



VITTEL

A BRAND

THAT WORKS
HAND IN HAND
WITH ITS
ECOSYSTEM

AGRIVAIR, 20 YEARS ON : "WORKING TOGETHER",
REVIEWING EXPERIENCE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

PRESS RELEASE



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Because healthy water begins with a healthy earth, from the outset Agrivair¹ instituted innovative land management to protect the VITTEL natural mineral water spring from all forms of pollution, whether agricultural, industrial or urban. Now, with 20 years of partnership we can truly say that the VITTEL brand works hand in hand with its ecosystem. This “working together” is now ongoing, with future projects being organized around biodiversity, enhancing the role of trees, and collaborative associations for the implementation of innovative activities that respect the environment in the region.


Agrivair, an avant-garde approach to the ecosystem

For 20 years Agrivair has conducted an avant-garde environmental policy with all the Vittel stakeholders in the 11 communes surrounding its catchment basin (nearly 10,000 hectares).

This consulting body provides technical support for local players by ensuring that concrete and concerted actions are implemented in order to preserve the quality of the water resources in the Vosges hydromineral basin. The different achievements recorded over the past 20 years are based on a pluridisciplinary partnership approach that brings together farmers and industry, local authorities and residents, but also horticulturalists, landscape designers and green space managers. The cooperation model they used was specifically favourable for the deployment of a “zero pesticide” policy that combines local economic development with high-quality water.

The French forestry agency ONF is one of Agrivair's historic partners: trees are at the heart of the policy to preserve the VITTEL natural mineral water spring. When we consider all the advantages, it is an ally, a regulator and an opportunity to promote balance in the biotope. The act of planting and caring for trees has enabled the creation of virtuous circles for water, air and biodiversity (natural regeneration of native plants), and it has helped to preserve the quality of the soil, thus reinforcing the protection of groundwater and springs.

The result is very positive: whereas between 1970 and 2008, biodiversity dropped by 30% on a global² scale, we can now observe in the VITTEL catchment basin a wealth of biodiversity that is in some cases equivalent to that of certain protected areas.



Agrivair, new innovative projects, following on from an avant-garde policy conducted over the past 20 years

Based on its 20 years' experience, Agrivair has now chosen three innovative projects to complement the territorial strategy already deployed.

1• Biodiversity labelling

Agrivair is now a driving force in drawing up a biodiversity labelling by a specialized certification authority. The benchmarking system is an innovation in the domain of business-to-business labelling. It will assess all the interrelations between businesses and the living environment and the degree to which biodiversity is taken into account within the range of Agrivair activities. Through this policy to protect the VITTEL natural mineral water spring, Nestlé Waters France is a pioneer in requesting this label for its actions in order to optimise its interaction with biodiversity.

2• Renaturation of the Vittel river over more than 2km

In 2013 Agrivair, in partnership with the French water authority Agence de l'Eau, will commence a project for the renaturation of the Vittel river (Petit Vair), a watercourse that has been particularly damaged by successive developments. Today the fauna and flora have become considerably impoverished, the channel is oversized and the riverbed is being eroded. The renaturation project, on an exemplary scale in France, will result in a type of watercourse that has practically disappeared from our countryside: the riparian vegetation³ around the river will be reconstituted over a distance of more than 2 km. The river will thus recover its original form and function, along with its ecological and socio-economic role in the region.

3• VITTEL / Pur Projet⁴, from expertise in a tropical milieu to partnership in a temperate milieu

Fully conscious of global climate issues, the VITTEL brand engaged with Pur Projet from 2010 to 2012 in a programme for the preservation of the primary forest and reforestation with one million trees in Amazonia, the world's largest expanse of fresh water. In 2013, VITTEL will continue in this vein by collaborating in tending trees planted by local Peruvian populations, in accordance with agroforestry principles.

This expertise in a tropical milieu has opened the way for a plantation programme at a local level in the Vittel region, in line with Agrivair's previous forestry actions. The plantation projects will be drawn up in conjunction with the region's stakeholders and possibly implemented by the population, farmers and local authorities. Over and above the beneficial effect for the ecosystem, these projects will contribute to developing the timber industry, eco-tourism and public awareness of the role of trees.



These experimental plantation projects are destined to develop in three different ways:

- Plantations on plots of land held by Agrivair that are unsuitable for agricultural activity e.g. planting fallow land and steep zones, in order to help to feed the aquifer and protect the soil from erosion, while bearing landscaping considerations in mind. The ONF will be asked to contribute to the implementation of this project.
- Pilot plantations in collaboration with volunteer farmers on pasture land and crop land in accordance with the principles of agroforestry, in order to further enhance the ecosystem's resources and to benefit from the complementarity of trees and crop farming.
- Plantations, of a symbolic, educational or entertaining nature, in collaboration with local authorities, such as the creation of an educational trail through the trees.

And that's not all from Agrivair

This year sees Agrivair as a founding member of the Terre-Eau association, which is open to all stakeholders in the region, both public and private. Through a pooling of means (a think tank, support for project management and innovative start-ups), Terre-Eau aims to reinforce the environmental value of the region via a new co-development that is mindful of protecting water resources.

Through this association, the region will affirm its importance as a centre of development, thanks to the capacity of local players to drive forward common projects.

Terre-Eau will also continue the actions initiated by Agrivair, such as the project for a biogas plant that will be coupled with a protein production unit for animal food.

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“What Agrivair has achieved is proof that everyone can gain by combining economy and ecology. Today the VITTEL brand works hand in hand with its ecosystem. As a result, the company is a major player in the creation of shared value—for itself and for society at large” Denis Cans, President of Nestlé Waters France- Belgium.



1-A subsidiary of Nestlé Waters France 2-2012 report on the state of the planet, conducted jointly by Global Footprint Network and the WWF NGO 3-The trees and shrubs on the riverside 4-Founded by Tristan Lecomte, Pur Projet is a collective that helps enterprises to integrate climate considerations in their raison d'être and skills, mainly by regenerating and preserving ecosystems.