



# LOUSADA PROTECTING RIVERS

Municipality of Lousada, Portugal



Lousada protecting RIVERS is a project that aims to protect watercourses, through the mobilisation of volunteer patrols and ecological restoration actions done with the help of volunteers. Lousada Guarda RIOS has become an award-winning Portuguese national good practice in the topic of water protection, rivers restoration and community engagement. So far, results are the following:

- 52 km of water streams characterized
- 66 sections of 250m of stream adopted by volunteer patrols
- Over 900 volunteers
- Over 20 training actions delivered
- Publication of a “Guarda RIOS Handbook” with good practice in cleaning and maintaining rivers, and with safety measures for volunteers
- Over 1600 trees were planted in the river margins
- Over 13000 L of litter removed from the water
- Over 130 formal inspection processes, with the legal authorities



## POTENTIAL FOR TRANSFER

An approach similar to this project may be an excellent way to diagnose and improve the ecological condition of rivers and water streams, in any part of the world. The characterization of water streams allows for dividing the water stream into shorter bits that can be made available for volunteer adoption and monitoring.

The involvement of official authorities empowers the volunteers and makes the local community more aware and responsible for their rivers.



## HOW TO START

- secure funding
- establish partnerships with local NGOs, Corporate volunteer groups, legal authorities and law enforcement, schools and citizens
- learn the landscape and characterize all water streams
- enlist volunteers
- train volunteers
- establish trust in the project in the community



## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

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