

# Caruara Reserve

# **Biodiversity for all**



*Photo: aerial view of Visitor Center with Iquipari Lagoon and restinga protected area.  
Credits: Port of Açú*

# Commitment to Sustainable Development

**Port of Açu is located in the north region of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in an area that faces many social challenges:** from low social development indexes, lack of proper educational system to poor infrastructure and public services availability.

Pillars of Açu's sustainability strategy, **social development and biodiversity conservation are integrated in this project** that aims to increase quality of life and sustainability to local community, promote education and well-being and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals on the territory, benefiting the entire society.



*Photo: Port of Açu Terminal 2.  
Credits: Port of Açu*



THE CHALLENGES OF DEFORESTATION ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE AMAZON

## Restinga: one of the most fragmented and threatened ecosystems of Atlantic rainforest in Brazil

### ATLANTIC RAINFOREST IN BRAZIL

**~15%**

remains of the original cover

**66% +**

increase on deforestation 2020-2021

**24% (4k+)**

of endangered species are from Atlantic rainforest

*Restinga is a unique coastal ecosystem of Atlantic Rainforest, with numerous endemic species and rich biodiversity of fauna and flora, that hosts a variation of mangroves, grasslands, swamps, and coastal lagoons*

*Brazilian restinga has been reduced by more than 90% and its conservation is threatened by anthropic activities and exploration on coastal area.*

**~ 53K ha**

of restinga remnants in Rio de Janeiro state

*Photo: Restinga protected area.  
Credits: Port of Açu*

Biodiversity losses compromises the well-being of 3.2 billion people around the world and costs approximately 10% of the annual global income in terms of loss of species and ecosystem services.

# Caruara Reserve

Since 2012 Caruara Reserve protects an area of 4.000 hectares of restinga and promotes biodiversity conservation of this important costal ecosystem.

As an open port initiative of Port Administration, in September 2022 the new visitor center was open to the public: a place of well-being, leisure and sustainability, integrating port and community, aiming shared-value creation for society.

**4k ha**  
of protected area

equals ~50% of Port of Açú and industrial area

**EU\$ 5,6MI+**  
of total investment

**80** direct employees  
100% of local labor

## GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

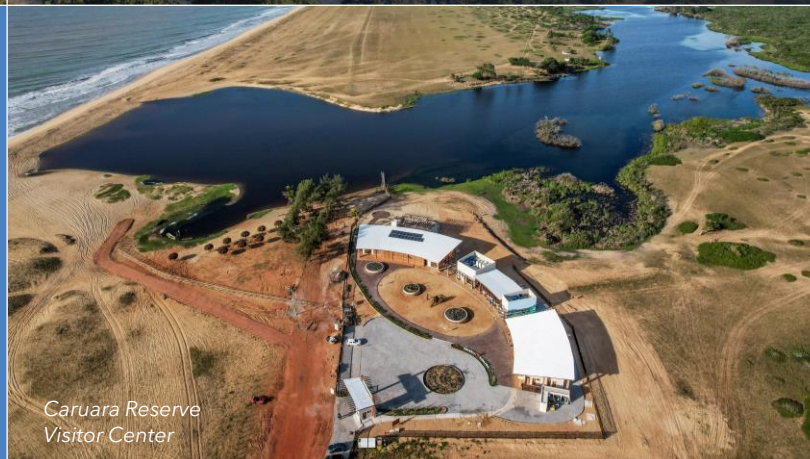


Photo: Restinga protected area and Iquipari Lagoon.  
Credits: Port of Açú

## **Mission**

To protect, restore, and promote biodiversity of the largest remaining restinga fragment in a private area in Brazil, through actions and services that generate scientific knowledge and environmental, social, and health benefits.

## **Vision**

To be a reference in large-scale restoration projects of restinga vegetation and conservation of the related biodiversity.

## **Values**

Commitment, Efficiency and Quality, Social and Environmental Responsibility, and Ethics and Transparency.



*Photo: Purple flower (Pleroma clavatum).  
Credits: Port of Açú*

# Caruara Reserve - A social and environmental legacy for the community



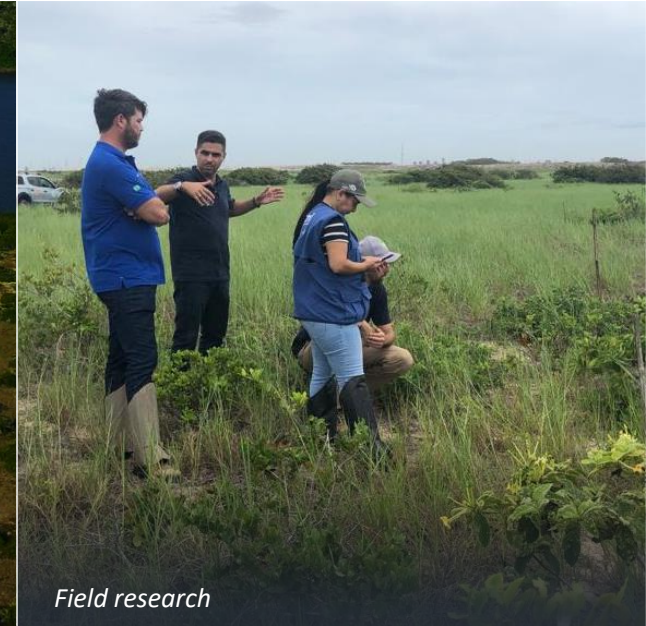
*Ecotrail*

**Sustainable Tourism and  
Environmental Education**



*Seedling*

**Environmental Services**



*Field research*

**Scientific Research**

A DECADE INCREASING SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE ON  
RESTINGA'S BIODIVERSITY

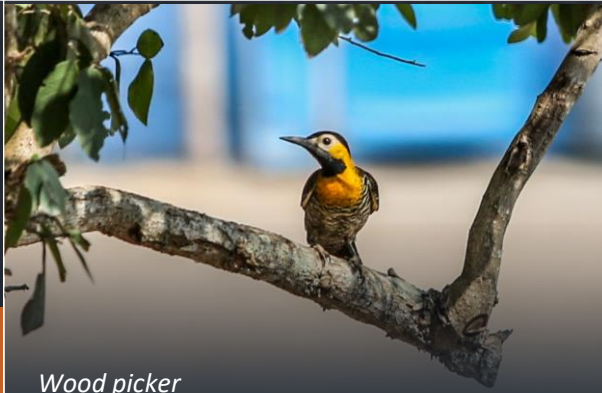
Since 2012, conservation programs have  
identified over

**880**  
flora and  
fauna species

including

**22**  
endangered  
species ...

**"Transforming popular  
knowledge into science"**



Wood picker



Cardeiro cactus



Collared anteater

Photo: Seeds handling.  
Credits: Port of Açú

PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF DEGRATED AREAS

... and restored

**1280+**

hectares of restinga degraded area, in over a decade of work,

planted over

**2 MI**

seedlings...

...produced on its dedicated nursery that handles

**89** species of restinga flora.



Restoration (planting)



Seedling nursery



Seedling triage

Photo: Seedling handling.  
Credits: Port of Açú



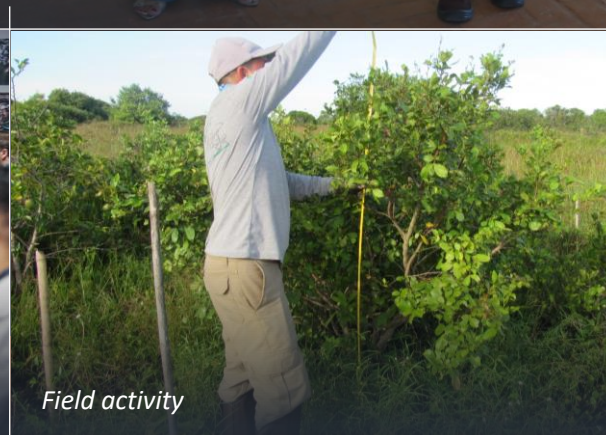
## Through technical cooperation for scientific purposes

Port of Açú teamed up with region's main universities to use the area as an open classroom and R&D laboratory.

**45**  
scientific researches  
held in the Reserve area



Technical class



Field activity



Cooperation agreement

Photo: Technical visiting from local university  
Credits: Port of Açú

FROM CONSERVATION UNITY TO A COMMUNITY BUILDING PLATFORM

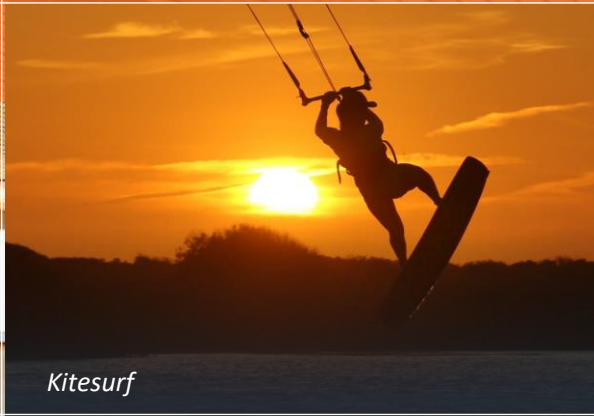
After 7 months of public opening

**11k+** Visitors

- Ecotrails
- Exhibitions
- Bird watching
- Astronomy program
- Sea Turtle Center
- ... and others



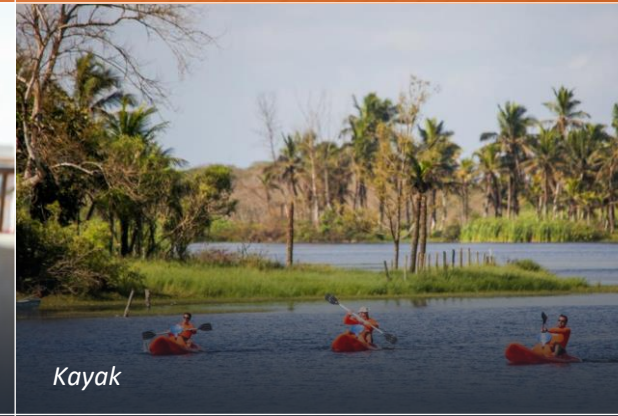
Photo: Visitor Center patio  
Credits: Port of Açu



Kitesurf



Sports for health



Kayak

Photo: Actions of health,  
wellness and leisure  
Credits: Port of Açú



## QUALITY OF LIFE AND WELL-BEING

**A center of health, well-being,  
leisure and sustainability,  
open and accessible to the  
entire community**

- Recreational activities
- Sports
- Connecting with nature
- Family fun

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE AND EQUAL FUTURE

With its educational activities, promotes sustainability principles for local children.

**100+**  
scholar groups

In 2023, Port of Açú in coordination with city hall education office added environmental education as part the official educational curriculum in municipal schools and produced with Caruara a booklet with a content dedicated to biodiversity.

**60+**  
local schools



Environmental education for children



Nursery visit



Recreational

Photo: Aerial view of Visitor Center  
Credits: Port of Açú

HOSTING AND MANAGING THE PORT'S  
SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION PROGRAM

## The Port's Sea Turtle Conservation Program

is now coordinated and hosted by  
Caruara, maximizing its community  
outreach for the protection of this species

**23**  
releases activities  
with over  
**3k+**  
participants

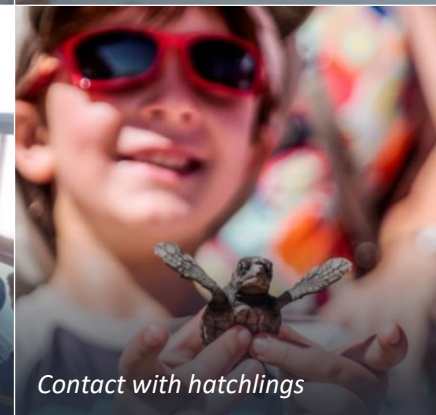
**16k**  
nests protected  
ensuring release of over  
**1,2MI**  
turtles' hatchlings  
to the sea



Hatchlings



Sea Turtle Center



Contact with hatchlings



INTEGRATION OF CONSERVATION  
ACTIONS IN THE TERRITORY

## Addressing ocean pollution

bringing together port employees and local community  
and fisherman to discuss solid waste issues and  
improve ocean and coastal environmental quality

**7 Tons**  
of garbage collected by  
**200+**  
volunteers involved



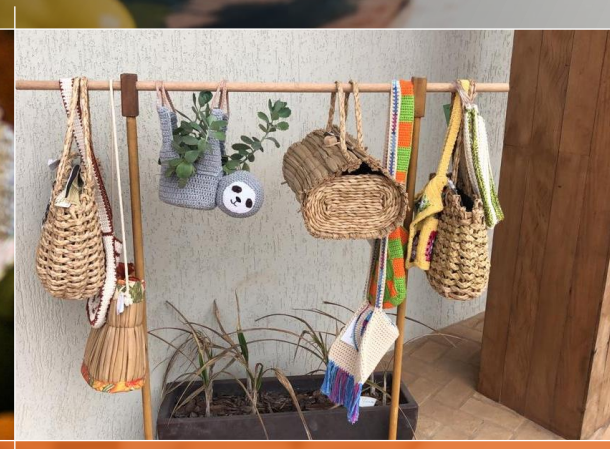
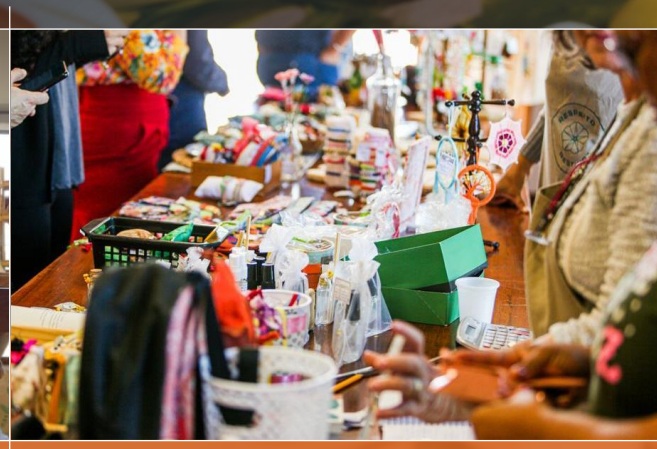
Photos: Clean up activity  
Credits: Port of Açú

FOSTERING INCOME GENERATION FOR THE COMMUNITY  
AND PROMOTING LOCAL CULTURE

The center also hosts  
permanent exhibitions of

## 24 local female artisans

displaying Restinga themed craftwork enabling  
not only training and new skills, but also  
improving their employment and  
income opportunities.



Photos: Female artisans and its  
craftwork  
Credits: Port of Açú

Caruara Reserve is the main environmental asset of Port of Açu and demonstrates its leadership in biodiversity conservation in one of the most degraded ecosystem of the Atlantic rainforest in Brazil, showing that it is possible to develop a port complex in balance with the protection of surrounding habitats. **Its overall objective is to be a community building platform designed to promote sustainability to reach a net positive impact on biodiversity and people's lives.**

The opening of its visitor center as a public space creates a new gateway between the community and Port of Açu, promoting environmental education, well-being, health and leisure for the region.

Through the offer of sustainable tourism activities promoted at the visitor center, the Port Administration consolidates the innovative role of the Port as a community builder, inducing local sustainable development and in partnership with port users and tenants, government and community, will continue to promote change, enhance quality of live and contribute to biodiversity protection and UN SDGs development in the territory.



