

Danube Challenge: The Austrian river adventure

Cast off! At the initiative organized by Coca-Cola Hellenic Austria and Generation Blue, students can explore the ecosystem of water and get to know the habitats of different creatures. This time, the Danube Challenge is making stops at the National Park Donau-Auen, at the National Park Neusiedlersee-Seewinkel, in the Lafnitz valley and at the National Park Hohe Tauern. Together with school classes from Vienna, Jozsef Tarsoly, General Manager of Coca-Cola Hellenic, visited yesterday's Challenge in Orth an der Donau.

At the Danube Challenge – organized by Coca-Cola Hellenic Austria in cooperation with Generation Blue, the youth water platform of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management – students explore river and lake ecosystems and make different exciting experiences close to the water at five events in all parts of Austria. The goal of the Danube Challenge is to raise awareness for the issues of water, water protection and sustainable handling of water.

This year's first Danube Challenge took place at the National Park Donau-Auen at June 18. Under the competent guidance of the National Park rangers, three school classes from Vienna tested the water quality of the Danube and built a solid raft from natural materials.

The day at the Danube is a valuable experience for the school classes. Alexander Krause, teacher at the NMS Konstanziagasse, said, "The students experience nature first-hand and with all senses. They see what they previously learned in class."

Coca-Cola Hellenic General Manager Jozsef Tarsoly supported the participants on-site at the final challenge in which they had to create a giant painting together. "The Danube Challenge is one of the most sustainable initiatives of this kind. That way we have managed to get thousands of teenagers enthusiastic about Austria's waterscapes. Today, we also received a lot of positive feedback from students. We are delighted about that and feel encouraged in our efforts to manage water responsibly in all parts of our company."

Together with the National Park director Carl Manzano and the participating school classes, Jozsef Tarsoly visited the underwater station of the schlossORTH National Park center as well as the turtle area and explored the microorganisms of the water while fishing.

National Park director Manzano said, "For several years already, we have been able to welcome school classes in the National Park Donau-Auen as part of the Danube Challenge. That way we can give them an understanding of the value of natural river ecosystems – today's teenagers are tomorrow's environmentalists. I am particularly delighted that the students also spent several hours at the schlossORTH National Park center today!"

Federal Minister Andrä Rupprechter pointed out, "Our river habitats are invaluable gems of nature. We aim to show this to the teenagers at the annual Danube Challenge. This year, 30,000 teenagers took part in the Hydration Check campaign. The students with the best ideas will spend exciting days at Austrian rivers in June."

Successful Hydration Check campaign as a ticket for the Danube Challenge

In spring, thousands of Austrian students already dealt with the topic of water and explored the waters in their environment. At the Hydration Check campaign, the students watched their personal water drinking habits and were reminded of adjusting them if necessary. This year, almost 30,000 passes were ordered and more than 17,000 completed passes were returned.

Participating schools at National Park Donau-Auen, June 18:

COB/NMS Pachmayergasse, 1110 Vienna

BHAK 10, 1100 Vienna

NMS Konstanziagasse, 1220 Vienna

Further stations of the Danube Challenge:

National Park Neusiedlersee-Seewinkel June 22 and 23, 2015

Lafnitz valley June 24, 2015

National Park Hohe Tauern, Mallnitz June 30, 2015

The researchers' submissions and impressions of the Challenges can be found on www.facebook.com/DanubeChallenge.

Further information on www.generationblue.at

June 19, 2015

Queries and further information:

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MPW-1060

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About Coca-Cola Hellenic Austria

Coca-Cola Hellenic supplies the whole Austrian market with products from Coca-Cola. The company employs 1,000 people in Austria – in a production site, sales and distribution centres. Apart from the well-known brands Coca-Cola, Coke light, Coke zero, Fanta and Sprite, products like Nestea, Cappy, Römerquelle, emotion, the energy drink burn and the sports drink Powerade are also part of the comprehensive portfolio.

For 40 years now, Römerquelle mineral water has been bottled at the spring in Edelstal, Burgenland. From 2013 onwards Carbonated Soft Drinks are also bottled and distributed throughout Austria in the state-of-the-art production site in Edelstal which has recently been expanded. More than 57,000 customers (future and immediate consumption) distribute Coca-Cola products to consumers. Furthermore, 8,000 vending machines make sure that the products are always within an arm's reach.

Coca-Cola has been firmly established in Austria since 1929. Through ongoing investments, Coca-Cola Hellenic Austria is an essential part of the local economy. The company's direct value created amounts to 94 million Euros (that equals 0.03 % of the Austrian gross domestic product). Considering the whole value chain – from production over supply to consumption – more than 1 billion Euros created are connected to Coca-Cola every year (that equals 0.36 % of the GDP).

Coca-Cola Hellenic is a subsidiary of Coca-Cola HBC AG, headquartered in Switzerland. It is the largest bottler of non-alcoholic refreshing beverages in Europe with production and distribution centres in 28 countries. The company has a premium listing on the London Stock Exchange and its shares are listed on the Athens Exchange. Coca-Cola HBC is included in the Dow Jones Sustainability and FTSE4Good Indexes. For more information please visit www.coca-colahellenic.at.