



## Enriching municipal biodiversity and resilience in Poiares

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Yesterday, 2 November, the City Council of Vila Nova de Poiares unanimously approved a new initiative which will strive to increase biodiversity in the municipal forests. The programme, under the name “A Nossa Floresta” (‘Our Forest’), is aimed at private and commercial forest spaces which are managed and exploited by private owners in the process of carrying out an economic activity.

Diversifying forests need not mean reducing their economic viability

The programme that was adopted is aimed at forest owners by providing them, free of charge, with native species saplings (with a limit of 300 per order) in order to help them and show them that this diversification would actually strengthen the ecological resilience of the forests against pests and diseases.

Commercial forests tend to rely on replanting one type of tree in order to maximize the output and from there the profit margins, as well as to ensure a constant supply of wood for the timber industry market.

“It is a fundamental project to diversify our forest space, and to fight monoculture of species”, because, “despite the importance of the forest's income to its owners, it is fundamental to leave each species the most adequate space, with the most balanced proportion, always with a view to greater diversity, resulting in factors of environmental and economic sustainability, and adding greater resilience to the entire forest,” said João Miguel Henriques, the Mayor of Poiares.

Owners or tenants of forest plots can turn to the Municipal Technical Forestry Office where they will be shown the different species of plants available. Then they can fill out an application form, which will be analyzed for suitability of the requested species to the specific terrain of the forest.

Once they receive the saplings, forest owners will be asked to adhere to specific guidelines, such as respecting a planting window that does not go beyond February 2021, for example.

Source: <https://www.themayor.eu/ga/enriching-municipal-biodiversity-and-resilience-in-poiares>