups, including the Board of Directors, Health & Safety, Human Resources, Onboarding, Legal Support, Image, Communication & Outreach, Research Innovation Strategy & Funding Offices, Green Lab, Commission for Gender Equality, Commission for the Prevention and Combat Against Harassment, PhD Students Committee, CIIMAR Sport, CMIA Matosinhos, CMIA de Vila do Conde and Bioterium of Aquatic Organisms Team (BOGA).

CIIMAR is an active member of *Green Labs Portugal*, an association that promotes and supports the creation of **sustainability initiatives in laboratories** and fosters collaboration between various institutions. By bringing together motivated teams in Portugal and encouraging the sharing of knowledge and resources on sustainable laboratory practices, the goal is to drive change within the Portuguese research community towards implementing more environmentally conscious research practices. Green Lab CIIMAR aims to reduce the ecological footprint of our research center associated with laboratory work, such as energy consumption, water usage and recyclable urban waste.

5. MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

To ensure the implementation and achievement of the planned goals, CIIMAR conducts an annual monitoring and evaluation of its Social and Environmental Sustainability Plan. This process is coordinated by the CIIMAR Environmental & Social Sustainability Office, with active involvement from various organizational units, internal services and relevant committees.

Performance monitoring and evaluation includes key indicators to assess the implementation and success of various measures. When necessary, it may also incorporate interviews, surveys and other feedback tools to gather direct input from the community.

The results are published and publicly disseminated through CIIMAR's Annual Social & Environmental Sustainability Report, using methodologies outlined in the **Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)**¹ sustainability reports and the **European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS)**².

1. <https://www.globalreporting.org/>

2. https://finance.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-adopts-european-sustainability-reporting-standards-2023-07-31_en

6. ACTIONS AND INDICATORS OF SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY FOR 2025

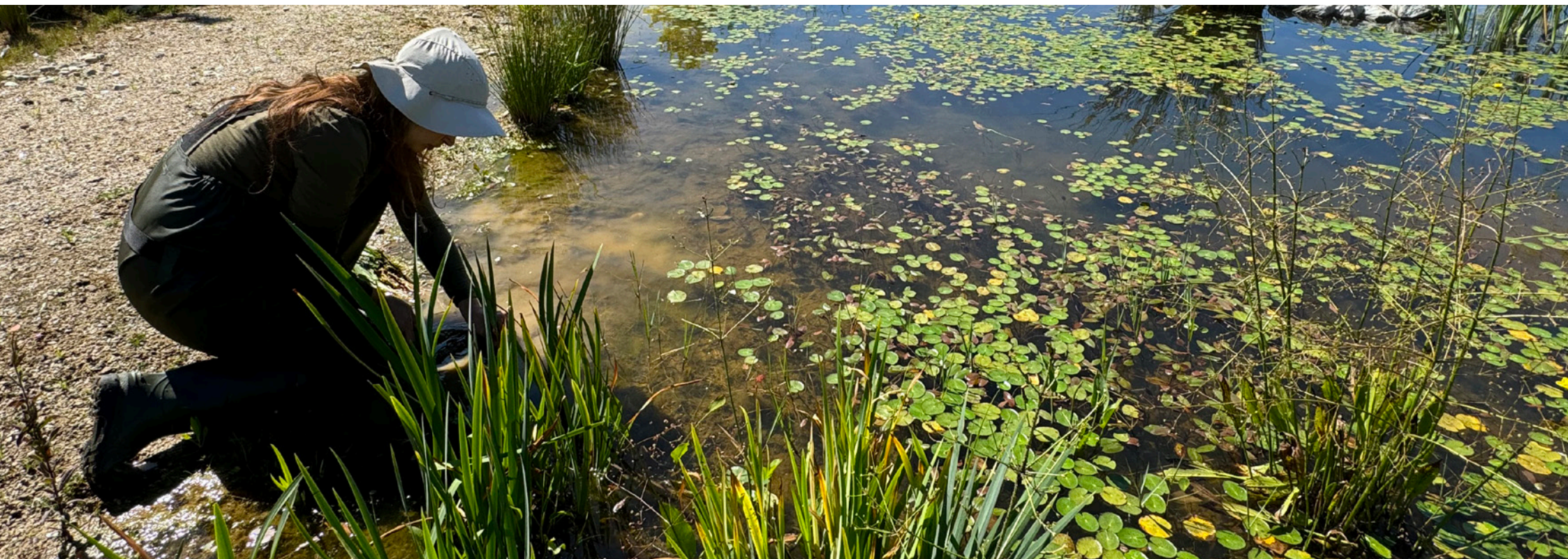
GOAL	ACTION	INDICATOR	ANNUAL GOAL	COORDINATION
SOCIAL DIMENSION				
Promote employee participation in cross-cutting matters at CIIMAR	Manage and disseminate the " Suggestion Box/Caixa de sugestões "	Nº of actions	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat & Events • Communication Office
Foster organizational well-being by creating a shared space for collaboration and interaction among employees	Organise institutional events (e.g. team-building activities, cultural visits, hikes, celebration of festive dates, sunsets, contests) to promote social interaction among members, teamwork, and organizational cohesion	Nº of activities	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Office • PhD Students Committee • Secretariat & Events • CIIMAR Sport
	Organise talks, debates and events on topics of general interest for the CIIMAR community (e.g. time management, emotional management)	Nº of activities	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Training & Careers • Sustainability Office • Communication Office • PhD Students Committee
	Create a regular " Researchers forum ": a horizontal moment for sharing and brainstorming among CIIMAR researchers	Frequency	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Training & Careers
	Provide logistical and promotional support to internal CIIMAR community groups (e.g. CIIMAR Sport, Green Lab, PhD Student Committee)	Frequency	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Office
	Maintain the " Tea Corner " communal tea-sharing space	Frequency	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Office
	Implement and manage a Lost & Found box in the common area	Nº of actions	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Office
Provide employees with clear information on matters related to their rights and responsibilities	Organise forums for clarification of employees' rights and responsibilities (e.g. workplace accidents, vacation rights, occupational diseases)	Nº of activities	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Support • Human Resources
Provide employees with soft and hard-skills for work and life management	Organise seminars and trainings for employees	Nº of activities	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Training & Careers
Create conditions to support the balance between professional, family, and personal spheres	Organise activities for employees' children , particularly during school break periods	Nº of activities	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMIA's
	Encourage remote working and flexible working hours among researchers and administrative staff	Included groups	Whole CIIMAR community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors • Human Resources
	Adopt measures to facilitate work organization and the balance of different aspects of employees' lives	Included groups	Whole CIIMAR community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors • Human Resources

GOAL	ACTION	INDICATOR	ANNUAL GOAL	COORDINATION
SOCIAL DIMENSION				
Create conditions and implements active measures to create a safe, healthy and inclusive work environment for all	Review, disseminate and monitor the implementation of the " Code of Conduct for the Prevention and Combat of Workplace Harassment "	Nº of actions	3	• Commission for Prevention and Combat of Workplace Harassment
	Organise a training on the "Prevention and Combat of Workplace Harassment"	Nº of actions	1	• Advanced Training & Careers • Commission for Prevention and Combat of Workplace Harassment
	Review and disseminate the implementation of the " Gender Equality Plan "	Nº of actions	2	• Commission for Gender Equality
Welcome and integrate new members of the community	Review and disseminate the CIIMAR " Guide for Grant Holders /Guia do Bolseiro "	Nº of actions	2	• Legal Support • Human Resources
	Review and disseminate the CIIMAR " Survival Guide for PhD Students " (namely to update legal matters and include mental health resources)	Nº of actions	2	• PhD Students Committee • Legal Support • Sustainability Office • Advanced Training & Careers
	Update the " Welcome Guide " that is sent to all new members of CIIMAR	Nº of actions	1	• Onboarding • Sustainability Office • Human Resources
	Create a new section on CIIMAR's website for "Guides" (which includes: Welcome Guide, Guide for Grant Holders, Code of Conduct for the Prevention and Combat of Workplace Harassment, Gender Equality Plan, Survival Guide for PhD Students, Guide on How to Host Sustainable Events)	Nº of actions	1	• Communication Office • Sustainability Office
Encourage healthy eating habits and physical activity	Reduce foods with excess salt and sugar and include vegetarian options in vending machines at CIIMAR headquarters, and ensure a meal provisioning service with vegetarian options	Nº of actions	2	• Secretariat & Events • Sustainability Office
	Organise initiatives to promote physical activity : regular classes and sports activities at CIIMAR facilities or outdoor, and collective participation in sports events	Nº of activities/ Nº of members	4 / 60	• CIIMAR Sport • Sustainability Office
	Produce CIIMAR sports equipment	Nº of members	50	• CIIMAR Sport • Sustainability Office
	Celebration and internal dissemination of special price protocols for sports activities in sports centers for the CIIMAR community	Nº of protocols	4	• Sustainability Office • CIIMAR Sport
Provide Occupational Health services	Provide free or discounted medical consultations for the community, including occupational medicine and mental health consultations , and extending this offer to fellowship/grant holders	Included groups	Whole CIIMAR community	• Secretariat & Events • Health & Safety Office

GOAL	ACTION	INDICATOR	ANNUAL GOAL	COORDINATION
SOCIAL DIMENSION				
Promote mental health and wellbeing	Organise a recurring seminar for the whole community on Mental Health and Psychological Care	N° of activities	8	• Advanced Training & Careers
	Organise a training for staff on Psychological First Aid	N° of activities	1	• Advanced Training & Careers
Develop actions to ensure human life safety	Organise a First Aid and Basic Life Support training	N° of activities	1	• Health & Safety Office
	Conduct the Safety and Best Practices Training for all new members of the CIIMAR community	Frequency of activities	Biweekly	• Health & Safety Office
	Update Self-Protection Measures , the Internal Safety Manual , and provide and disseminate information for Accident Prevention	Frequency	Continuous	• Health & Safety Office
	Implement measures for a Zero Workplace Accidents Policy	N° of actions	1	• Health & Safety Office
	Regularly monitor the air quality of Offices and Laboratories, publish reports, and implement appropriate safety measures	Frequency of activities	Continuous	• Health & Safety Office
Conduct activities and campaigns within the scope of social and environmental responsibility	Carry out charity actions, social volunteering and initiatives for the collection of goods and donations for Social Solidarity Institutions	N° of activities	2	• Green Lab • Sustainability Office • Secretariat & Events
Organise activities and events aimed at increasing scientific and environmental literacy in society	Carry out environmental literacy and educational activities with schools	N° of activities	200	• Communication Office • Sustainability Office • CMiAs • Research Teams
	Organise exhibitions, lectures, movie festival screenings, and large public events	N° of activities	10	• Sustainability Office • Communication Office • CMiAs • Research Teams
	Organise a Job Shadowing programme for high school students	N° of activities	1	• Communication Office
	Organise an Open Day at CIIMAR for university students	N° of activities	1	• Communication Office
Implement an advanced training program	Organise advanced training courses and events (e.g. Master and PhD programmes, undergraduate studies and advanced courses)	N° of activities	6	• Advanced Training & Careers

GOAL	ACTION	INDICATOR	ANNUAL GOAL	COORDINATION
ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION				
Implement measures to reduce consumption and environmental impact	Implement measures to reduce electricity, water and paper (and printing supplies) waste and over consumption	Nº of actions	3	• Sustainability Office • Green Lab
	Maintain the eco-friendly dishwashing area at CIIMAR headquarters with the supply of eco-friendly detergent and sponges	Nº of actions	Continuous	• Sustainability Office
Promote mental health and wellbeing	Raise awareness and provide support to labs and the CIIMAR community to reduce plastic use , particularly disposable plastic, and to increase selective separation of waste	Nº of actions	2	• Green Lab • Sustainability Office
	Creation of a new recycling point at CIIMAR headquarters	Nº of actions	1	• Sustainability Office
	Campaign for the collection, and donation or reuse, of disposable coolers in the laboratories	Nº of actions	1	• Green Lab • Sustainability Office
	Produce CIIMAR merchandise (e.g., mugs, water bottles) to encourage the reduction of disposable cup and bottle usage	Nº of actions	1	• Communication Office
	Maintain collaboration with Precious Plastic Portugal for the recycling of pipette tip boxes and for visits and volunteering at the studio	Nº of actions	1	• Green Lab • Sustainability Office
	Organise " Circular Markets " for various items (clothes, books, decorations, etc.), and laboratory materials for the CIIMAR community	Nº of activities	3	• Green Lab • Sustainability Office
	Maintain the " CIIMAR's Book Sharing " area in the CIIMAR headquarters building	Frequency	Continuous	• Green Lab
	Implement a system for reusing promotional materials , such as roll-ups, among CIIMAR working groups to reduce discarded materials and printing costs	Nº of actions	1	• Sustainability Office
Collaborate in environmental volunteer actions	Create a guide on " How To Host Sustainable Events "	Nº of actions	1	• Sustainability Office
	Conduct corporate environmental volunteer actions in collaboration with other organizations	Nº of activities	1	• Sustainability Office
Communicate and disseminate implemented actions	Campaign for cleaning discarded cigarette on the terrace to raise awareness about their improper disposal	Nº of activities	1	• Sustainability Office
	Update the " Green Lab " and " Environmental Responsibility " pages on the CIIMAR website to showcase new initiatives and best practices	Nº of actions	2	• Green Lab • Sustainability Office
	Communication and extension of the environmental measures implemented at CIIMAR to the CMiAs	Frequency	Continuous	• CMiAs • Green Lab

GOAL	ACTION	INDICATOR	ANNUAL GOAL	COORDINATION
ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION				
Promote sustainable mobility	Implement a carpooling system for the CIIMAR community	Nº of actions	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Office • Green Lab
	Update, analyse, and share the Mobility Survey conducted with the CIIMAR community	Nº of actions	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Office • Green Lab
	Implement a bicycle parking area at the CIIMAR building	Nº of actions	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Office
	Celebrate World Bicycle Day (June 3rd) with a bike ride and a social picnic for the CIIMAR community	Nº of activities	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Office • CIIMAR Sport
Promote actions of restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity	Promote the creation and restoration of freshwater or marine habitats	Nº of habitats created or restored	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Office • Research Teams
Join accredited partnerships in the field of environmental responsibility	Implement measures to obtain the LIPOR Green Heart Certification	Nº of actions	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Office • Board of Directors





CIIMAR - Interdisciplinary Centre of Marine and Environmental Research

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