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Learning Outcomes Related to Environmental Protection in Curriculum Documents

With the adoption of new curricula in 2019, educational policy introduced a significant shift toward learning outcomes and the development of student competencies. Today, various curriculum documents are implemented in primary education, all of which aim to develop key competences for lifelong learning. Learning outcomes encompass not only knowledge and skills but also attitudes, creativity, critical thinking, responsibility, and relationships with oneself, others, and the environment.

The subject *Nature and Society* in early primary education represents the first structured course through which students develop key competencies for living in a sustainable society. Environmental protection, as one of the three fundamental pillars of sustainable development – alongside social equity and economic growth – is directly linked to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 15 (Life on Land). Moreover, *Nature and Society* provides a conceptual and content-based foundation for progression into subjects such as Science, Geography, History, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, and Technical Education. This paper presents the results of a qualitative analysis of the presence of learning outcomes related to environmental protection in the curriculum documents of the Republic of Croatia for primary education: the *Nature and Society* curriculum, the cross-curricular theme *Sustainable Development*, and the *Experimental Science Curriculum* for primary schools.

The findings can serve as a valuable resource for teachers when designing learning scenarios, for authors of educational materials when developing textbooks and workbooks, and for educational policymakers in planning future curriculum reforms and strategic guidelines for education focused on sustainability.

Keywords: cross-curricular theme, curriculum, learning outcomes, *Nature and Society*