

Article

The Role of Ports in Tourism: Porto Santo Harbour

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Abstract: The island of Porto Santo belongs to the Madeira Archipelago and is often described as an idyllic paradise for its warm waters and its iconic sandy beach, though it faces vulnerabilities such as insularity; a small economy; geographic remoteness; and scarce population, area, and available resources. Nevertheless, these disadvantages have a silver lining because small territories can act as laboratories to test and develop models that can subsequently be implemented at a larger scale. This work provides a case study of the role of ports in tourism development. It presents an analysis of air and maritime transport used by tourists to visit the Island of Porto Santo, Madeira Islands, Portugal. The climate changes and strong winds during the year can reduce tourist demand for the inter-island sea travel in the Madeira Archipelago. Porto Santo is a strategic transfer point for tourism, and improving the shipping infrastructures will enable a faster and more diversified maritime transportation system. To capitalise on these developments, Porto Santo needs to improve its reputation as an exclusive beach destination. This will reduce tourism seasonality and improve sustainability.

Keywords: economic growth; insular territories; ports; sustainable planning; transport and mobility



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1. Introduction

Porto Santo is an island in the Archipelago of Madeira, as shown in Figure 1. The main economic sector of the island is tourism, based on its beaches and climate. Due to its peripheral location, transportation is a key consideration that places constraints on the local tourism economy. However, increases in transport accessibility are dependent on demand and in turn accommodation availability.

Meanwhile, sustainable tourism refers to sustainable practices in and by the tourism industry. It is an aspiration to acknowledge all impacts of tourism, both positive and negative. It aims to minimize the negative impacts and maximize the positive ones. Sustainable tourism is defined by the UN Environment Program and UN World Tourism Organization as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.” Additionally, sustainable tourism “refers to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability” [1–5].

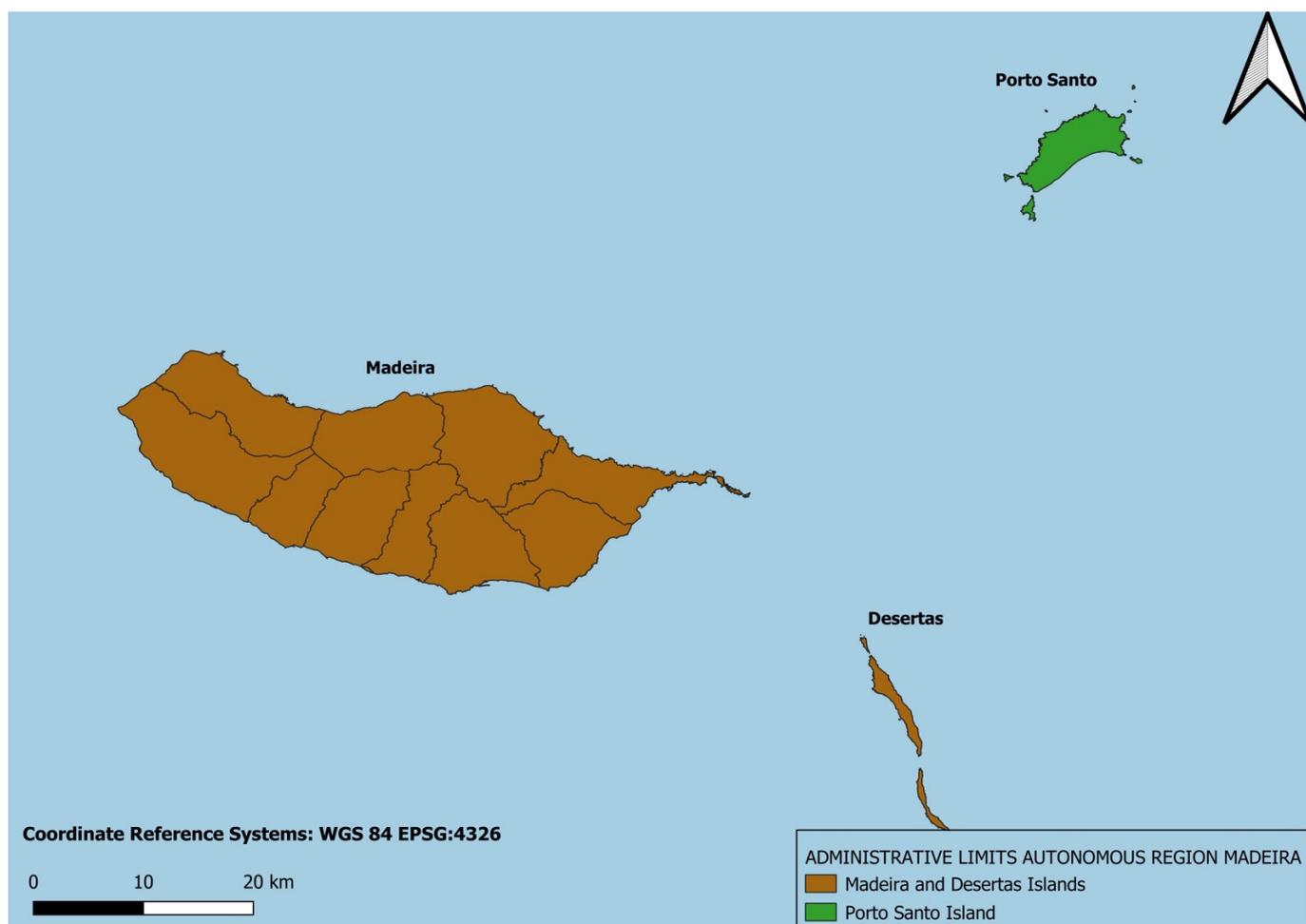


Figure 1. Archipelago of Madeira—Porto Santo Island. (Source: Authors by ESRI ArcGIS, 2020).

The definition states that sustainable tourism should satisfy the requirements of current visitors and host communities while preserving and enhancing prospects for the future. In order to do this, it is necessary to manage all resources in a way that satisfies economic, social, and aesthetic goals while preserving cultural integrity, crucial ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems [6].

The competitiveness and quality of tourism destinations, which are influenced by both natural and cultural settings, as well as their successful integration into the local community, are the foundations of tourism sustainability [7].

Tourism is considered one of the most important pillars for the social and economic sustainability of many regions and localities. Its impact is strong in various segments of society, and it is an excellent source of income and socioeconomic development for any region or country in the world. The economic importance of tourism and the sociocultural nature of the tourism phenomenon are undeniable in societies where tourism develops [8].

Tourist activity on the island of Porto Santo is considered by many a lifeline for the development of the island. In fact, tourism, thanks to its economic and social importance, is an important pillar of the island's economy and development, as it constitutes a market of excellence for local products. It thus becomes the sector with the most weight in the local economy, bringing with it a number of activities, both commercial and very relevant services [8].

In this process, the ports constitute the identity frameworks of the cities that were born from them; with them they grew and have been transformed, tending to integrate recreational, cultural, and tourist uses in their activity [9].

Following the extensive changes within the post-industrial economic environment over the previous few decades, port cities all over the world reorganized themselves to meet the new demands and challenges. The conversion of beachfront vacant land parcels to new uses, often the so-called emergent landscapes of consumption like shopping malls and entertainment centers, was one of the numerous developments that attracted notice. Different port cities have gradually incorporated tourism activities into urban waterfront reconstruction projects due to widespread de-industrialization, the growth of the service sector, and the belief that tourism development would lead to the regeneration of urban centers [10,11].

Today, waterfront revitalization is a worldwide trend, with thousands of projects being implemented in major cities, medium-sized cities, and even small towns. Waterfronts offer highly exploitable urban spaces for new purposes including large-scale office, leisure, and residential buildings due to their excellent placement at the interface between built environment and water, close to the city centers [12–20]. Unlike more recent projects, which must deal with complicated urban development issues, early examples of historic waterfront redevelopment concentrated primarily on leisure and retail applications [15,21,22]. The transformation from a manufacturing to service-based economy and the rising demand for cultural amenities in post-industrial towns eventually made culture an essential tool for waterfront revitalization. Due to the widespread utilization of abandoned warehouses and port factories as venues for cultural events and amenities, historic waterfronts are now more appealing to tourists and have greater local vibrancy [16,17,23].

Due to the concentration of engaging land and sea activities, urban waterfronts—generally defined as the area of a town or city that borders the water, particularly a district of wharves where ships dock—have traditionally been advantageous locations [14,24–30]. Water was the primary human resource for sustenance, irrigation, and transportation in man’s early settlements, and events and development along the world’s coasts, rivers, bays, and lakes have played crucial roles in civilization. In the past, port expansion has dominated neighborhood life by enhancing the local economy and adding a cosmopolitan element. Ports developed into important urban centers thanks to a number of productive industries, including manufacturing and the modern “product services,” as well as the development of thriving urbanist cultures and societies [31]. This development process of value-added labor, value-added production, and value-added service [25] epitomizes the diversity of ports and their significance to life, industry, and commerce [32], from the early fishing village developing from settlements near the water to the busy transshipment stations serving the rapidly growing global transportation up to the modern expanding logistics hubs [25].

The 20th century saw a decline in the functional relationship between ports and cities, mostly as a result of advancements in maritime technology and the increasingly multifunctional nature of post-industrial cities, which steadily reduced their reliance on port activities. Ports were gradually pushed out of the center of cities as a result of shifts in international shipping methods, which resulted in the employment of ever-larger ships, containerization, and more extensive stocking areas. Following port closures, traditional harbor and manufacturing businesses saw a slump and relocated to the suburbs. The traditional harbor economy rapidly ceased to serve as the primary economic engine for urban growth, leading to sharp declines in local labor forces, depopulation, and urban decay. Historic waterfront dock areas have changed from being emblems of affluence to being symbols of social and economic decline [29,33,34].

However, as Ashworth [13] notes, the waterfront’s abandonment by ports and related industries, along with these regions’ likely prior historical significance, led to the conservation of architectural artifacts and historical connotations. The ensuing “zone of discard” [35], which was at or near city centers and involved the land/water interface, endowed urban waterfronts with potentially high-quality constructed environments from which stem intrinsic qualities that might be used as resources for urban tourism. In order to restore their economic and social connections with the city and support urban economic growth, formerly

active but now underutilized and physically degraded port districts have to adapt their uses [12]. Waterfront restructuring, also known as waterfront “redevelopment,” “regeneration,” “revitalization,” or “rehabilitation” in the literature [28,36–38], became the focus of urban planning initiatives in the context of sustainable urban development strategy.

The gradually growing flows of urban tourism, which is classified as a complex phenomenon with a diversified and ill-defined collection of activities, are fueling tourism, which is commonly believed by academics and practitioners to become the largest worldwide industry [24,39]. Cities around the world are transforming into hotspots for cultural tourism, and to varying degrees [40] based on local elements like legacies of beautiful buildings and history but also on contemporary cultural interchange and experience, which combine to produce various results.

Paradoxically so close to nature, climate, and tides, and so heavily industrialized and close to civilization (cities and the globalized world), ports are unique places, populated with contrasting facets. Warehouses, docks, cranes and hoists, unexpected corners, quays, walls, rails, cargo and containers, along with old boats and some abandoned spaces, are other characteristic images of the port. On the other hand, as borders, ports have always had their own control and security mechanisms, namely military/police, customs and sanitary [9,41,42].

The global economy benefits from the dynamic development of maritime transport. International maritime trade, transportation, and tourism are all sea-based activities that are critical to modern society’s economic development [43–45].

This study aims to understand the role of ports as tourism resources and how to maximize the outcome of a faster and diversified maritime transportation system.

In order to understand the interactions between supply of transportation and accommodation and anticipated demand, this study examines first operational port capacity and any development issues, then the ongoing economy of the port in the light of external trends. Next, there is a discussion of past and projected tourism accommodation trends followed by some general concerning strategies for the tourism development for the Island of Porto Santo in a sustainable way.

2. Port Study

2.1. Schematic of the Methodology

To structure the methodology for this study, it was subdivided into six chapters, as illustrated in Figure 2. Extensive bibliographic research and review was initially performed. Then, from the bibliography taken into consideration, data were selected related to the theme under study towards deepening the analysis. Using programmed Excel sheets, it became possible to determine the parameters and indexes needed, i.e., significant wave height, peak period, direction of propagation.

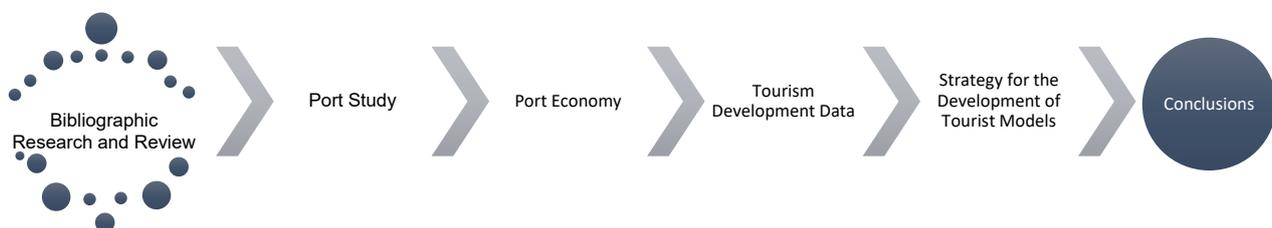


Figure 2. Organogram of the adopted methodology (source: Authors).

Then, the port economy in general is discussed, as well as specifying the importance of the port for the local economy (Porto Santo Island). Subsequently, the duly processed data relating to tourism development are presented. Subsequently, a chapter on strategy for the development of tourist models for Porto Santo Island is included.

Finally, in the last chapter of the methodology, some conclusions were drawn, expanding the scope of this paper. The following steps are further explained above.

2.2. Case Study

This section examines the Port of Porto Santo Island in order to maximize its use, being a key element for the local economy, as well as allowing the development of tourism. The Archipelago of Madeira is located in the Atlantic Ocean, close to the African coast. The archipelago of Madeira belongs to a biogeographic region called Macaronesia that includes the archipelagos of Azores, Canaries and Cape Verde. These are all volcanic islands and have biological, geological and human similarities [46]. Porto Santo is located in the northeast of Madeira Island and southwest of Portugal's mainland. The island has an area of approximately 41 km², a 38 km coastal strip, is 11 km long between Furna das Amasiadas and Ponta do Focinho do Urso, and 6 km wide from Ponta da Cruz to Ponta do Incão [46–49]. The number of people residing in Porto Santo has increased over the last century with 4473 inhabitants in 2001 and 5483 inhabitants in 2011 [46,47,50].

The Autonomous Region of Madeira has a number of port structures around its coast. The Port of Porto Santo Island is located northeast of Madeira Island and 26 km from Ponta de S. Lourenço [51–53]. The Port of Porto Santo Island is characterized by being a mixed infrastructure, as it is used by cruise ships and cargo ships, as shown in Figure 3. In addition, as can be observed in Figure 4, it has a pier for fishing vessels, recreational vessels and a cement terminal, thus being considered a small-scale port when compared with the resident population.



Figure 3. Port of Porto Santo Island (Plan). (Adapted from: APRAM - Administração dos Portos da Região Autónoma da Madeira, S. A.).

The main pier is in the south, is 290.0 m long, and it has a hydrographic zero of 7.0 m and a roll-on/roll-off ramp. It is used by cruise ships and cargo ships with a maximum length of 150 m. The protection pier has a length of 210 m and a draft of 4.0 m [54]. This pier is used by fishing and recreational vessels. The port is quite exposed to the southern sea, and when the tide is strong it becomes inoperable for ships, but 95% of the time it is fully functional [54]. In addition, the Lobo Marinho undergoes maintenance for five weeks a year and unavailable for the transportation of people and goods.



Figure 4. Port of Porto Santo Island. (Source: Authors).

The geographic location, altitude and relief orientation are key factors when determining a region's climatic characteristics. For Madeira Island, the climate tends to be mild during the year in areas of medium and low altitude, with lower temperatures in the mountainous slopes. Porto Santo has a lower average altitude than Madeira, making the climate less humid. Therefore, the climatic characteristics of the island of Porto Santo are a reflection of a set of factors such as location, reduced area, relief, altitude [55,56].

The annual rainfall distribution of Porto Santo (Figure 5) shows the variation in precipitation on the island, where the rainfall is more intense between October and March, having its peaks between November and December and between February and March. It is also noted that in periods close to July, the precipitation reaches its minimum.

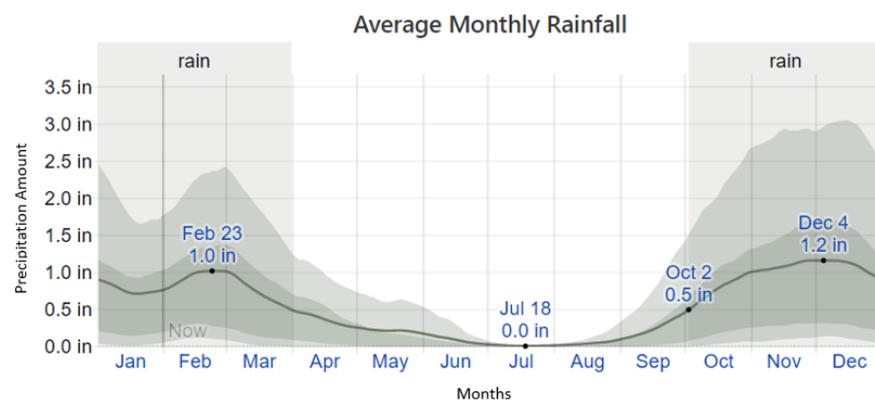


Figure 5. Annual rainfall distribution in Porto Santo. (Source: Madeira Regional Delegation of the Meteorological Institute).

The data retrieved from Madeira Regional Delegation of the Meteorological Institute between the years of 1961 until 1990, enables us to characterize the island considering multiple parameters—e.g., cloudiness, temperature, humidity, atmospheric pressure, potential evapotranspiration, sunshine and wind [55,56].

“Climatically, Porto Santo is located in the domain of the trade winds that blow most of the year from the north. Unlike in Madeira, the island does not have a mountainous barrier preventing their passage, so they sweep the island in all directions, reaching very high speeds. The absence of high

altitudes makes it difficult for condensation (and subsequently rainfall) of the surrounding moist air masses. [...] To these unfavourable natural conditions there is also the thinness and poverty of sandy, salty soils with high percentage of clays, which does not allow the development of vegetation, nor favour agriculture [55,57]”.

In relation to vegetation, note that there is little vegetation present on Porto Santo and that the trees present on the island are due to the reforestation program [58]. This program began since “the regional forest was consumed early, subsisting, in areas inaccessible to man. The dragon tree, the juniper, the marmulano, the wild-olive tree, the zambujeiro and the laurel tree subsisted probably because they are resistant to dryness” [55].

2.3. Coastal Dynamics

The geological and geomorphological characteristics associated with the capacity for erosion and transport of solids appear to be factors that influence the dynamics of the coastal strip of the island of Porto Santo. Sea waves and tidal currents have modified the coast. The tide has a maximum height of 2.9 m and direction of propagation from the south (spate), changing its course to the east where it reaches a speed of 0.5 m/s [54]. The rise of the sea level in association with meteorological events, i.e., storm surge, are reported by APRAM (1998) and LNEC (2004) as having a maximum value of 0.6 m for storms. Thus, the study of the maritime climate is a relevant element in the planning and design process of maritime-port infrastructures, enabling the determination of wave conditions using historical data from local waves [59].

The peak period of the waves is a highly variable parameter, with a maximum around 8 s. A detailed analysis of wave data indicates that the prominent wave propagation in Porto Santo is found in the northeast quadrant, with approximately 32.03% of the waves originated in the north and 23.92% in the north-northeast. On the other hand, from the northwest quadrant, there are 6.10% of north-northwest and 2.37% of northwest, as can be observed in Figure 6.

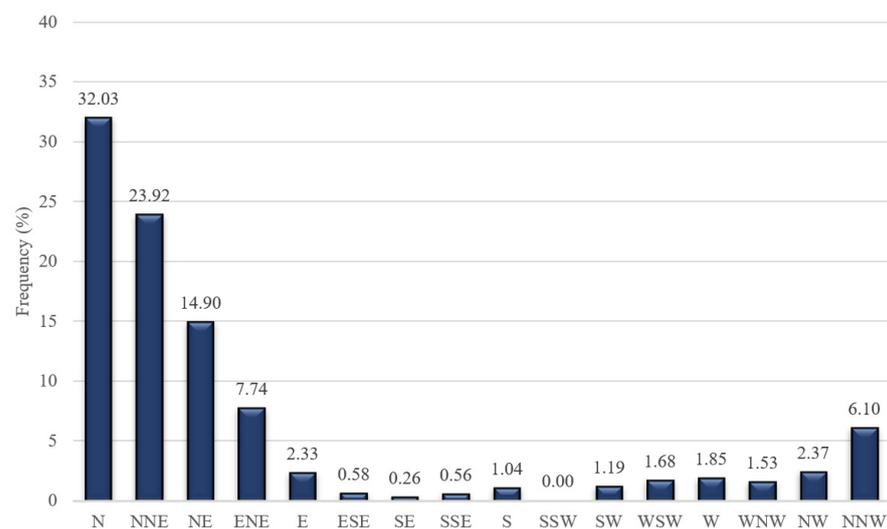


Figure 6. Porto Santo’s waves propagation direction. (Source: Authors).

Regarding the predominant significant wave height, it appears that it is between 1.0 and 1.5 m, 10% of the times coming from the north and 7.5% of the times from the north-northeast, as can be observed in Figure 7.

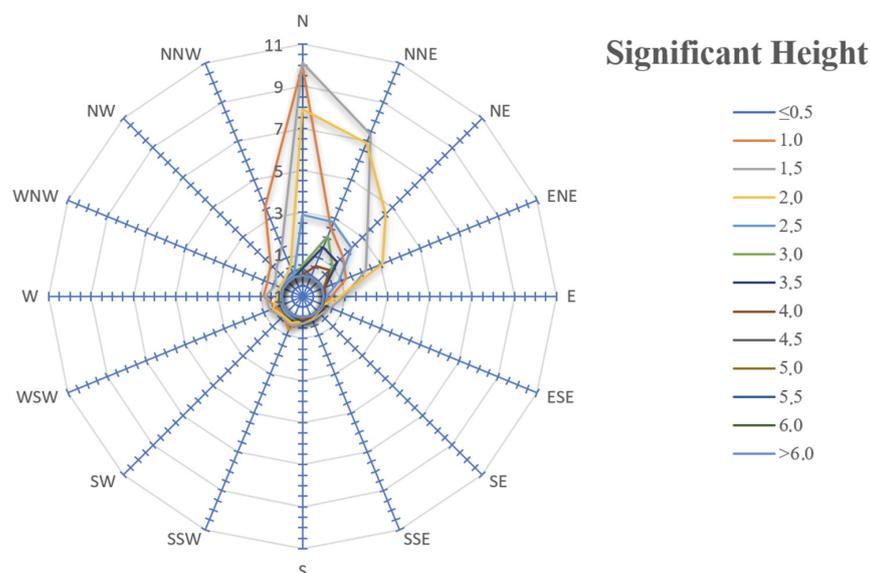


Figure 7. Direction of the significant wave heights of Porto Santo. (Source: Authors).

These data validate the previously description that the port is quite exposed to the southern sea and that only 5% of the time does it become inoperable for ships. As previously described, Lobo Marinho undergoes maintenance for five weeks a year and is unavailable for the transportation of people and goods. This maintenance turns out to be relevant in the analysis of wave data, having implications and affecting tourism in Porto Santo.

Therefore, in relation to the Port of Porto Santo Island, its form of execution and geographical framing in relation to the island. The fact that the island climate is not very humid, with more intense rains between October and March and trade winds most of the year from the north. In terms of coastal dynamics, the maritime agitation that affects the use of the port is little relevant, making the port inoperable for only 5% of the time (about 3 weeks per year). The joint analysis of these factors validates this port as a key element for the local economy, as well as for the development of tourism.

The island of Porto Santo has unique characteristics: Its excellent geographical location and its fabulous climate make it an appealing destination, despite its reduced dissemination, which is well implemented, and all its great features can make it a destination for tourists.

3. Port Economy

This section aims to assess whether the port of the island of Porto Santo has become a fundamental element for economic development, achieved through the increase of its use in a sustainable way, both by passengers and in the loading and unloading of goods.

Over the past few years, ports have become a strategic point for economic development in different regions worldwide. Contextually, ports not only influence the cost of living, but also the speed at which ships move along a country's coast [60].

"It can be said that a port is a place that provides good conditions for anchoring and permanence of ships, in a relatively safe way, which can shelter them from winds and storms. Vessels and ships dock in order to embark or disembark passengers and load or unload goods [61,62]".

The relevance of ports concerning a country's economy for matters of tourism and cargo transportation is evidenced in countries with an economic base geared to international trade [63–65]. According to Estrela, the Portuguese port management model started to stand out in 2012 due to three main reasons [66–71], namely:

- Troika: the government intends to improve the management of the port system;
- Exports: the progress of industrial exports is an important tool for reducing the impacts of the economic crisis;
- Sea: the endogenous resource potential must be maximized.

The Troika, consisting of the European Commission, ECB and IMF, negotiated an Economic Adjustment Programme aimed at restoring confidence, enabling the return of the economy to sustainable growth, and safeguarding financial stability in Portugal, a euro area in the European Union.

According to the Memorandum of Understanding on Economic Policy Conditionalities, the government was to adopt several measures in the waterway transport sector, as stated by Estrela (2014):

- Define a strategy to integrate ports into the global logistics and transport system. Establish the goals, scope and priorities of the strategy, as well as the respective link to the Strategic Transport Plan;
- Develop a legal framework to facilitate the implementation of the strategy and improve the governance model of the port system. Define the necessary measures to ensure the separation of regulatory activity, port management and commercial activities.

Since 2012, several documents with strategic content published by the government on the theme of the sea and ports have been published in order to follow the guidelines suggested by the European Union.

“What is impressive about the vision of the sea economy outlined in this study, is the possibility to grow and the subsequent business opportunities that are envisaged, when comparing the current situation with the natural potential of the resource and the use of the sea and when external long-term trends are known, which are driving a growing international demand for products and services related to the sea’s economy [67].”

Regarding the port on Porto Santo Island, there has been exponential growth in the number of passengers—mostly on cruise ships—during the last twenty years, following the global trend [68]. According to Brida, between 1990 and 2007, there was an average annual growth of 7.4%, and even with the slowdown in the growth rate, it is likely that this growth will be maintained in the future [68].

This growth can be understood as the result of a strategic change of cruising routes, making it affordable to everyone. Branchik and Dickinson and Vladimir corroborate this theory, stating that the adaptation of the ships and offer made it possible for the middle class to use this type of service [69].

4. Tourism Development Data

In this section, data related to tourist demand for accommodation and transport are analysed, specifically, the time series on the number of hotel establishments in operation, the number of guests entering hotel establishments, the evolution of the average stay in hotel units and preference for the transportation mode of passengers and goods (by air or sea).

The Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira (DREM) releases every year short and long series of metadata collected over the years, making it possible to create comparative graphs for different themes, e.g., tourism, transport, economy. The number of hotel establishments in Porto Santo has seen minor changes over the years, except for the time period between 2012 and 2015, i.e., the Portuguese economic crisis (Figure 8).

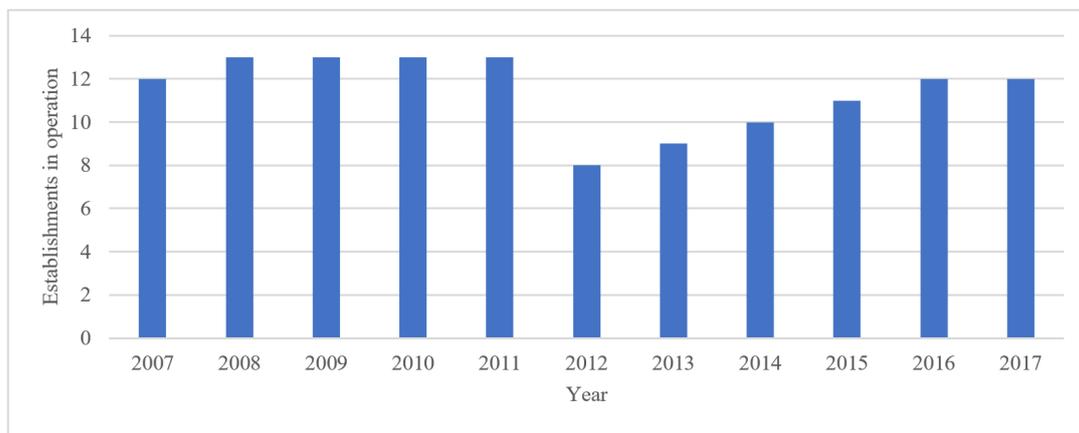


Figure 8. Number of hotel establishments in operation. (Source: Edited by Authors).

The comparative graph shown in Figure 9 lists the number of guests entering hotel establishments, subdivided into two categories, residing in Portugal and foreigners, between the years 2007 and 2017. It is possible to identify two distinct time periods in the graph, the first taking place between the years of 2007 and 2012 and the second between 2012 and 2017.

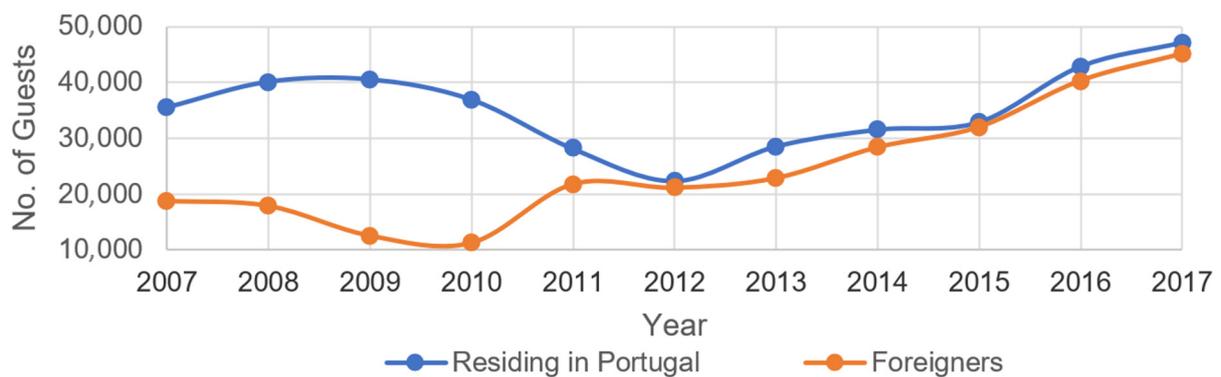


Figure 9. Guests entering Porto Santo. (Source: Authors).

The first season shows a clear preference of national guests over foreigners with the maximum differential being reached in 2009, approximately 28,000 more national guests (40,514 in total) than foreigners. On the other hand, during the second season, the maximum differential was only 5675 in 2013, with both types reaching over 45,000 guests in 2019, although with a slight preference for the Portuguese.

Thus, the growing demand for Porto Santo as a tourist hub becomes evident, where the stay overnight is a key parameter, that is, the stays last at least four nights on the island, a positive indicator that favours a tourist destination’s sustainability (Figure 10).

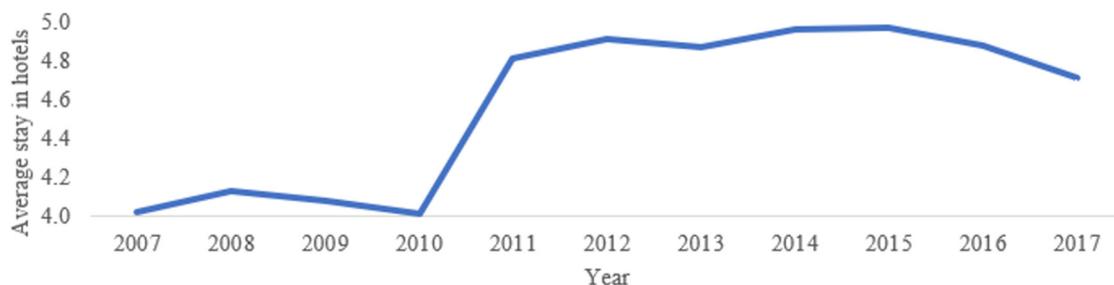


Figure 10. Average stay in hotel units. (Source: Authors).

Assessing the record of disembarked passengers, differentiating them as to their entry route on the island, Figure 11, there is a period of decrease in both methods between the years of 2008 and 2012, which then stabilizes until 2014, when the disembark of passengers either by sea or air starts to increase again reaching values of 167,235 and 78,370 passengers in 2019, respectively.

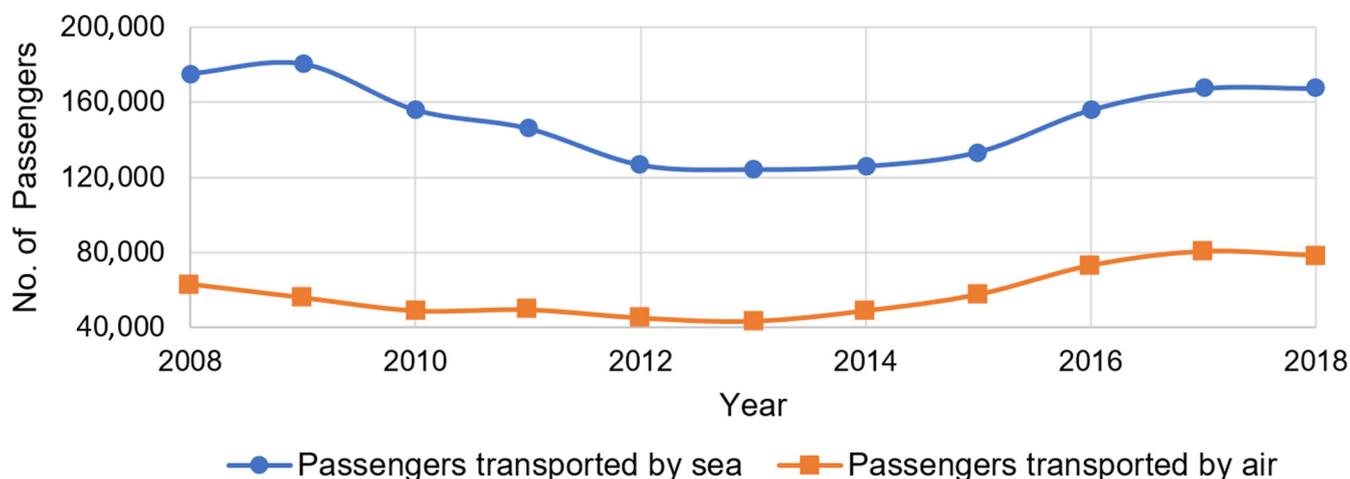


Figure 11. Passengers disembarked in Porto Santo. (Source: Edited by Authors).

In 2011, there was also an increase in the number of average stays in hotels related to the strategy implemented by the ARM (Autonomous Region of Madeira) government to promote Destination Madeira internally and externally with a view to strengthening competitiveness in view of the situation experienced at the time and competing destinations. Porto Santo has always been promoted as a beach destination due to the quality and richness of its grains of sand and the temperature of its turquoise waters. These qualities are worth the title of Golden Island, or even “Caribbean Europe”; however, with the strategy implemented by the ARM government, other points of attraction were valued [72,73]

Although the annual records remain within the same order of magnitude, the preference for the sea route as a way for tourism to travel to the island is evident, the maximum differential being reached in 2009 with approximately 125,000 more passengers than by air. This highlights the importance of the port of Porto Santo as a strategic point and enhances the need to optimize the process. On the other hand, despite the increase in the demand for air transport to the island, this study highlights the possibility of maximizing the existing resources, promoting tourism sustainability, particularly in other seasons.

Finally, a comparison is made between both access routes to Porto Santo for the transportation of goods, as shown in Table 1, with particular emphasis on the sea route with a maximum of 60,890 tonnes compared with 191 by air in 2008. Analysing the temporal evolution of cargo transportation in Figures 12 and 13, the currently recorded minimum values are noticeable, implying lower consumption by the residents and non-residents and subsequently the need to adopt strategies to stimulate Porto Santo’s local economy. Regarding 2018, the last year under analysis, the amount of cargo transportation was approximately 21,175 tonnes by sea and only 63 by air.

Table 1. Cargo and goods unloaded by sea and by air in Porto Santo. (Source: Authors).

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Cargo and goods unloaded by sea (t)	60,890	35,097	29,190	23,819	21,536	19,678	23,410	18,629	17,291	20,135	21,175
Cargo and goods unloaded by air (t)	191	168	135	120	116	106	68	58	57	43	63

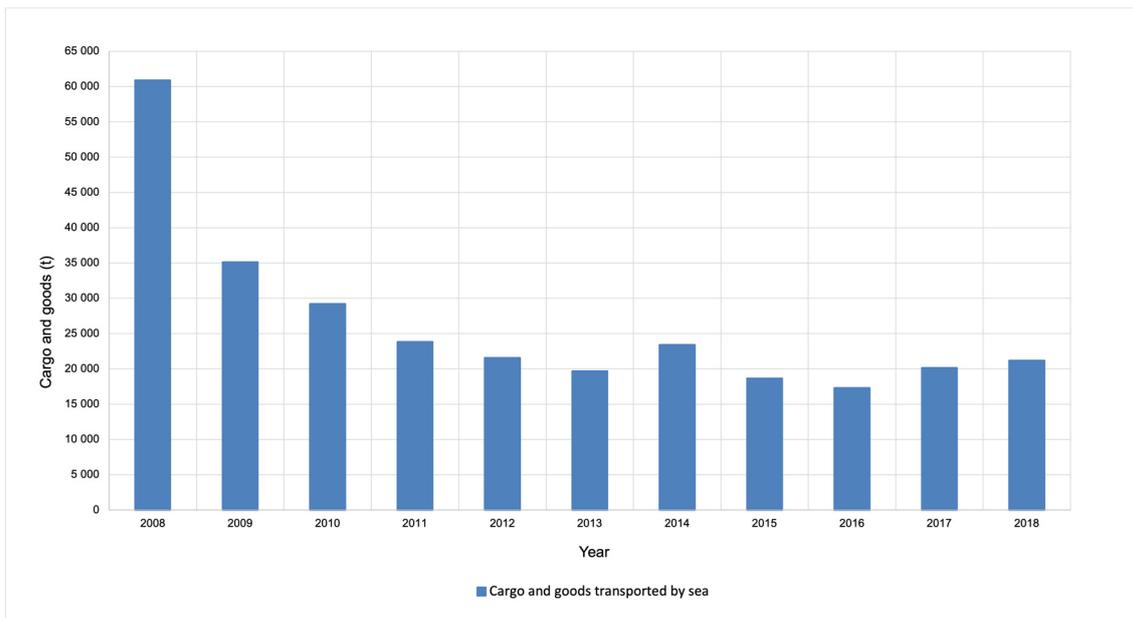


Figure 12. Cargo and goods unloaded by sea in Porto Santo. (Source: Authors).

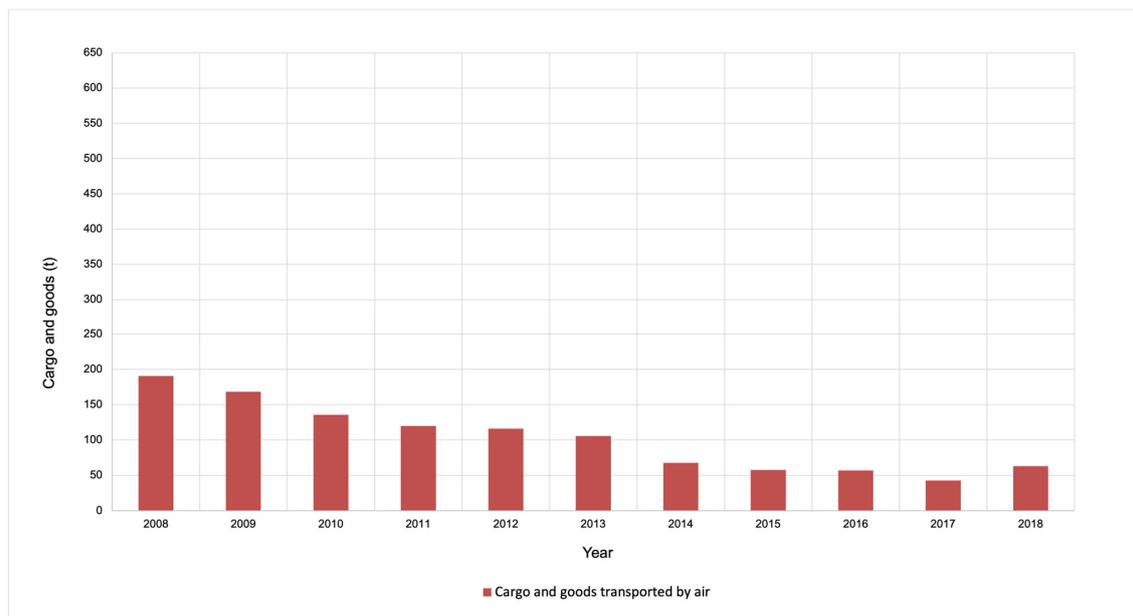


Figure 13. Cargo and goods unloaded by air in Porto Santo. (Source: Authors).

The results in this section indicate a preference for the transport of passengers and goods by sea. The island of Porto Santo suffered from a decline in demand at the beginning of the last decade that resulted first in a reduction in the hotel establishments in operation in 2012 followed by a longer-term trend towards higher international visitor numbers and also longer average stays in hotel units. It appears that there is ongoing demand for travel to Madeira and Porto Santo.

5. Strategy for the Development of Tourist Models

This section reviews regional and sectorial reference documents, including those related to the national strategy for the sector, updated statistical and qualitative information, as well as the most recent international studies.

The various changes that occurred in the regional, national and international conjuncture determine a global review and a strategic reorientation in the approach to the sector and its different components in order to reinforce and consolidate the work that has been developed by the Regional Government of Madeira, by the Madeira Promotion Association, by the sector's private agents and by all other related entities, framing it and laying the necessary foundations for the future.

5.1. Actual Situation

According to GRM (Regional Government of Madeira)-A1 (2017), an increase of 3.3% per year in international tourism is expected worldwide between the period of 2010 and 2030. However, from the analysis between the years of 2000 and 2015, there is a stabilization in the number of accommodation and tourist establishments in the Autonomous Region of Madeira [74], as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Evolution of the accommodation offer by number of beds. (Source: Edited by Authors).

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
ARM	22,722	25,399	26,894	27,019	27,949	28,069	27,799	27,307
Var. %	0%	11.8%	5.9%	0.5%	3.4%	0.4%	−1.0%	−1.8%
Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
ARM	28,057	28,915	28,530	28,399	27,732	27,862	28,281	28,432
Var. %	2.7%	3.1%	−1.3%	−0.5%	−2.3%	0.5%	1.5%	0.5%

The analysis of the table presented above corroborates that except for the variation between 2000 and 2001, there was not a clear increase in the local tourist supply, probably because the supply is less than the demand.

In this context, the potential for growth in the offer of accommodation in ARM reveals itself to be pivotal towards ARM's sustainable development, particularly of Porto Santo [74].

5.2. Model Improvement Proposals

The island of Porto Santo despite its contained socio-territorial and cultural dimension presents a diversified and qualified matrix, with the potential to develop sustainable and sustained tourism, with a diversity of spaces for nature, sports and leisure activities. To do this, it will have to rebalance its positioning and seek to base its development on a different and differentiating tourism model.

The tourist model for the island of Porto Santo is based on the following vision for this island: enhancing the affirmation of Porto Santo in Destination Madeira due to the uniqueness of its socio-territorial dimension and its environmental, landscape, historical and cultural particularities.

For Porto Santo, "[...] there is a strong probability of growth in the offer of tourist accommodation (in a tourist resort) to adopt the format of "self-sufficient" tourist estab-

ishments based on an all-inclusive offer and supported by charter air transport operations (GRM, 2017)”. Therefore, for the optimization of the tourism model it becomes necessary for the following topics [38], as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Optimization of the tourism model—Topics.

General Aspect	Environmental Aspect
Increase the routes between the archipelago’s most important islands and between the mainland and Porto Santo	The sustainable use of water and low carbon emissions
Fixation of the population residing on the island by improving their life quality	Sustainable management of solid waste and urban effluents
Flexibility of the local economy	
Proper control concerning the growth of leisure-housing and the regulation of the entry market, in order to consider other demands, thus exploring the sustainable development of the territory	Decrease in the use of fossil fuels through the improvement and implementation of renewable energy sources
Use of a global mobility system (electric vehicles and second-life batteries), in order to allow the free movement of tourists through the various facilities, both existing and to be built in the future	Enable sustainable mobility
Emphasize the development based on tourist’s well-being, safety and comfort	
Validation of Porto Santo’s tourism destination’s quality, considering its products and services	Providing support for sustainable tourism entrepreneurship

5.3. Strategic Options

The strategic option adopted is the need to position Porto Santo as differentiated and authentic, with high-quality tourism.

Develop Porto Santo as a differentiated tourist destination based on the authenticity of the offer; genuine and quality service; and economic, social and environmental sustainability.

According to the Regional Government of Madeira, the systematization of the development aspects is based on a guideline with four fundamental topics [38], as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Systematization of the development aspects—Topics.

Structural factors	Recognition of the singularity in ARM’s offer
	Public sector’s intervention towards the regulation of development
	Valorisation of natural and cultural resources
	Structuring of tourism products
	Maintenance of the acquired sustainable status
Demand Segmentation	Consolidated tourist sectors
	Unconsolidated tourist sectors
	Tourists
	Residents

Table 4. Cont.

Geographic Segmentation of the Offer	Valorisation of the existing heritage
	Improvement of the complementary offer
	Decreasing costs for tourists
	Management based on the population growth-rate
Quality of the Products and Services	Nature and landscape
	The sun and the sea
	Culture
	Well-being
	Sport

5.4. Growth Prospects

The ARM that saw an evolution in demand between 2000 and 2015 of just 1.5% (lower than the growth seen for Europe between 1980 and 2010—higher than 3%) should not be able to exceed this indicator and, in the case of maintaining the same dynamics compared with Europe, will be below the European indicator again, that is, below the line of 2.3% of annual average growth. Despite this indicator, the constructive dynamics related to the creation of the number of beds have an increasing trend.

“There are 3873 beds in ARM in tourism establishments under construction, of which approximately 20% are located in Porto Santo and 60% in Funchal [37]”, while the remaining 20% can be found in other municipalities of Madeira. Regarding future investments, there are approximately 2304 beds already approved by the Regional Tourism Directorate (DRT), as shown in the Table 5.

Table 5. Tourism development projects in ARM. (Source: Edited by Authors).

Municipality	2016	In Construction 2017/2018		Approved Projects		POT 2002/2012
	Existent	Started	Total	Not Started	Total	Beds
Porto Santo	3154	706	3860	900	4760	4000
Madeira	27,540	3167	30,707	1404	32,111	35,000
ARM	30,694	3873	34,567	2304	36,871	39,000

As described at the beginning of this section, based on specific documents as well as on the conjuncture that defines the evolution of tourism at a global level, the port of the island of Porto Santo is a key part in the evolution of tourism in a sustainable way, as it is allied with the optimization of tourism models and its growth. The topics presented in the previous sub-sections are intrinsically connected to the use of the main tourist entry structure on the island, the respective port.

6. Conclusions

In conclusion, the port of the island of Porto Santo is a key and unique element in sustainable and sustained tourism that allows for enhancing different activities, thus being a unique piece in the development of a different and differentiating tourism model.

This study provides an extensive analysis of the port of Porto Santo Island, and the parameters that influence its effect on the local economy. Porto Santo’s climate is influenced by the small area and low relief of the island. These factors, among others, make it less humid and the soil more arid, and less useful for agricultural purposes. The climate affects the production capacity, leading to an increase in imports and therefore to the transportation of cargo and goods. The sea route is preferable to air for transporting goods, so the port infrastructure of Porto Santo Island is the strategic point for loading and unloading goods.

An analysis of the coastal dynamics and sea waves that tend to affect the island indicate that the predominant wave direction is from the northeast quadrant, with a predominant wave height estimated between 1.5 and 2.0 m, occurring during 30.2% of the recorded time and with a maximum wave height of between 4.5 and 5 m. The records of the operation of Porto Santo's port indicate that the maximum wave heights during heavy storm events would have a greater impact on the local economy, due to the inconveniences to the transportation of passengers, cargo and goods by sea.

An analysis of the evolution of tourism and access to the island, either by sea or air, indicates a clear preference for the sea route between islands. This highlights the importance of passenger daily transport by a regional company, which can also be seen in the prices of the air alternative, which may be two to three times higher than sea. The Funchal-Porto Santo connection, and vice versa, is currently carried out by a single company for each type of passenger transport, which ends up making the sea route much more economically and financially attractive. This compensates for the travel time, which is four to five times longer. In this sense, the value of transportation by sea and subsequently of the port of Porto Santo Island is unquestionable. Therefore, due to the increase in investments made and the implementation of development strategies, there is a constant improvement in the performance of the ports.

Finally, the environment is another key factor for sustainable development. The main goals of initiatives like GreenPort are as guidelines for the implementation of laws that help economic progress, whilst causing the least possible environmental impact. Although there is still a major conflict between the market's offers and the environmental protection due to lack of economic feasibility, programs such as GreenPort have promoted and enabled the creation of new technologies that allow the cleaner and more sustainable development of insular territories, particularly for the island of Porto Santo.

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