

“Our Beautiful Sava” wins European Excellence Award

Croatian water stewardship project “Our Beautiful Sava” recognised by top European communication professionals

Zagreb, December 17th 2009 – “Our Beautiful Sava” a water protection programme has won first prize in the European Excellence Awards for the best campaign in the South East Europe region.

The Project was initiated by Coca-Cola HBC Croatia in partnership with the Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management, the Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure and the International Sava River Basin Commission with the support of Coca-Cola Adria for the Alpine and Adriatic region.

“Our Beautiful Sava” was rolled-out and coordinated by the communications consultancy Mmd Croatia.

A gala ceremony was held at the Hofburg Imperial Palace in Vienna to announce the winners of a host of awards across the entire European Public Relations industry.

“The Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management is extremely satisfied with the project which has strengthened awareness for the protection and sustainable use of the river Sava and its surrounding areas. This pan-European award not only confirms the value of this project, but is a great incentive for continuation of the project on even greater scale in years to come”, stated Ružica Drmić, Head of Directorate for Water Policy and International Projects at the Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management.

“Water management and protection is an issue that is a high priority globally, therefore every corporate social responsibility project is important to raise public awareness about the immeasurable value of our water resources”, stated je Dejan Komatina, Secretary General of International Sava River Basin Commission.

Efficient water management, including CSR projects that protect water basins and raise awareness about their importance, is one of the company's key imperatives. Therefore, in 2008, the International Sava River Basin Commission recognised the Coca-Cola System as a valuable partner and who supported the celebration of the 2008 Sava Day. This year, 2009, Coca-Cola HBC Croatia went a step forward in reinforcing this partnership by developing "Our Beautiful Sava" to set a cornerstone for a long-term promotion and protection of the Sava River.

"The European Excellence Award acknowledges all the efforts of all partners both on national and local level. Also, it represents recognition of our ideas among the entire European communications sector, thus will ensure momentum and enthusiasm is maintained for this project for future years," stated Nikolaos Kalaitzidakis, General Manager of Coca-Cola HBC Croatia.

The 2009 Excellence Awards received a record of 1,250 entries and "Our Beautiful Sava" was nominated in the SEE regional category (Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia & Herzegovina). Five entries were shortlisted in each of 56 categories, covering a wide range of communication disciplines and corporate media, as well as industries and national markets across Europe.

The awards, hosted by the international professional magazine Communications Director, was organised for the first time in 2007. Excellence awards honour outstanding achievements in PR and communications across Europe.

The Excellence Awards jury was composed by the leading agency directors and in-house communication heads in Europe. The judging process involved a week-long online voting period, where the thirty jury members defined the shortlist, followed by a personal jury meeting directly before the ceremony to decide upon the winners.

The project which was realised in June was supported by the retail chain Plodine.

About “Our Beautiful Sava”

“Our Beautiful Sava” is a comprehensive project that has encompassed institutions on all levels from the Ministry of regional Development, Forestry and Water Management, Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure, and International Sava River Basin Commission on national level to city municipalities of Sisak, Slavonski Brod and Zupanja, tourist boards and city museums of Zagreb, Sisak, Slavonski Brod and Zupanja on local level and all with the joint goal – to protect and promote river Sava.

In 2009 the project included the Celebration of Sava Day on June 2nd when journalists from Zagreb, Sisak and Slavonski Brod joined a synchronised canoeing event on the Sava organised simultaneously at noon in all three cities. Celebrations were followed by Sava Fairs in Zagreb (June 6th), Sisak (June 13th), Slavonski Brod (June 20th) and Zupanja (June 27th).