C2 - Action Report with data on Natural Population Reinforcement

Action C2 refers to the actual Conservation of natural populations of *Azorina vidalii* and *Lotus azoricus*, meaning it aims at increasing the number of individuals of the existing natural populations of both target species, thereby contributing to improve their conservation status. Within this report, we aim to address the works carried out within this action, including the numbers of target species planted within the intervention areas and the resulting number of individuals that have been counted during the last monitoring works.

Table 1, below, presents the yearly number of plants planted in the intervention areas regarding both target species, compared to the planned numbers. It is possible to understand that despite the late start, the numbers were rapidly met and by 2021 the expected numbers for both species had been surpassed.

Table 1 - Annual planted target species - Expected vs Actual

	Planned C2					Executed C2 (Cumulative total)				
Species	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**Total**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**
Azorina vidalii	885	2 915	2 325	1 475	7600	230	4 240	12 178	16 038	18 998
Lotus azoricus	900	850	850	200	2 800	11	1 268	4 156	9 161	10 681

By interpreting the table above, it becomes obvious as the project reaches its final that almost three times the expected number of plants were planted in the intervention areas during the project's course. This number of planted plants was possible due to the efficient production methods and infrastructures used in the rare plant nursery and were of great importance to increase the number of target plants on the project's intervention areas. In order to give a more complete idea of planted target plants, Table 2 presents the distribution of the individuals planted per intervention area.

Table 2 - Planted Target Species per Intervention Area

Species	*Azorina vidalii*		*Lotus azoricus*	
Intervention Areas	**Fai-Av-1 Caldeirão**	1 428	**Pic-La-1 Calheta de Nesquim**	
	Fai-Av-2 Morro de Castelo Branco	1460	**Pic-La-2 Ponta da Ilha**	2984
	Fai-Av-3 Porto de Castelo Branco	1 125	**Pic-La-3 Ribeirinha**	3 088
	Fai-Av-4 Monte da Guia	1822	**Jor-La-1 Fajã das Pontas**	971
	Pic-Av-1 Madalena	1 487		
	Pico-Av-2 Lajes I	1033		
	Pic-Av-3 Lajes II	-		
	Pic-Av-4 Ribeirinha	1190		
	Pic-Av-5 Prainha	1 576		
	Pic-Av-6 São Roque	1262		
	Pic-Av-7 Lajido	1 268		
	Jor-Av-1 Topo	926		
	Jor-Av-2 Fajã dos Cubres	1 141		
	Jor-Av-3 Fajã de Santo Cristo	1405		
	Jor-Av-4 Fajã das Pontas	1 190		
	Jor-Av-5 Fajã da Ribeira da Areia	685		
Total	18 998		10 681	

During the project implementation, it has been understood that *Azorina vidalii* productions work better early in spring, but this presens a limitation, as the plants will be ready for the field during summer and the hot sun and the dryness can pose a threat for a recently planted plant. This is a factor we could control to add to the plant's survival chances, but some more unpredictable issues have influenced the survival of plants on the field, such as climatic events, trampling, landslides, etc. Besides, some intervention areas, despite not having much more adult plants than other, seem to produce more seedlings naturally every year, which is something that was not anticipated. During the project's implementation, we proceeded with planting in less protected spaces, which now is seen as unrecommended for *Azorina vidalii*, and these also contributed to the loss of some plants.

In sum, a combination of internal and external factors has contributed to the numbers that can be read on **Table 3**, which compares the number of plants counted for both target species in 2023 to their respective figures in 2018.

Species	Intervention Area	Nr Target species	Nr Target Species	% of change
Azorina vidalii	**Fai-Av-1**	30	**225**	650
	Fai-Av-2	61	**195**	220
	Fai-Av-3	237	**4101**	1630
	Fai-Av-4	3	**210**	6900
	Pic-Av-1	600	**640**	7
	Pic-Av-2	170	**910**	435
	Pic-Av-3	80	**305**	281
	Pic-Av-4	1250	**2553**	104
	Pic-Av-5	136	**450**	231
	Pic-Av-6	130	**936**	620
	Pic-Av-7	77	**983**	1177
	Jor-Av-1	50	**208**	316
	Jor-Av-2	620	**1824**	194
	Jor-Av-3	200	**772**	286
	Jor-Av-4	1000	**911**	-9
	Jor-Av-5	1000	**1395**	40
	Total	**5644**	**16618**	**294**
Lotus azoricus	**Pic-La-1**	800	**1437**	80
	Pic-la-2	14	**1255**	8864
	Pic-La-3	14	**162**	1057
	Jor-La-1	10	**149**	1390
	Total	**838**	**3003**	**358**

Table 3 – Number of plants of each Target Species in 2018 vs 2023

In the end, the results were very satisfactory in general. However, it has to be said that, for several factors, the goals were not completely met, although it is important to note that the project has been able to increase the numbers of *Azorina vidalii* in around 3 times and the numbers of *Lotus azoricus* in more than 3,5 times the original figures.