

Vienna, June 29, 2008 - With the “Business Friends of the Danube” project, which was presented in Vienna on June 2, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) invited regional companies whose business is directly related to the Danube River to make more significant contributions to its preservation.

The Danube is the main river artery of Europe, connecting 18 states and almost 81 million people. Therefore, its preservation should be one of top priorities of the European environment protection policy, and for the companies involved, this is an opportunity to demonstrate their corporate social responsibility efforts.

According to Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, Membership of the “Business Friends of the Danube” initiative requires much more than the usual sponsorship and donation.

“Members, first of all, agree to cooperate with the Governments to preserve the uniqueness of the Danube River and its resources over the long-term, and with the annual fee of EUR 25.000, for the minimum of two years, they commit to contribute to this goal either directly or indirectly. All their investments will be documented and we will inform the public about them”, explained Weller.

The Austrian Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Josef Proell, supported the initiative and expressed hope that this project, which is meant to preserve the most important artery of Europe, will be widely recognized.

“With this initiative companies can now protect the Danube and its basin and raise awareness of the requirements of the second-longest river in Europe,” said Proell.

Along with Austrian and international companies, and the ORF, Austrian public radio and television broadcaster, the initiative to preserve the Danube and its tributaries, was also backed by The Coca-Cola Company and Coca-Cola Hellenic.

Coca-Cola Hellenic supports this project as part of its strong commitment to the protection and preservation of water resources throughout all 28 territories in which the Company operates, including Croatia, and protection of the environment is one of the key social responsibility policies pursued by the Company.

Sir Michael Llewellyn-Smith, Board Director of Coca-Cola Hellenic, and Chairman of the Social Responsibility Committee, confirmed this, saying that partnering with governments, NGOs, and especially with the Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, it will be possible to significantly raise contributions to the protection of water resources, which is also one of the duties in line with the Company’s general policy.

“The Business Friends of the Danube initiative gives companies an excellent opportunity to serve millions of people in countries along the course of the Danube and at the same time be widely recognized for participating in this cause,” said Sir Llewellyn-Smith

Besides the “Business Friends of the Danube”, in 2005 the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River launched another partnership program with The Coca-Cola Company and Coca-Cola Hellenic – the “Green Danube Partnership”. This program includes the “Danube Day”, the world's largest river festival. The Green Danube Partnership also launched the “Danube Box” initiative which, among other things, offers teaching material about the Danube in seven different languages

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