

When companies support protection of water resources- the co-creation of territorial value on Natural Mineral Water watersheds
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For more than 20 years, Evian (Danone Waters) has been implementing an innovative approach to protect natural mineral water resources. Based on cooperation between the company and local elected representatives, this approach is unique in the panorama of bottling companies. If land acquisition, or at least imposition of strict environmental standards and constraints related to protection of water resources are common practices in the areas where the risk of groundwater pollution exists, Evian chose to set up an institutionalised public-private dialogue, to make corporate interests converge with local development (see Session 7.06 for the description of the applied governance principles). To ensure a greater flexibility in deploying different water protection initiatives and guarantee higher engagement of all stakeholders, Evian decided to concede the management of cocreation to dedicated non-profit organizations. Detailed study of this kind of management shows that, in order to cocreate territorial value benefiting to all stakeholders (especially farmers inhabitants) living in the watershed area, the initiatives need to be co-designed with various actors representing all interested parties. In this way, beyond their first (environmental) objective, which is to protect natural mineral water resources from potential deterioration, the initiatives create an enlarged value- in terms of socio-economic development for farmers, higher comfort and better health conditions for inhabitants, etc. It appears that only this cooperative principle and enhanced dialogue can guarantee the multidimensional aspect of territorial contribution+ the interferences between economic, environmental and social impacts of the initiatives need to be apprehended and evaluated, as the organisations draw their legitimacy from their effectiveness. For this reason, specific framework to “reveal” and evaluate this value was implemented and will be described in this presentation. Going beyond quantitative evaluation, this framework also places particular emphasis on the qualitative revelation of immaterial value whose importance is significant. This dynamic re-examines the theoretical status of the company considering that this economic value is created in partnership with other territorial players, traditionally judged as non-economic actors.

