

‘Kit do Mar’. The Portuguese educational project for the ocean

Costa Raquel¹, Geraldes Diogo¹ and Rafael Teresa²

¹ Task Group for the Extension of the Continental Shelf, Rua Costa Pinto, 165, 2770 - 047 Paço de Arcos - Portugal
E-mail: rlcosta@emepc-portugal.org

² Ministry for Agriculture, Sea, Environment and Spatial Planning, Av. Brasília, 1449-030 Lisboa - Portugal

The ‘Kit do Mar’ is an education project for the ocean developed by the Task Group for the Extension of the Continental Shelf (EMEPC). The aim of this project is to promote the awareness for the ocean knowledge among children and youngsters, leading to more informed and responsible citizens, more conscious of the strategic importance of the sea in our country.

The philosophy of this project is to enhance research, collaborative work and social intervention in our education practices.

This educational resource is a set of project sheets in accordance with the national basic curriculum guidelines. An interdisciplinary and inquiry approach provide a support tool for the educators, teachers and educational technicians to implement ocean related projects in school, or other non-formal educational contexts.

Our project sheets are developed in cooperation with both private and public sectors e.g., fisheries, ocean related museums and sea centres, harbours, and navy vessels.

The upcoming project ‘High School Kit do Mar’ is a pilot project that aims to implement education strategies based on scientific inquiry and will include laboratory activities in a real investigation context. A partnership between EMEPC and the Portuguese Institute of the Sea and Atmosphere (IPMA) was created in order to provide a learning experience in which students work with scientist during one scholar year.

Other projects like ‘Teachers on board’ and ‘Kit do mar teachers training’ are related to ‘Kit do Mar’. The ‘Kit do Mar teachers training’ is a program for all professionals that aims to implement the sea subject in the formal and non-formal teaching through the educational resource ‘Kit do Mar’. The goal is to train teachers, educators and environmental technicians, in specific subjects related to the sea, improving the implementation of ‘Kit do Mar’ as an educational project. During the course, ocean related knowledge, tools and practices are worked out and discussed with trainees bringing a better knowledge on the ‘Kit do Mar’ methodology and allowing an increase in scientific knowledge on the sea.

‘Teachers on board’ is a national project that allows the participation of science teachers in scientific cruises in the North-Atlantic ocean. This project aims to give teachers a clearer insight about ocean sciences, and a better understanding about ocean technology and research studies in order to increase their level of science literacy. The ‘Teachers on board’ program provides a unique learning environment and is driven by the active participation of teachers in hands on research activities.

After the cruises, participants are invited to share their experiences with students, colleagues and other education communities and to bring to schools real scientific data that can be used with their classes.

Major impacts on how teachers teach (namely inquiry), on how they think about science (nature of science and research) and on a personal level have been achieved (Costa, R. pers. commun.).