



PRESS RELEASE

Groundwater, guardians of life: Studenac launches contest to select next environmental cleanup location

Residents from Zadar to Dubrovnik can submit polluted river and stream banks by 21 September, after which Studenac will select one location for a cleanup action

Omiš, 8 September 2025 – Following last year's successful cleanup of the Neretva riverbank in Metković, which collected nearly 10 tonnes of waste, Studenac is preparing a new environmental initiative. A contest has been launched allowing local residents from the area between Zadar and Dubrovnik to nominate polluted river or stream banks. The Studenac "Groundwater, guardians of life" project team will select one location based on predefined criteria for the next cleanup action. The contest runs from 8 to 21 September, and submissions are accepted via an online form.

Applicants are asked to provide the exact location or a clear description, attach a photo showing the pollution, and include a brief explanation of why the location should be chosen.

All submissions will be carefully reviewed, and by the end of September, the project team will select a site that will become the focus of this year's cleanup, planned for November. The team will consider the level of pollution, the need for cleanup, feasibility for volunteers and waste removal vehicles, and the potential impact on the local community.

The author of the selected submission will receive a special gift package, including a water bottle, children's memory cards, a keychain featuring the "Groundwater, guardians of life" project design, and various Studenac private-label products.

Beyond the opportunity to nominate a local site, the community will have the chance to actively participate in the cleanup. The project team will provide all necessary materials, and Studenac employees will lead the action, inviting local residents to join.

"After focusing earlier this year on educating children and receiving excellent participation, I'm excited that we are now organising another concrete action, with the support of the community where we operate. I'm confident we will select the right location and look forward to removing waste that affects groundwater in the area," said Tatjana Spajić, Director of Corporate Communications at Studenac.

More information about the contest and the official rules is available on the project's website.



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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.

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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