



Wildfires, elections and new decade of environmental policies.

The Cabinet defines the environmental objectives for the next decade. The Portuguese cabinet approved, August 2nd, two strategic programs to fight the climate change and the current culture of individual mobility, with the intend of improving and increasing the social and economic welfare.

Contacts

António de Macedo Vitorino
avitorino@macedovitorino.com

André Dias
adias@macedovitorino.com

With the wildfires afflicting again the country, and a general election in early October, the Portuguese cabinet launched two programs to combat the climatic changes and their negative effects on the environmental, social and economic domains: Program of Action and Adaptation to Climate Change (P-3AC) and Program of National Strategy of Active Cycling Mobility (ENMAC).

In the P-3AC program, the Portuguese Cabinet established as priority action lines, the prevention of rural fires, the improvement of soil quality, water management and urban vulnerabilities, reserving, to the effect, a financial package of 372 million euros to be spent up to 2020.

This package includes (i) 129 million euros to implement urgent measures, such as planting fire-resilient forest species, promoting the reduction of fuel biomass through intermunicipality structures, reconfiguration of telecommunications networks in forest areas and the installation of a communication system to alert the rural populations; and (ii) 127 million euros to make water consumption more efficient, for instance, favoring the conversion of crops to less water-demanding species, varieties and cultivars or promoting the installation of rainwater harvest system to support the industrial activity and improve the water savings.

The Portuguese Government forecasted a total spending of 560 million euros in coastal protection until 2030, to promote a more resilient coastline to erosion and coastal flooding and the removal of structures or buildings in high risk zones.

In parallel, the ENAMC program puts in place active mobility strategies in large urban areas for the 2020-2030 decade, with the intent of reducing the culture of individual transport.

Recognizing the health, traffic, economic and environmental benefits brought by cycling mobility, the program targets having 10,000 km of cycle paths until 2030 in the urban areas and creating an awareness program to universalize this mode of transport. Among the objectives of this program we can find:

- having cycling as extracurricular subject in the schools;
- building an articulated system of cycling stations;
- changing the Road Law to increase favorable and safer conditions for the users of this cycling vehicles, for example, creating more strict rules about the behavior in the cycling paths and assessing the chance of attenuation of the injured person's guilt as a cause of exclusion or reduction of compensation in the event of objective liability.

In addition, the Labour Law will be amended to improve conditions, in the medium and large companies, for workers to use bicycles, such as the right to specific space and bike lockers.