



## 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

*“Wetlands: home and destination”*

**Bucharest, Romania, 6-13 July 2012**

### **Intervention of Emmanuel Faber, Chief Operating Officer, Danone, France, at the Opening Ceremony**

It is a great honour for our company to be here today with Anada Tiega, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention, and Julia Marton-Lefevre, Director General IUCN, and have the opportunity to celebrate the partnership between Danone and the Ramsar Convention

As we could see in the video, this partnership is a long story : it started 14 years ago, in 1998, when Danone and its blueship brand Evian engaged with Ramsar to support the Convention effort to promote the conservation of wetlands. This partnership is deeply rooted in Danone water business and its action to protect the purity of Evian mineral water in the long term.

In 2008, Danone decided to accelerate its environmental policy and set-up a very aggressive target : reduce its carbon emissions by 30% in 4 years. This objective will be reached end of this year. Throughout the world, Danone and Evian teams made outstanding efforts to reduce energy, packaging, develop transportation by rail.

In addition, it was decided to make Evian carbon neutral in 2012 through an innovative approach: restore wetlands such as mangroves which store large quantities of carbon. The Danone Fund For Nature was created with Ramsar and IUCN to fulfill this ambition.

Four years later, the experience was such a success as you have seen in the video with 10,000 hectares of mangroves restored in Sénégal, 6,000ha being restored in India, 5,000 ha in Indonesia that a new fund was created end of last year with Danone and other companies. Six corporation have joined Danone, including, Schneider Electric, Credit Agricole, Hermès, and invested 25 million Euros in Livelihoods. This capital finances large scale projects of mangrove restoration, agroforestry and access to energy. The goal of the fund is to restore sustainable livelihood of poor rural communities and at the same time to sequestrate 6 to 8 million tons of carbon in the coming 20 years. Those high quality carbon credit will help companies and brands such as Evian to offset their own emissions.

I would like to thank Ramsar and IUCN which are key partners in this new venture. The relationship of trust that has been built over the years is a key asset for the future. We believe that despite the international context, action must be our priority, in particular action with efficient field actors. We believe also that none of us is able to find solutions alone: we need to join forces, to co-invent solutions. I feel confident that we can make again very significant progress together and I give you “rendez-vous” in 4 years.