

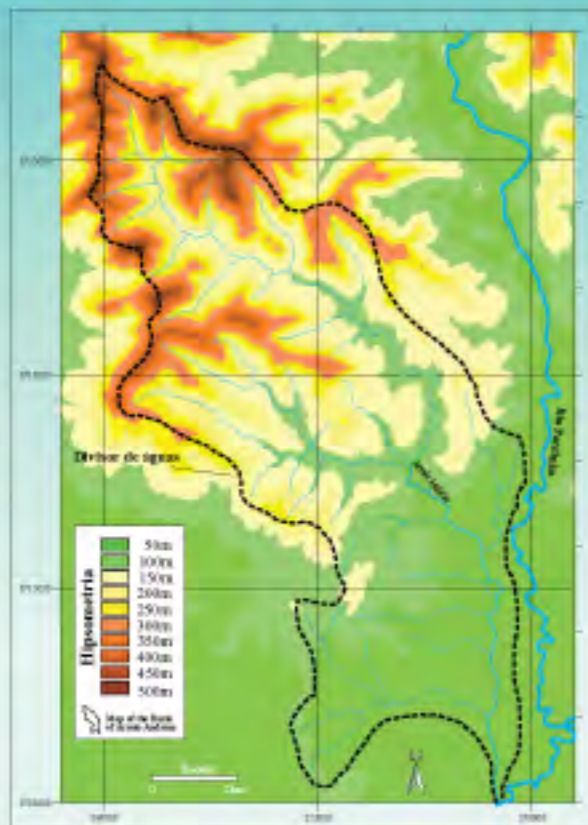
OBJECTIVES

To implement water recovery and protection actions through systematized and monitored stages, as follows:

- ▶ *Identification and characterization of the water springs;*
- ▶ *Diagnosis and plan for the recovery and protection of degraded areas;*
- ▶ *Periodical monitoring of the evolution of water quality and streamflow;*
- ▶ *Guidance and availability of the material resources for recovering and protecting the springs;*
- ▶ *Establishment of the Payment for Environmental Services (PES), in accordance with criteria set forth by the Water Guardian Project;*
- ▶ *Make the partners and their communities aware of the fact that best practices and conservation-oriented management, along with improvements to forest coverage, may transform the farmers in "Water Producers" and attract benefits, either directly or indirectly.*

PROJECT EXECUTION AREA

The project shall cover the entire Andrés Brook Hydrographic Sub-Basin, in Vera Cruz (RS), whereby all the water springs are to be known and preserved.



Sponsorship



Universal Leaf Tabacos



Project Execution



Support





TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The **Water Guardian Project** relies on technical and financial support for conducting the water and soil conservation practices, such as the recovery or protection of water springs and reforestation of degraded areas. It also relies on the payment of incentives (financial compensation) to the rural producers that, without any doubt, contribute towards the protection and recovery of water sources, bringing benefits to the basin and people.

The incentives are only delivered after the adhesion to the program and after the conclusion, either partial or total, of the implementation of the actions and conservation practices previously agreed by the parties. The values to be paid to the Water Guardian will be calculated on the grounds of technical criteria, placing value on the Payment for Environmental Services which come to the benefit of society as a whole.

The project is sponsored by Fundación Altadis - a nonprofit organization that belongs to Imperial Tobacco Group, and by Universal Leaf Tabacos (ULT). Its execution is under the responsibility of the University of Santa Cruz do Sul (UNISC), and also gets support from the Municipal Administration of Vera Cruz, Pardo Committee, SindiTabaco and AFUBRA.

The coordination of the project is under the responsibility of a Multidisciplinary Management Committee involving professionals of several knowledge areas.

PROJECT

Water Guardian

The **Water Guardian Project** is a pioneering initiative in South Brazil whose objective is the development of water resources recovery and protection actions through the Payment for Environmental Services (PES) program to the farmers of small holdings, characterizing them as Water Protectors.

Scheduled for a five-year period, the project encourages the farmers to adhere to water and soil conservation practices, while remunerating them for water production services rendered.

Once the water springs have been identified and the holding has been surveyed, diagnoses are made and action plans for the recovery and/or protection of water springs are established. The farmers adhere voluntarily and take part in the entire process.