Flash report – Meeting between Commissioner Reynders and Antoine de Saint-Affrique, CEO Danone - 24/10/2022

Participants:
- Antoine de Saint-Affrique, CEO and his team
- Commissioner Reynders, Cab Reynders

Report:
- Commissioner Reynders gave the state of play on our proposal Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, which is currently discussed by both co-legislators.
- Antoine de Saint-Affrique explained his commitment to improve the supply chain, namely in his past job with Callebaut on palm oil. He was concerned by the fact a company doing due diligence and discovers there are human rights violations on their supply chain could be held liable for this, hence this could discourage some companies to invest in certain areas. He believes legislation should go as far as possible but should not punish companies for discovering violations otherwise it would be counter-productive.
- Commissioner Reynders acknowledged these points, and recalled that what is required from companies is to show measures are being taken to check the supply chain and avoid such situations. Companies should be responsible to put a due diligence system in place.
- Danone referred to the French law that has already been adopted a moment ago and Commissioner Reynders encouraged him to promote the French system toward other Member States’ ambassadors to share their experience and show them this is manageable by companies.
- They also touched upon the preparatory work of the Commission on a nutri-score and the importance of being transparent towards consumers, which allow them to improve their eating habits. Danone is already using this system in certain countries and insisted on the fact it should be based on scientific evidence and be as simple as possible for consumers to understand it easily. Finally, he also underlined that this should be harmonised at EU level.
- Commissioner Reynders also noted the concern of dual quality in some Member States.