



PRESS RELEASE

The King and Queen were at Spa on 18 November to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Spa Monopole and SPA Reine with nature conservation and biodiversity preservation playing key roles

Spa, 18 November 2021 – This is an exceptional year for the Spa Monopole factory and for SPA Reine natural mineral water: these two iconic brands are celebrating their 100th anniversary in 2021. For this double anniversary, King Philippe and Queen Mathilde were welcomed at Spa Monopole this Thursday 18 November, where they met the factory's employees. It was an opportunity for them to honour this flagship of the Belgian economy that is still at the forefront of innovation. The royal couple then took part in a round table on biodiversity at Domaine de Bérinzenne, in the presence of the Walloon Minister for the Environment Céline Tellier and several experts. For 100 years now, Spa Monopole has been one of the European pioneers in terms of sustainability and the preservation of natural resources. With very encouraging results, since a recent study conducted by Arcadis shows that the company has had a positive impact on biodiversity over the past 100 years thanks to measures that have been taken over decades to protect and restore biodiversity in the Spa mineral waters protected area. In order to pursue and even accelerate this positive momentum, the Spadel group is committed to making a positive impact on biodiversity for all its sites in Europe by 2025.

It was in 1921 that the *Compagnie fermière des eaux et bains de Spa* (Spa Waters and Baths Farming Company), which was set up in 1912 with the *Monopole de l'exploitation des eaux de Spa* (Monopoly for the Use of Spa Waters), became *Spa Monopole*. In the same year, SPA Reine natural mineral water was launched, and was an immediate success. In 1923, the Pierrot character first appeared on the bottles. It is still the icon of Spa Monopole and the SPA brand today.

When it was founded, Spa Monopole was a small traditional business. Spurred on by several representatives of the du Bois family, within the Spadel group it became a true industry leader in the region, while remaining an independent Belgian family business. Spa Monopole is a flagship of the Belgian economy, today employing some 500 people, most of whom from the Spa region. SPA Reine, the leader in the natural mineral water market in the Benelux, obviously remains its flagship product, but the factory also produces sparkling water, flavoured waters and lemonades made with 100 % natural ingredients.



“Today’s consumers want healthy, local and sustainable products, with a low carbon footprint. This is exactly what we offer them” explains Marc du Bois, CEO of the Spadel Group. Spa Monopole and SPA Reine have always been frontrunners. Over the past 50 years, over 500 million euros have been invested in the Spa Monopole factory. *“This is what allowed us to stay at the forefront of innovation,”* highlights Marc du Bois once again. *“I’ve always been convinced that innovation is the best springboard for growth and so it’s also the best way of ensuring the continuity of this company.”*

A positive impact on biodiversity in Spa and a commitment to making a positive impact on biodiversity for all Spadel’s sites by 2025

The company is also innovative in its firm commitments for reducing waste and CO₂ emissions resulting from its operations. For decades, Spa has been synonymous with water of the highest quality, but also protected nature. For example, Spa Monopole only works with local suppliers and does not export its products more than 500 kilometres away from its springs.

As a pioneer of sustainable development, Spa Monopole’s motto is *“puiser sans épuiser”* (take without depleting). Spa’s waters have the virtues that are recognized today because they have been protected for generations, in particular thanks to the ban on any agricultural activity and any use of pesticides, fertilisers and chemical improvers in the water catchment area. These measures have proven to be highly effective, enabling Spa water to maintain unrivalled purity. In 2020, the Spa Monopole site was the first mineral site in Europe, and the second in the world, to receive Platinum certification from the AWS, the Alliance for Water Stewardship. This is the most well-recognized label in the world for the sustainable management of aquifers. Since 2020, SPA products have also been among the first waters in Belgium to be certified carbon neutral from spring to consumer.

It’s quite remarkable that the efforts of Spadel and its public and private partners to conserve natural resources have had a beneficial effect on biodiversity in the protected zone of the catchment area for Spa waters, which covers over 13,000 hectares, or the equivalent of 26,000 football pitches. According to the specialist consulting firm Arcadis, there has indeed been a positive impact on biodiversity over the past 100 years, thanks to the measures taken for decades and decades to protect and restore biodiversity in the protected area. A remarkable result, given the worldwide decline in biodiversity and the international efforts attempting to reverse this trend. This positive impact is the result of several initiatives including the public-private partnership between Spa Monopole, the Walloon Region, and the town of Spa (called Modus Vivendi) that has been in place for over 50 years. In order to pursue and even accelerate this positive momentum, the Spadel Group is now committed to making a positive impact on biodiversity for all its sites in Europe by 2025. *“We will incorporate our actions into the framework of the international Science Based Targets Network initiative and we aim to extend our efforts to the entire value chain,”* highlights Marc du Bois.



New packaging coming soon and the B Corp movement

Spa Monopole and SPA Reine intend to continue on the road to success they started out on 100 years ago. SPA Reine packaging, for example, will continue evolving to become even more environmentally friendly, particularly by exploring packaging types other than PET and glass. In general, the Spadel Group is committed to collecting 100 % of its marketed packaging and to using 100 % reused or recycled materials in its packaging by 2025.

After becoming the first Belgian drinks producer to have stated in black and white in its articles of association that its objective is to become a company with a positive impact, the Spadel Group joined the B Corp movement with the aim of obtaining B Corp certification, also known as 'B Corporation' certification, as quickly as possible. *"We're a centenarian in great health, with lots of plans that are keeping us motivated,"* concludes Marc du Bois. *"We will continue to innovate and commit ourselves to supporting local communities and protecting nature and biodiversity, whether here in Spa or at our other sites."*

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About Spadel

Spadel is a European family group whose mission is to provide consumers with life-long natural solutions to their hydration and refreshment needs. It markets brands of natural mineral water, spring water and refreshing beverages based on natural mineral water: Spa and Bru in the Benelux, Devin in Bulgaria, and Wattwiller and Carola in France. Sustainable development is part of the Spadel Group's DNA, and its CSR 2025 policy has been defined. In 2020 Spadel generated a turnover of €266.6 million. Late 2020, the Spadel Group employed 1,263 people.

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