

Sustainable Campus Group

Universidade Aberta



Sustainability Report

Sustainable Campus
Group UAb

2023

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INTRODUCTION and OBJECTIVES

Universidade Aberta (UAb), as a public institution of distance higher education, is committed to contributing to a sustainable society and intending to promote several actions and practices in the area of sustainability, established the working group called “Campus Sustentável UAb”, under the Despacho N.º 58/R/2021, dated 12 July 2021 and considering the Despacho n.º 153/R/2022 (dated 30 August), which extends its mandate for a period of two years (with effect from 12 July 2022).

Aligned with the objectives of the UAb Strategic Plan 2019-2023, namely that of promoting economic, social, and environmental responsibility and with the mission of promoting sustainability issues in UAb, the working group works under the direct dependency of the Rector of UAb and consists of 11 core members.

In pursuit of the mission underlying its creation and in continuity with ongoing work, the objectives of the working group are:

- a) Promoting sustainability practices at UAb, namely through proposals that contribute to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2030 of the United Nations;
- b) Present sensibilisation proposals to adopt better environmental practices and sustainable consumption patterns at UAb;
- c) Promote the necessary actions to fulfil the commitments made by UAb within the scope of the Programmes, Initiatives and digital tools for higher education institutions in the area of sustainability, namely with a view to meeting resource efficiency, carbon neutrality and GHG emission reduction targets;
- d) Evaluate UAb's sustainability performance using tools applicable to Higher Education Institutions.
- e) Collect and systematize information from the various UAb services necessary for the development of the work;
- f) Proposing the signing of partnerships and protocols with external organisations in the area of sustainability.

Based on these objectives, from **July 2022 to July 2023**, UAb Sustainable Campus Group has collaborated on several activities to promote the sustainability of the University, in line with the core elements of sustainability at Higher Education Institutions, as shown in figure 1.

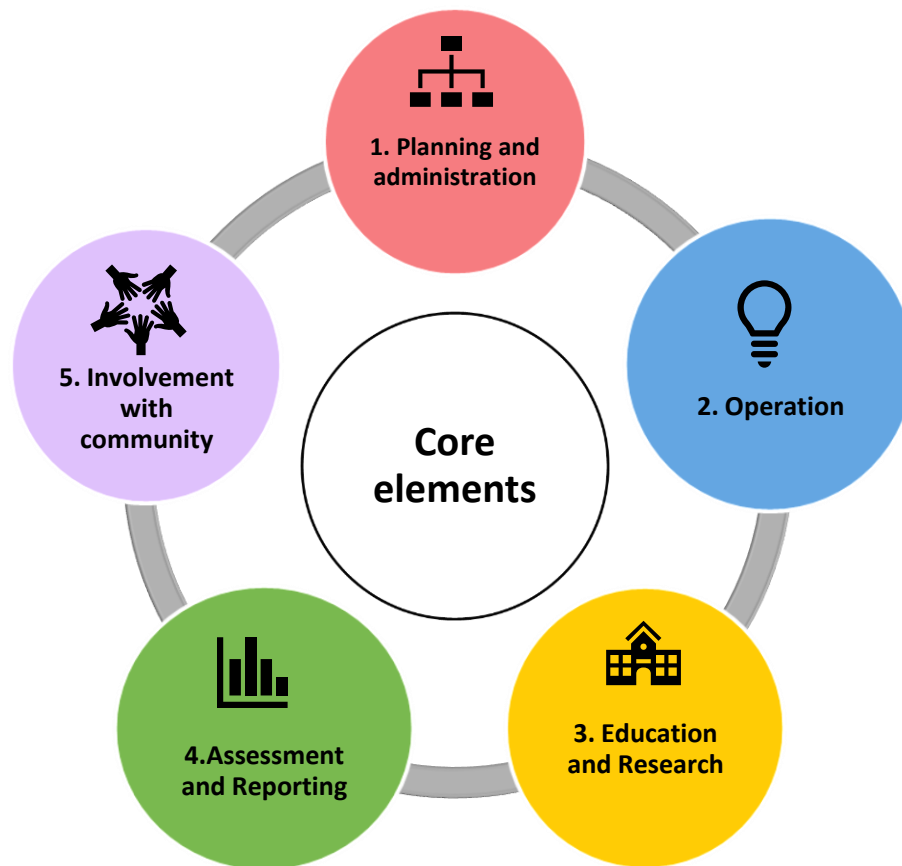
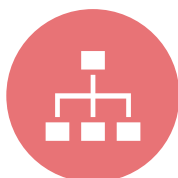


Figure 1- Core Elements of Sustainability at Higher Education Institutions

A summary of the activities, developed/implemented by Sustainable Campus Group in accordance with the core elements and in the respective period, is listed in the following sections. It is noted that the activities are categorized based on the most relevant core element, however, bearing in mind that some activities can cover more than one element.

Also, the communications during this period are listed and the future development activities for the next year are presented at the end of the report.

ACTIVITIES



1. Planning and Administration

In the first element, known as planning and administration, the university shows its commitment, policies, vision, and visions toward sustainability. The UAb formal commitment to sustainability appears in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan: “For a university open to the world, innovative and sustainable, with 4 axes of action and 4 Strategic objectives”, which focuses on all SDGs, in particular, SDGs 4, 8, 10. Among the main axes and objectives, the following ones have been acknowledged as the most associated with sustainability measures:

- Axis 4- A sustainable University centered on people (and socially committed);
- The Strategic Objective SO10 - Promote social and environmental responsibility.

The activities in Table 1 have been done by the sustainability campus group to show their commitment to the Planning and Administration element during 2022-2023.

Table 1- Planning and Administration Activities

Activity 1 - Task Force on Green Campus (EADTU)

Date: May 2023- now

Relevant SDG: All, mainly 17



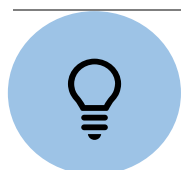
Group Objectives: a, f

From May 2023, UAb is a member of the Task force on “Green Campus”, under the responsibility, organization, and communication of the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU)¹. The team of TF-GC consists of the representative of 9 distance learning Universities to work on the following tasks:

- Developing a vision on the specific role and position online and distance universities have in supporting the concept of a Green Campus;
- Making inventory on EADTU universities’ policies on Green Campus
- Sharing expertise and experiences between EADTU universities and collaborate in support of Green Campuses;
- New approaches, collection of good practices, as well as sharing studies on research;
- Making an inventory of approaches; Identifying opportunities and obstacles; Leveraging collaboration among EADTU partners; and developing a reference model for institutional strategies.

UAb is currently working on the guideline report on how to approach achieving university sustainability goals, e.g. by transforming policies into actions.



¹ . European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU). Available at: <https://eadtu.eu/>.



2. Operation

Operation is the group of activities at the university that mainly include energy use and energy efficiency, greenhouse gases, waste, water and water management, food, purchasing, and transport. During 2022-2023, the Sustainable campus shows its commitment to operational systems through the activities listed in Table 2.

Table 2 – Operational activities

Activity 2 - Implementation of the Energy Saving Plan 2022-2023		
Date: August 2022-December 2023	Relevant SDGs: 6, 7, 11, 13, 17	
Group objectives: a, b, c, e		
<p>To achieve the decarbonization objectives, UAb participated in the Energy Saving Plan 2022-2023 which is an integral part of Portugal's response to the challenge of the European Council Regulation n.º 2022/1369 (of August 5, 2022) and Council of Ministers Resolution n.º 82/2022 (of september 27) also constitutes a complement to the decarbonization path already outlined by Portugal. Based on the plan, all public bodies must implement the plan, which contains concrete measures that complement each other and aim to accelerate the energy transition, and reduce dependence on fossil fuels, by reducing consumption in the following areas of activity: i) energy, ii) hydric efficiency, and iii) Communication and sensibilisation campaign. There are mandatory and recommended measures, both with immediate impact. UAb participated in reporting the savings measures that have to be implemented at UAb by detailing them according to the availability of the existing resources.</p>		
Activity 3 - Implementation of the waste management Plan at UAb (Phases 1 and 2)		
Date: 2022-2023	Relevant SDGs: 11, 12	
Group objectives: a, b, e		
<p>In response to one of the improvements needed according to STARS evaluation, the UAb waste management plan (System of management, monitoring and selective collection of urban waste produced in UAb buildings) has been developed to be implemented in the UAb buildings located in Lisbon, Porto, and Coimbra by the contribution of the Sustainable Campus Group. The plan covers 4 main phases including: i) Description the current status of waste management, ii) Data collection (to analyse the quantity and types of waste), iii) Design and implementation of new waste management system, iv) Monitoring and evaluation.</p>		

The first phase is now concluded. The second phase, associated with data collection, has already started (from June 2023), by developing a data sheet for daily reporting of the quantity of waste and implementing it in the Almirante Barroso, as well as Palacio Ceia (Lisbon). The cleaning staff was individually trained on how to fill out the datasheet.

The third phase, associated with determining the total number of recycling bins, as well as the spaces for placing recycling points in each building is in progress.

Activity 4 - Public Administration Resource Efficiency Programme - (ECO.ap 2030)

Date: 2022- 2024

Group objectives: a, b, c, e

Relevant SDGs: 6, 7, 11, 13, 17






The sustainable Campus Group continue its participation in the ECO.ap 2030 - Public Administration Resource Efficiency Programme triennium 2022-2024. This program is mandatory for all public administration entities and intends to promote the efficient and effective management of state resources, according to RODMAP to carbon neutrality 2050, Resolução de Conselho de Ministros (RCM) n.º 107/2019 of 1 July; PNEC 2030 - National Plan for Energy and Climate 2030 - RCM n.º 53/2020 of 10 July, and ELPRE 2030 - Long Term Strategy for Building - RCM n.º 8-A of the 3rd February. UAb is currently developing the implementation and monitoring structure phase of the program, which means the collection and organisation of information and characterizing the reference scenario/baseline concept. Data needs to be collected with the collaboration of the different services at UAb and then the UAb Efficiency Plan ECO.ap 2030, can be drawn on. The program is in progress.



3. Education and Research

The “Education and research” element includes all educational programs within the scope of sustainability including courses on sustainable development, programs on sustainability issues, curricular reviews, and educate-the-educators programs. Also research funding, sustainable development research used in teaching, publications, patents, new knowledge, and technologies are addressed in this element. Table 3 presents the main educational/research activities that have been implemented by the Sustainable Campus Group.

Table 3- Education and research activities



Activity 5 - Micro-Credential on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)		
Date: Oct 2022- Feb 2023	Relevant SDGs: all SDGs, in particular 4	 
<p>In line with the project “Impulso 2025” a micro-credential “Sustainable Development Goals” (6 ECTS) was developed and piloted by the Sustainable Campus Group at UAb (Oct 2022-Feb 2023). The module aimed at making students acquainted with the sustainability concepts and SDGs from the field of 5 areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet (5Ps): People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships. 43 students, mainly from the undergraduate program of environmental Science, enrolled in the pilot training, led by 10 educators from Sustainable Campus Group (UAb), with the cooperation of the Instructional designers Helena Manuela and Marco Dias, also SPD team to develop the educational materials in the format of video. The outcomes of its first pilot teaching at UAb were also assessed, obtaining a total of 94% satisfaction from participants. Based on the results of the pilot, the micro-credential “SDGs” were refined, to teach to the broader target group (public and private organizations) in the next semester, and later as a formal curricular unit in various degrees.</p>		
Activity 6 – Educational materials for the SLP on Art, Design, and Sustainability		
Date: 2022-2024	Relevant SDGs: 4	
<p>In the scope of the Erasmus+ ARDES project - Short Learning Programme (SLP) for ART and DDesign and Sustainability with special focus on environment and climate change (CC) (2022-2024)- the course plan and educational materials of the SLP on Art, Design, and Sustainability has been developed. The SLP, made of 156 study hours, consists of 3 main modules (plus an extracurricular community activity), which integrate knowledge and values associated with sustainability and climate change through art activities, design techniques, and digital solutions. Designing the course on the UAb E-learning platform is in progress and it will be piloted at UAb in the academic year 2023-2024.</p>		



4. Assessment and Reporting

The “assessment and reporting” element includes the internal or external assessment and assurance, as well as reporting cycles, done by the University through self-assessment, or through assessing the performance based on international assessment systems by the collaboration of a group of international evaluators. During 2022-2023, UAb participated in both types of self-assessment and international sustainability assessment activities in collaboration with Sustainable Campus Group, as indicated in Table 4.

Table 4- Assessment and reporting activities

Activity 7 - Time Higher Education (THE) Impact Ranking 2023		
Date: Oct-Nov 2022	Relevant SDGs: All	
Group objectives: a, d, e, f	UAb reporting on 4,5,6,8,10,17	
<p>Universidade Aberta has been ranked by Time Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2023 to show its commitment to the SDGs for the third year. The ranking measures universities’ performance against the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UAb is ranked 801-1000 globally out of 1,591 universities from 112 countries/regions. The university's overall score in 2023 is 58.3 (out of 100) which was almost the same in 2022 (58.5 out of 100), with significant progress on both SDG 4 and SDG 5. Also, among all reported metrics in all SDGs, ‘secured contract’ (score 93,4 out of 100) on SDG 8, and ‘Relationships to support the goals’ (score 91,1 out of 100) on SDG 17, reached the highest scores. The UAb Sustainable Campus Working Group managed the data collection and submitted the report with the collaboration of several departments at UAb.</p>		
Activity 8 - Assessment of the UAb Ecological Footprint		
Date: Dec 2021- July 2022	Relevant SDGs: 12 and 13	
Group objectives: a, b, d, e		
<p>Based on the open digital tool called “University Footprint Calculator²”, which is developed within the scope of the EUSTEPs Erasmus+ project (by the contribution of the UAb), the UAb keeps track of the consumption of natural resources and ecosystem services demanded in running its activities and operations by calculating the Ecological Footprint of the UAb and compare the results in the years 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. The tool measures the natural resources and services at the University under the Direct and Indirect Control of the University, identifies critical areas, and allows UAb to act and improve</p>		

² . University Footprint Calculator. Available at: <https://www.eusteps.eu/resources/university-footprint-calculator/>

the efficiency and contribute to achieving the SDGs. Under the direct responsibility of UAb, “staff labour” was found to be the main driver. Carbon uptake land was found to be the ecosystem under the highest anthropogenic pressure. Since UAb is a distance learning University (without a canteen), under Indirect Responsibility, the contribution of food at home was found as the most impactful category, followed by energy use at home. Aligned with the calculator, a set of recommendations³ was extracted to be addressed in the future to reduce UAb consumption in the most impactful categories.

Activity 9 - Institutional self-assessment report on sustainability (A3ES)

Date: March- June 2023

Relevant SDGs: All

Group objectives: e, f



Within the scope of the Higher Education Assessment Agency (A3ES), UAb submitted an Institutional Self-Assessment Report in June 2023. Sustainable Campus Group collaborated to report the initiatives/actions at UAb on the following self-assessment area:

- **6.4.3 Environmental Sustainability:** by reporting the institutional strategy, policies and mechanisms to promote environmental sustainability and raising awareness among the academic community about environmental sustainability, as well as resource management.
- **2.5.1 Contribution of the strategic plan to the achievement of the 2030 agenda:** by demonstration of the strategic plan's contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda, and actions to achieve the SDGs and sustainability, as well as integration of sustainability into education, research and cooperation with society.


³ . Moreno Pires, S., Ferreira Dias, Onofrietti, G., Madeira, C., Nicolau M., Galli, A., Mancino, M.S., Patrizi, N., Mapar, M., Malandrakis, G., Lopes, M., Pulseli, F.D., Bacelar-Nicolau, P., Caeiro, S., Gomes, A.P., Nadais, M.H., Gigliotti, M., Papadopoulou, A., Niccolucci, V., Theodosiou, N., Zachos, D. (2022). Ecological Footprint Reduction Recommendations for Higher Education Institutions. IO8 ERASMUS+, KA203 2019-2022, Agreement No. 2019-1-ELO1-KA203-062941. 19 p. Universidade de Aveiro Pub. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.48528/3dh1-yb53>. ISBN:978-972-789-812-1. <http://hdl.handle.net/10400.2/12617>.



5. Involvement with community

Involvement with the community means engaging a large audience and bringing knowledge and expertise on sustainability issues to the general public, such as sustainability events, seminars, or media productions, open to the community. In Table 5, the sustainability activities, done by Sustainable Campus Group to disseminate sustainability knowledge to the public are listed.

Table 5- Involvement with community activities

Activity 10 - Videos “Be Sustainable”	
<p>Date: Oct 2022- now</p> <p>Group objectives: a</p>	<p>Relevant SDGs: 6, 7, 11, 12, 13</p> 

The UAb Communication and International Relations Office and Digital Production Services with the collaboration of the Sustainable Campus Group and in line with the guide “Be Sustainable” have been developing a series of videos called “Being Sustainable at UAb”. The produced videos include short tips aiming to promote good practices in terms of environmental protection and social sustainability. In the period of this report (July 2022-July 2023), 4 episodes have been developed, as follows:

1. Reduce energy costs. UAb Sustainable Campus Group. Collection “Be Sustainable at UAb”. Episode 1. <https://vimeo.com/778825195>.
2. Reduce your waste. UAb Sustainable Campus Group. Collection “Be Sustainable at UAb”. Episode 2. <https://vimeo.com/789066890>.
3. Reduce the water consumption. UAb Sustainable Campus Group. Collection “Be Sustainable at UAb”. Episode 3. <https://vimeo.com/802658559>.
4. Use transport consciously. UAb Sustainable Campus Group. Collection “Be Sustainable at UAb”. Episode 4. <https://vimeo.com/813551657>.

The project is still in progress to produce more episodes.

COMMUNICATIONS

The list of the communications (journal papers, conference proceedings, or media publications) by the contribution of Sustainable Campus Group is as follows:

Publications

1. **Bacelar Nicolau, P., Mapar, M.** (2023). Sustainable Campus at Universidade Aberta. Erasmus Staff Week 2023. June 29 -31. Universidade Aberta, Lisboa, 30th June. <https://sites.uab.pt/erasmus-staff-week/program/>.
2. **Bacelar Nicolau, P.; Mapar, M.; Sandra Caeiro, S.**; Moreno Pires, S.; Nicolau, M., Madeira, C.; Ferreira Dias, M.; Lopes, M.; Gomes, A.P., Nadais; H.; Malandrakis, G. (2023). Empowering Non-Academic Staff for the Implementation of Sustainability in Higher Education Institutions. Sustainability 2023, 15, 14818. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su152014818>.
3. Mancini, M.S., Galli, A., **Bacelar Nicolau, P., Caeiro, S.**, Galanis, N., Gigliotti, M., Madeira, C., Malandrakis, G., **Mapar, M.**, Moreno Pires, S., Niccolucci, V., Nicolau, M., Papadopoulou, A., Patrizi, N., Pulselli, F.M., Shaffer, M., Theodossiou, N., Wambersie, L., Williams, R. (2022). "EUSTEPS University Footprint Calculator – User Manual". ERASMUS+, KA203 2019-2022, Agreement No. 2019-1-ELO1-KA203-062941. Available at: https://www.eusteps.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/EUSTEPS_Calculator_Manual_202210_EN.pdf
4. Lozano, R. Barreiro-Gen, M., D'amato, D., Gago-Cortes, C. Favi, C., Martins, R., Benayas, J., Djekic, L., Awuzie, B., Monus, F., **Caeiro, S.**, Benayas, J. Caldera, S., Moneva, J. M., Sáenz, O., Gladysz, B., (2022). Improving sustainability teaching by grouping and interrelating pedagogical approaches and sustainability competences: Evidence from 15 Worldwide Higher Education Institutions. Sustainable Development. 1 -11. DOI: 10.1002/sd.2396.
5. **Mapar, M., Bacelar-Nicolau, P., Dias, M., Dias-Ferreira, C., Manuelito, H., Martins, R. Martinho, A. P., Pereira., Pedro, Simão, J., Teixeira, T., Trindade, J., Vaz-Fernandes, P., Caeiro, S.** (2023). A 5Ps approach to e-teaching sustainability: The case of Universidade Aberta. 29th International Sustainable Development Research Society Conference (ISDRS 2023), July 11-13, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. **Full paper** in conference proceedings (In press). (Abstract available: <https://2023.isdrsconferences.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Book-of-Abstract-ISDRS-2023.pdf>)
6. **Mapar, M., Bacelar-Nicolau, P., Dias-Ferreira, C., Martins, R. Martinho, A. P., Pereira., Pedro, Simão, J., Teixeira, T., Trindade, J., Vaz-Fernandes, P., Caeiro, S.** (2023).

Integrating Sustainable Approaches in Distance Learning Universities: The Experience of Universidade Aberta. 5th Sustainable Campus Conference (CCS2023), Oct 26-27, Viana do Castelo, Portugal. Abstract (accepted).

7. **Mapar, M.,** Bidarra, J., **Caeiro, S.,** Veiga., P., **Bacelar-Nicolau, P.** (2023). Integrating Sustainability into Art and Design Education: Curriculum Development. 29th International Sustainable Development Research Society Conference (ISDRS 2023), July 11-13, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Abstract in conference proceedings. <https://2023.isdrsconferences.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Book-of-Abstract-ISDRS-2023.pdf>.
8. Moreno Pires, S., **Mapar, M.,** Nicolau, M., Patrizi, N., Malandrakis, G., Pulselli F.M., **Bacelar-Nicolau, P., Caeiro, S.,** and Galli, A. (2022). Teaching Sustainability within the context of everyday life: Steps towards achieving the SDGs through the EUSTEPS approach. *Frontiers in Education*. 7. 639-793. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2022.639793>. Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/10400.2/12416_Q2.
9. Moreno Pires, S., Ferreira Dias, Onofrietti, G., Madeira, C., Nicolau M., Galli, A., Mancino, M.S., Patrizi, N., **Mapar, M.,** Malandrakis, G., Lopes, M., Pulselli, F.D., **Bacelar-Nicolau, P., Caeiro, S.,** Gomes, A.P., Nadais, M.H., Gigliotti, M., Papadopoulou, A., Niccolucci, V., Theodosiou, N., Zachos, D. (2022). Ecological Footprint Reduction Recommendations for Higher Education Institutions. IO8 ERASMUS+, KA203 2019-2022, Agreement No. 2019-1- ELO1-KA203-062941. 19 p. Universidade de Aveiro Pub. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.48528/3dh1-yb53>. ISBN:978-972-789-812-1. <http://hdl.handle.net/10400.2/12617>.

Media productions

1. Reduce energy costs. UAb Sustainable Campus Group. Collection “Be Sustainable at UAb”. Episode 1. <https://vimeo.com/778825195>.
2. Reduce your waste. UAb Sustainable Campus Group. Collection “Be Sustainable at UAb”. Episode 2. <https://vimeo.com/789066890>.
3. Reduce the water consumption. UAb Sustainable Campus Group. Collection “Be Sustainable at UAb”. Episode 3. <https://vimeo.com/802658559>.
4. Use transport consciously. UAb Sustainable Campus Group. Collection “Be Sustainable at UAb”. Episode 4. <https://vimeo.com/813551657>.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Future development activities of the Sustainable Campus Group are listed in Table 6.

Table 6- Future activities of Sustainable Campus

Actions	Estimated time
1. Continuing the implementations of the Energy Saving Plan 2022-2023 (following Activity 2)	Until Dec 2023
2. Implementation of the second and third phases of the waste management plan (following Activity 3)	Until 2024
3. Continuing the implementation of the Public Administration Resource Efficiency Programme – ECO.AP 2030, (triennium 2022 – 2024) (following Activity 4)	Until Dec 2024
4. Implementation of the second revision of micro-credential on ‘Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)’ to the broader audiences (students, public and private organizations) (following Activity 5)	Oct 2023 - Feb 2024
5. Implementation of the SLP “Art, Design, and Sustainability” in the pilot phase (following activity 6)	Nov 2023 -Feb 2024
6. Participating in the Time Higher Education (THE) Impact Ranking 2024 (following Activity 7)	Oct-Nov 2023
7. Monitoring the UAb Footprint Calculator for 2023 and suggesting recommendations (following Activity 8)	Until July 2024
8. STARS- Renovation of Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System (STARS) for UAb	2024
9. Implementing bicycles parks and awareness campaigns for smooth mobility of UAb staff (academic and non-academic)	2024
10. Evaluation of UAb student perspective about sustainability competences and pedagogical approached (Integrated in a International on-going study)	2024
11. Evaluation of UAb 1 ^o cicle students perspective about environmental literacy and how is integrated in the courses syllabus (Integrated in a national FCT funded project)	2024

Lisbon, 2023

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