



PRESS RELEASE

## **Groundwater, guardians of life: Studenac cleans landfill above the Jadro river source, providing water for 300,000 people**

*Following last year's successful Neretva river cleanup in Metković, this year's location was selected with input from the local community*

**Omiš, 30 September 2025 –** After a public contest allowing residents from Zadar to Dubrovnik to nominate polluted river and stream banks, Studenac has selected the location for this year's environmental cleanup as part of its "Groundwater, guardians of life" project. The chosen site is an illegal landfill above the Jadro river source – in the Klis-Kosa area below the Solin-Klis expressway, near the Mačkovac tunnel. The cleanup will take place on 6 November and will involve Studenac employees, project partner associations, and local residents who wish to participate.

The Jadro river source is a key water supply for populations from Podstrana through Split, Klis, Solin, Kaštela, Trogir, Seget, and the island of Čiovo, providing drinking water since ancient times. It is estimated that nearly 300,000 people rely on water from the Jadro source daily, making it crucial to keep the area clean and protected. The Jadro source is a typical karst spring, fed by underground flow and located within a catchment area of 250–500 km<sup>2</sup>, making it highly sensitive to environmental pollution. The illegal landfill directly above the spring is filled with large and small waste, including furniture, trash bags, toys, plastic containers, and old clothing.

Following the successful cleanup of the Neretva riverbank in Metković last September, when employees and project partners collected nearly ten tonnes of waste, this year Studenac decided to involve the local community in the action. The contest to select the site ran from 8 to 21 September, with submissions accepted via an online Google form. After the contest, the "Groundwater, guardians of life" project team selected the location based on predefined priorities.

In choosing the final site, the team considered the level of pollution and the need for cleanup, feasibility for volunteers and waste removal vehicles, and the potential benefit to the community. The author of the winning submission received a special gift package from Studenac.

"By involving the local community in selecting the location, we want to show how much can be achieved for nature when we work together. The goal of this action is to find a lasting solution for the landfill above the Jadro source. I invite local residents to join us in this cleanup so that the source, which provides water for the wider area of Dalmatia's largest city, can be permanently freed of waste," said Tatjana Spajić, Director of Corporate Communications at Studenac.



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The local community is invited to participate, and attendance can be confirmed via email by 20 October: [korporativne.komunikacije@studenac.hr](mailto:korporativne.komunikacije@studenac.hr).

In the first phase of the project earlier this year, Studenac organised interactive workshops for more than 600 students from 20 elementary schools in Karlovac County, Osijek, and Ploče, in collaboration with partner associations Zeleni Osijek, OSMICA from Karlovac, and Udruga mladih Kolektiv from Metković. Students learned about the importance of groundwater through practical activities such as recycling plastic bottle caps with a bike-powered melting machine, creating their own superhero characters, and other exercises. Additionally, a quiz competition involved more than 2,100 students from 386 schools, with OŠ Ivana Filipovića from Osijek winning a one-day educational trip to the freshwater aquarium Aquatika in Karlovac this spring.

### **About the 'Groundwater, guardians of life' project and Studenac's CSR initiatives**

Studenac, with more than 1,400 stores, is the largest retail chain in Croatia. Alongside ongoing business growth, the company actively develops a corporate social responsibility strategy to drive positive change in local communities.

In 2020, Studenac launched the "A Step Closer to Nature" program, focused on environmental protection and raising awareness of ecological issues. Within this program, the "Groundwater, guardians of life" project was introduced in 2024 to educate the public and highlight the importance of groundwater as a vital resource for life and ecosystems.

As part of the project, Studenac issued a special series of bottled water, donating part of the proceeds to environmental associations. Additionally, 500 bottles were donated to the GLOBE school competition. Two expert panels on the importance of groundwater were held, and, with the support of employees, partners, and associations, a section of the Neretva riverbank was cleared of ten cubic meters of waste as part of internal initiatives.

The project's activities in 2024 were recognised with prestigious awards, including the Green Butterfly by Večernji list and the Grand PRix by the Croatian Public Relations Association.

This year, the focus is on educating children and youth. In cooperation with the associations Zeleni Osijek, OSMICA from Karlovac, and Udruga mladih Kolektiv from Metković, interactive workshops were organised in 20 elementary schools across Karlovac County, Osijek, and Ploče, involving more than 600 students. Through practical activities such as recycling plastic and drawing superhero guardians of water, students learned about the importance of protecting groundwater. Additionally, a quiz competition involved more than 2,100 students from 386 schools, hosted on the project's website [www.podzemnevode.studenac.hr](http://www.podzemnevode.studenac.hr)

Alongside "A Step Closer to Nature", since 2021 Studenac has been running the "A Step Closer to the Community" program to support local communities. Since 2024, this program includes the "Orange Fish" project, focused on providing support to single-parent families.



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