

PT-DS01-IN02

TAKING CARE OF A RIVER SECTION

Primary and secondary school

A school-wide initiative where 8th-grade students take care of a designated section of the Trancão River. Activities include environmental clean-ups, water analysis, topographic surveys, and artistic representations of the river surroundings. It is part of the “Escola Azul” programme and aims to foster environmental responsibility and awareness among students through hands-on activities outside the classroom.



NATURE OF THE INTERVENTION: *involving individual action and requiring collective action.*

OBJECTIVES:

- ★ Allow students to have experience and insight in the field of how they can contribute to the preservation of a resource as important as water.
- ★ Increase awareness in the school community about water protection and preservation.
- ★ Promote sustainable practices.



Relevant difficulties

- ◆ Difficulty in coordinating schedules and ensuring continuity over time.
- ◆ Some students lack motivation or interest.
- ◆ Teachers' involvement is inconsistent, affecting class participation.
- ◆ Logistical challenges: excessive number of students per session, activities under the sun without enough structure.
- ◆ Lack of school-wide awareness and communication.
- ◆ Disconnection between what happens at school and habits at home.

Resources

Human	
Time	
Costs	

Individual Competences	Collective Competences	Technical-material Competences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Environmental awareness and responsibility. ✓ Skills in scientific observation and fieldwork. ✓ Emotional connection to nature and sense of initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cooperation among students from different classes. ✓ Peer-to-peer learning and communication. ✓ Collective planning and shared responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Application of scientific methods (e.g., water analysis). ✓ Use of topographic and mapping tools. ✓ Basic environmental engineering and clean-up practices.

Sustainability competences in place in the intervention



Engagement

The intervention encourages students to connect emotionally with their local environment and to take responsibility for its conservation. Student engagement is crucial, as their motivation determines the success of activities. Teachers' involvement varies; some are highly engaged, while others show limited interest, which affects student participation. The intervention also opens space for stronger collaboration with families and external entities, such as the municipality and river management bodies.



Connections

The intervention promotes connections between environmental education and citizenship, linking school activities with real-world ecological issues. It fosters interdisciplinary learning (science, geography, civic education) and enhances collaboration among students from different classes. It also creates a connection between the school and the surrounding community, particularly within the scope of the Blue School program.



Change

Students developed a deeper sense of environmental responsibility and awareness. Many began to reflect on the impact of their actions. The intervention triggered behavioural shifts in some, especially those directly involved. However, the change was limited by the lack of broader engagement and recurring organisational issues. A shift in school culture was initiated, but sustained effort is required.



Action

Students conducted environmental clean-up actions, water sampling, analysis, mapping, and artistic representations of a river section. These actions are planned to be repeated regularly. However, execution has been hampered by logistical challenges and insufficient structuring. Future actions should include better planning, smaller groups, and more frequent activities.
