Co-financing approved
for 5 Parques de Sintra projects

- Total investment of around €2,250,000
- Co-financing totalling approximately €1,344,000
- Projects approved for implementation in 2015
  - Rehabilitation of the Ajuda Arena for Equestrian Art performances
  - Restoration of the Amizade Estate/Sassetti Villa
  - Concerts in the Palaces of Sintra, Pena and Queluz
  - Joint visits to nature sites in Sintra and Mafra
  - Protection against invasive species

Sintra, 29th December 2014 – Parques de Sintra has recently received the approval of its application for the co-financing of five projects: four projects applying to POR Lisbon (Regional Operational Program) and one candidate project under PRODER (Rural Development Program), all taking place in 2015 and mostly in the first six months. These five projects foresee overall investment of approximately €2,250,000 of which around €1,344,000 is awarded by the aforementioned Programs. Hence, for each of its projects, the company receives a proportion of the investment carried out and thus minimising the impact on its budget.

Parques de Sintra manages various Parks, Monuments and Forested Hunting Grounds across the Sintra Cultural Landscape and making recourse only to the revenues it raises (from sales at ticket offices, stores, cafeterias and the renting of facilities). Thus, whenever possible the company applies for project funding in order to co-finance part of the investment necessary.

At this moment, the projects are either already under way or at an initial phase of implementation.

The now approved applications relate to different fields of the company's activities but especially the following projects: the rehabilitation of the Henrique Calado Arena on Calçada da Ajuda (for presentations by the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art); the restoration of the Amizade Estate/Sassetti Villa (designed by Luigi Manini and located on the route between the historical centre and the Palace of Pena/Moorish Castle sites); music seasons in the National Palaces of Sintra, Pena and Queluz; designing a
visit tour itinerary themed along “Nature in Parks and the Great Hunting Grounds”; and as well as protecting against harmful biotic agents (through the removal of invasive species).

The Rehabilitation of the Henrique Calado Arena project, on Calçada da Ajuda, involves both the adaptation and rehabilitation of this site and equipping it with that necessary to regularly hosting EPAE – the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art – performances and training sessions. This will provide the facilities to ensure EPAE may carry out its activities in an appropriately covered arena alongside the Coach Museum in an area of Lisbon with an equestrian tradition and a leading pole of tourism and leisure attraction. Beyond the restoration of the facades and the roof, the interior will also undergo a refurbishment process (installation of seating stands, a cafeteria and sanitary installations) in order to appropriately host the public to the highest standard. This project implies total investment of around €1,110,000 and obtained 65% co-financing from POR and is due for completion in the first quarter of 2015.

The restoration of the Amizade Estate/ Sassetti Villa spans the rehabilitation and intervention on this site both in terms of the built heritage as well as its natural values. This includes the restoration of the Sassetti Villa and the surrounding garden that rises up towards the hills as well as the other constructions and built features existing throughout the extent of its Estate. This will enable its enjoyment by visitors, in particular via the pedestrian footpath that leads up to the Moorish Castle and the Park and Palace of Pena after beginning in Sintra’s historical centre. This project incorporates investment amounting to around €617,000, with 65% POR support and completed by the end of June 2015.

The revitalisation project for the Palaces of Sintra, Pena and Queluz through Music seeks to combine the enjoyment of the architectural heritage in conjunction with the musical legacy through exploring the historical contexts of each palace. Hence, whether through concerts, conferences or educational programs, this strives to boost the ongoing heritage activities, attract new publics, raise awareness among young age groups, foster national musical culture, strengthen the visibility and recognition of the Palaces as well as mobilize partners. The various different events cover musical styles from the period between the 15th and 19th centuries and directly related with each
location. This project incorporates total investment of around €288,000, 40% co-financed by POR and coming to a close in June 2015.

The combined visit program “From Sintra to Mafra, Nature in Parks and the Great Hunting Grounds” aims to implement a joint visit strategy for the areas under management by Parques de Sintra and by Mafra National Hunting Grounds and thus resulting in a joint program for individual tourists and groups. A full and integrated visit of these two sites, including a tour of the Environmental Interpretation Centre, will foster a complete approach to the biodiversity of these locations. The project also includes the production of videos, brochures, websites and signposting, among other outputs. This project requires total investment of approximately €174,000 by Parques de Sintra and now with 40% co-financing from POR and under implementation through to the end of June 2015.

The protection against harmful biotic agents (invasive species) project focuses upon the intervention targeting an area of around 24 hectares recently acquired by Parques de Sintra in the Saldanha Hunting Grounds. This is an area with strong natural values and protected species that are currently facing a highly delicate situation due to the high density of species that are not characteristic of the Portuguese geography (non-indigenous) and displaying invasive characteristics and behaviours. These species also generate high levels of combustible materials and hence raising the risk of fire. We aim to continue identifying and eliminating the invasive species as is the case with the Acacias and Eucalyptus and correspondingly re-introducing native forestry to these areas and maximising the biodiversity whilst minimising the risk of irreversible losses. This annual project involves requires investment of around €46,000 and received 80% in funding support from PRODER.

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About Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua
Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua, S.A. (PSML) is a state-owned limited company with exclusively public capital that was created in 2000 following the recognition by UNESCO of the Cultural Landscape of Sintra as a World Heritage Site. The company was created to assemble the public institutions responsible for preserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage in Sintra. PSML has been entrusted with the management of the State's main properties in the area. Because it does not resort to the State Budget, PSML depends entirely on proceeds from the tickets sale, shops, cafeterias and hiring of venues for events, in order to restore, maintain and promote the heritage it manages.
In 2013, the natural and cultural heritage managed by PSML (the Park and Palace of Pena, the National Palaces of Sintra and Queluz, the Chalet of the Countess of Edla, the Moorish Castle, the Palace and Gardens of Monserrate, the Convent of the Capuchos and the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art) welcomed approximately 1,700,000 visitors, over 90% of whom were from outside of Portugal.

The shareholders of PSML are the Directorate General of Treasury and Finance (Direção Geral do Tesouro e Finanças - representing the State), the Institute for the Conservation of Nature and Biodiversity (Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e Biodiversidade - ICNB), the Portuguese Tourism Board (Turismo de Portugal) and the Municipality of Sintra (Câmara Municipal de Sintra - CMS).

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