

ICPDR and Coca-Cola in Partnership to Protect the Danube

VIENNA, 1 June (UN Information Service) – The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) today with The Coca-Cola Company and its largest European bottler Coca-Cola Hellenic Bottling Company S.A. (Coca-Cola HBC), for the joint protection and preservation of the Danube River.

Under the agreement, an extensive range of activities will be implemented to promote public awareness and support conservation projects in six countries in which The Coca-Cola Company and Coca-Cola HBC have substantial operations and business presence.

“The long-term commitment by a leading beverage maker to actively create, develop, conduct and support a wide variety of activities to safeguard the freshwater ecosystems marks a significant step toward meeting the obligations of the Danube River Protection Convention,” said Istvan Öri, Permanent State Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Water, Hungary, and President of ICPDR.

Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, added, “Such a partnership with industry is welcome. It greatly broadens and accelerates opportunities beyond those that each party could expect to achieve individually.”

Sir Michael Llewellyn Smith, Board Director Coca-Cola HBC, said “Through this agreement we are seeking to extend environmental initiatives outside those applied to our own operations and reach out to engage in and contribute funding for high profile programmes across the communities we serve in the Danube River region. Our aim is to make a real difference.”

Salvatore Gabola, Director of European Public Affairs of The Coca-Cola Company European Union Group added: “We at The Coca-Cola Company feel it is our duty to protect and celebrate the Danube, as we recognise that its ecosystem provides us with a rich environment where we, and the communities where we operate, can prosper. This magnificent river is also a symbol of the connection of the European peoples: looking after the Danube also means commemorating a glorious past and celebrating the expanding, peaceful Europe of our future”.

Under the MoU, the three parties will work towards celebrating the Danube river as a symbol of life and environment in Central and Eastern Europe. In doing so, they will encourage the participation of other leading companies, extend celebrations of Danube Day (29 June), and work together with local governments, educational institutions and NGOs in hands-on projects in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia and Ukraine.

The partners will apply their expertise, technological capabilities and financial support while conveying an understanding that water is a finite resource and its proper control and management is crucial to the well being of communities.

The ICPDR

The ICPDR is an international organization consisting of 13 cooperating states and the European Union. Since its establishment in 1998, it has grown into one of the largest and most active international bodies engaged in river basin management in Europe. Its activities relate not only to the Danube River, but also the tributaries and ground water resources of the entire Danube River Basin.

The ultimate goal of the ICPDR is to implement the Danube River Protection Convention, and make it a “living” instrument. Its mission is to promote and coordinate sustainable and equitable water management, including conservation, and improvement and rational use of waters for the benefit of the Danube River Basin countries and their people. The ICPDR pursues its mission by making recommendations for the improvement of water quality, developing mechanisms for flood and accident control, agreeing on standards for emissions and by assuring that these measures are reflected in the Contracting Parties’ national legislations and are applied in their policies.

For more information, contact:
Jasmine **Bachmann**, ICPDR
Email: jasmine.bachmann@unvienna.org
Mobile: +43 650 514 7 514