EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION
SUSTENTÁVEL 2030

Sustentável 2030
What is it?

- Sustentável 2030 is a program dedicated to Climate Action and Sustainability;
- It has an allocation of €3.1 billion financed by the Cohesion Fund;
- It is a national program designed to address the challenges arising from sustainability and climate transition, with a special focus on decarbonizing various sectors of the economy.

Evaluation
How is the Sustainable 2030 Program progressing?

The evaluation aims to determine:

- Whether the strategy, monitoring mechanisms and support instruments are working well — and whether they are ensuring efficient implementation and tangible results;
- Whether the pace of execution shows that the Program is on the right track to meet its objectives and achieve the expected targets.

Evaluation Questions
How was the evaluation carried out?

The Evaluation Questions (EQs) go straight to what matters, covering the key aspects of the Program that are to be analysed. In the case of the evaluation of the implementation of Sustainable 2030, eight EQs were defined.

EQ1	Do the administrative processes and information systems used throughout the project work well and meet their objectives?
EQ2	Has the program been able to attract applications that are aligned with its objectives and suited to the profile of its main beneficiaries?
EQ3	Is the Program managing to select the projects that best contribute to achieving its objectives, within the required timeframes?
EQ4	Does the Program's information system function effectively and provide the essential data needed to manage, monitor, and evaluate the projects efficiently?
EQ5	Does the Program's management structure function well? Does the delegation of tasks to the IBs help make management more effective and efficient?
EQ6	Is the governance model truly helping to make the Program's management more effective and efficient?
EQ7	Is the Program's progress — in approved projects, committed funds, and execution — ensuring that the targets and objectives in each intervention area are being met?
EQ8	Is the Program's outreach/communication strategy working well?

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Methodology

The evaluation used multiple sources and information-gathering techniques to ensure a solid and reliable understanding of the evidence needed to answer the EQs: interviews, document analysis, case studies (Type I and Type II), surveys, and focus groups. A workshop related to the Type II case studies was also conducted. Interviews played a central role and, combined with document analysis, surveys, and case studies, made it possible to cross-check evidence, validate results, and deepen conclusions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Administrative Procedures
The Balcão dos Fundos makes applications and payments simpler, but it still needs greater flexibility and adaptation to the specificities of the programs. Despite clear documentation and standardised forms, usability challenges persist, as well as limitations in the capacity of both beneficiaries and technical teams.

Demand and Quality of Demand
The rapid launch of new calls (in the context of newly opened eligibilities) and the strengthening of capacity-building (indicators, technical justification, budgeting, and public procurement) are essential to improving the quality of applications. The increase in capacity-building opportunities should be accompanied by appropriate segmentation of target groups and better dissemination of the activities.

Efficiency of Selection and Decision Process
The delay in the execution of investments results from administrative and technical factors — spending authorisations, the Court of Auditors' approval, and insufficient planning. The spending authorisation is one of the major bottlenecks, and therefore its requirement as a minimum maturity criterion should be reconsidered, or a legislative solution should be created to simplify its obtainment. Ideally, the application and the spending authorisation should progress in parallel. Similarly, the Court of Auditors' approval could be obtained after the start of the works, provided that the legal framework allows it — a solution that is already being discussed within the scope of the State reform, according to the media. In the case of larger and more complex projects, the minimum maturity required at the application stage should be the execution project. This means planning investments earlier, anticipating needs instead of reacting only when a funding opportunity arises.

Information Collection and Indicators
The indicators are appropriate and consistent with the intervention areas. The work to improve the information-gathering system for indicators during the implementation phase should be continued.

Management Structure of Program
The delegation of responsibilities to the Intermediate Bodies (IBs) improves effectiveness and proximity to beneficiaries, but it requires greater autonomy and stronger technical capacity. The lack of specialised human resources limits the Managing Authority's ability to monitor and respond effectively.

Governance Model
The governance model ensures strategic coherence but shows an excess of formalism. The Monitoring Committee (MC) and the Climate Action and Sustainability Network (RACS) play important roles. In the case of the MC, communication and coordination among its members should be strengthened through the creation of thematic subgroups.

Implementation Pace
The execution of investments is hindered by administrative delays, overlapping funding periods, and unrealistic timelines presented by beneficiaries. Administrative simplification should be facilitated through legislative frameworks, and the application of penalties for non-compliance with the timeline approved by the Managing Authority should also be considered.

Program Visibility
The Communication Strategy is still in an early stage, with growing visibility but still below the targets. There is a lack of segmentation, monitoring, and dedicated human resources. It is necessary to strengthen the digital presence and encourage more active and strategic communication from beneficiaries.