



Press release

Tokyo - 18 October 2012

Accor leads international partnership to plant trees in tsunami-affected Ishinomaki

*Jakko No-Mori** project unites business giants to plant 19,200 trees in memory of the 19,200 victims of the 2011 Great East Japan Tsunami

Accor, the largest international hotel operator in Asia-Pacific, along with Pur Projet, Unilever, Air France-KLM, Fauchon, Materialize, and MIE Project, have joined forces with the Ishinomaki Environmental Network to launch the *Jakko No-Mori* project in Japan's Ishinomaki prefecture. The partnership **aims to plant 19,200 trees in memory of the 19,200 victims of the 2011 Great East Japan Tsunami** in an international show of friendship and solidarity. In a ceremony held on Sunday, 14 October, the six partners **planted 60 symbolic** cherry blossom trees at Hou on ji Temple in Ishinomaki, with **simultaneous plantings taking place around the world**, including in France, Spain, Peru, Thailand, China, Morocco and Haiti.

Initiated by Accor and Pur Projet, the objective of *Jakko No-Mori* is to plant at least 19,200 trees over a period of three years to match the number of victims from the 2011 tsunami in the Tohoku coastal areas. The project will be implemented through several phases, with the first phase being the planting of *sakura* trees by representatives from the Ishinomaki Environmental Network, several international business partners, and the people of Ishinomaki.

"*Jakko no-mori* is a unique international collaboration to remember those killed in the 2011 tsunami, while helping the Ishinomaki community rebuild following last year's devastating tsunami," said Tristan Lecomte, Founder of Pur Projet, and the global ambassador for Accor's Plant for the Planet reforestation program. "In addition to the 19,200 trees being planted by the partnership in Ishinomaki in the next several years, the same number of trees is being planted around the world – in places like France, Thailand and Haiti – in a beautiful display of solidarity with Japan."

For the launch of the project, the *sakura* – or cherry blossom – was chosen, given its deep symbolic meaning; in Japanese culture, *sakura* evoke connotations with rebirth, healing and hope. The six partners planted a total of 60 *sakura* in a ceremony held at Hou on ji Temple. The types of trees planted in the future will be determined by the needs of the community, but will include a mix of *sakura* and plant species native to the area.

"We truly appreciate all the partners who are supporting the *Jakko-no-mori* project to help begin the process of recovering from the crisis," said **Hisashi Takahashi, Representative Director, Ishinomaki Environmental Network**. "While full recovery will some time, we are making progress every day. We appreciate the ongoing support from the project partners."

Accor is supporting *Jakko no-mori* through **funds raised through the Group's unique Plant for the Planet reforestation program**. Plant for the Planet offers guests the option of reusing their towels and sharing the

hotels' cost savings with tree-planting projects: on average, every five towels reused plants one tree. Since 2008, more than two million trees have been planted in seven plantations worldwide. As part of PLANET 21, the Accor's sustainable development program, which was launched in April of this year, the program is being expanded to include more countries, including Japan. Today, **five hotels in Japan participate in Plant for the Planet: Mercure Tokyo Ginza, Mercure Sapporo, Mercure Okinawa Naha, Mercure Yokosuka and ibis Tokyo Shinjuku**. All funds raised by Accor hotels in Japan will support the *Jakko no-mori* project.

"When Accor announced that Plant for the Planet would be expanding to Japan, we wanted to make sure the tree planting efforts were done in the most meaningful way for our local community," said **Pieter de Weerd, General Manager, Operations, Accor Japan**. "Not only does *Jakko no-mori* fulfill an environmental objective – helping restore the damaged ecosystems of Ishinomaki – the program also shows solidarity with the many lives that were affected by this natural disaster."

To support the *Jakko No Mori project*, **Le Club Accorhotels members who stay at any of the five Japan hotels participating in Plant for the Planet** (Mercure Sapporo, Mercure Yokosuka, Mercure Tokyo Ginza, Mercure Okinawa Naha and ibis Tokyo Shinjuku) between 1 November and 31 December **will earn 1,000 Le Club bonus per stay that will be automatically converted into a donation to Ishinomaki Environmental Network** at the end of the promotion period. Therefore, for every five stays at participating hotels, Le Club members will support the project with an additional tree planted.

Accor is the leading international hotel operator in Asia-Pacific, with over 540 hotels in the region, including nine hotels in Japan with over 1,900 rooms in cities throughout the country: Tokyo, Osaka, Sapporo, Nagoya, and Okinawa.

* *Jakko No-Mori* means "a restful radiance, an illumination with the tranquility of truth and the workings of wisdom, symbolizing the two virtues of reason and enlightenment"

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Accor, the world's leading hotel operator and market leader in Europe, is present in 92 countries with nearly 3,500 hotels and 440,000 rooms. Accor's broad portfolio of hotel brands - Sofitel, Pullman, MGallery, Novotel, Suite Novotel, Mercure, Adagio, ibis, ibis Styles, ibis budget and hotelF1 - provide an extensive offer from luxury to budget. With more than 160,000 employees in Accor brand hotels worldwide, the Group offers its clients and partners 45 years of know-how and expertise.

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