

**Supetar, 15 October 2025**

## **Young People on Brač Learn How to Plan a Climate-Neutral Future – CO<sub>2</sub> PACMAN Simulation Held**

The first round of the **CO<sub>2</sub> PACMAN simulation** was held today on the island of Brač — an educational activity that brought together students, scientists, and representatives of the local community to raise awareness about climate change and plan the island's decarbonization. The event is part of the European project **CO<sub>2</sub> PACMAN**, which connects the islands of Brač, Elba, and Crete in a joint effort towards climate neutrality.

The event was opened by **Prof. Simone Bastianoni** from the **University of Siena**, who presented the structure and functionalities of the tool developed within the project. He explained that the CO<sub>2</sub> PACMAN simulation enables monitoring and planning of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as the creation of sustainable development strategies.

*“We all hear the data showing that the climate is changing — we are witnessing accelerated shifts, extreme temperatures, droughts, floods, and fires across the Mediterranean, something that was not common before. Such phenomena may have existed in the age of dinosaurs, but not in the age of humankind,”*

- said Bastianoni, emphasizing the importance of educating young people about climate challenges.

Participants then conducted the first round of the **CO<sub>2</sub> PACMAN simulation**, discussing possible strategies and recording initial results. Teams created their own plans for climate neutrality, and through this “game,” they learned how everyday habits can help reduce their individual carbon footprint.

*“Youth are essential — they are not only the leaders of tomorrow but the changemakers of today.”*

— Prof. Simone Bastianoni, University of Siena

As part of the program, the **greenhouse gas inventory** of the pilot island was presented, along with the ideas of students gathered in the **Youth Think Tank**, who shared their proposals for a more sustainable island life. Under the guidance of professors and experts, young participants discussed the role of solar energy, sustainable transport, and even the potential introduction of **electric ferries** in the future.

*“Young people are exceptionally capable when given the opportunity to explore together outside the classroom and beyond the set curriculum. It is precisely*

*then that they show their imagination, creativity, and genuine spirit of inquiry,"*  
- the professors who mentored the workshop emphasized.

As part of the workshop in Supetar, students from the Faculty of Geodesy and the Geoinformatics program at the University of Split worked on spatial analyses aimed at identifying opportunities to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on the island of Brač. Their tasks included analyzing the relationship between protected areas and terrestrial habitats, identifying sites suitable for reforestation outside protected zones, and determining locations where olive groves or other agricultural crops could be planted. Some students researched the issue of light pollution on the island, while others analyzed the potential of residential rooftops for installing solar panels.

*"The international collaboration was incredibly inspiring – through the exchange of ideas and joint work with colleagues from other countries, we learned to view problems from different perspectives and to develop creative solutions,"*

- the participating students and pupils said.

**Gianni Betti**, also from the **University of Siena**, together with the **GIIT team**, presented the results of a survey and citizens' perspectives, showing that as many as **85 percent of Europeans** consider climate change a serious problem, particularly because of its impact on health and quality of life. This growing awareness is why an increasing number of governments and states are investing in achieving climate neutrality.

Brač, as an example of good practice in cooperation with partners from **Italy and Greece**, demonstrates how island communities can become leaders in the fight against climate change.

*"Pollution is global, but we must act locally — each of us can contribute by changing our own habits,"* was one of the key messages shared during the event.