

Barcelona, Friday 18 July 2014

## **Criteria will become the second largest shareholder of Suez Environnement after exchanging its 24.14% holding in Agbar for shares of the French group**

- Criteria CaixaHolding will receive 22 million newly-issued shares of Suez Environnement, equal to 4.1% of its share capital, plus €299 million that will be allocated to purchasing Suez Environnement shares on the market in order to obtain up to 7% of the French group's share capital.

- Within the framework of the global cooperation agreement in the Spanish market, Criteria will also purchase 15% of the Agbar group's holding in Aigües de Barcelona.

- Suez Environnement is a world leader in water and waste management, with €14,600 million in sales and a stock market capitalisation of €7,100 million.

Criteria CaixaHolding, wholly owned by the "la Caixa" Banking Foundation which manages all "la Caixa" shareholdings, will become the second largest shareholder of Suez Environnement after signing a binding agreement with the French group for the sale of its 24.14% holding in Agbar in exchange for 22 million newly-issued shares of Suez Environnement, representing 4.1% of its share capital, and €299 million in cash.

As part of the agreement, Criteria declared its intent to allocate part of the cash received to purchase Suez Environnement shares on the stock market, for the purpose of obtaining, depending on market conditions, up to 7% of the share capital of Suez Environnement, a company that currently controls 75.35% of Agbar's share capital.

Suez Environnement will allow Criteria to be represented on Suez Environnement's Board of Directors and in its Strategy Committee. In turn, Criteria agrees to maintain its investment in Suez Environnement over the next four years.

The gross impact on Criteria's results from the sale of the Agbar shares will not be significant.

Within the framework of the historical cooperation with Suez Environnement in the Spanish market, the agreement between Criteria and Agbar includes a clause in which Criteria undertakes to acquire from Agbar 15% of Aigües de Barcelona, a company that manages the integral water cycle in the metropolitan area of Barcelona, and to purchase from Suez Environnement 14.5% of Aguas de Valencia.

When the investment in Aigües de Barcelona is made, its shareholder structure will be formed by Agbar (70%), AMB (15%) and Criteria (15%). Criteria's investment in Aigües de Barcelona reinforces its commitment and connection to developing key infrastructure and services for 36 municipalities of the metropolitan area of Barcelona.

### **Leading shareholder and local partner**

As a result of these transactions, Criteria will become the second largest shareholder of one of the leading environmental management companies worldwide. From this new position, Criteria will be able to benefit from the macroeconomic trends indicating that the environment will be one of the key sectors over the coming decades.

According to Isidro Fainé, the Chairman of Criteria CaixaHolding, "Criteria's direct ownership interest in Suez Environnement as a leading shareholder is the culmination of a long and highly successful relationship between both companies". "Criteria will gain exposure to a leading company in the environmental sector with a strong international presence and a solid and diversified income base", Isidro Fainé added. Through Criteria's presence in Aigües de Barcelona, the "la Caixa" Group will also maintain its support for carrying out water-related activities in the metropolitan area of Barcelona, as it has been doing for over 20 years.

All transactions relating to this agreement have been approved by the related governing bodies of the companies involved. Once the various legal authorisations that are generally required in these types of transactions are obtained, the transactions are expected to be completed prior to the end of 2014.

### **About Sociedad General de Aguas de Barcelona, S.A. (“Agbar”)**

Since 1867 the companies forming part of Agbar have brought water and environmental management into the future by continuously applying new developments, technological advances and knowledge. After more than 145 years of experience, Agbar is an international benchmark with a presence in Spain, Chile, the UK, Turkey, Algeria, the US, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia and other countries in Latin America. Agbar adapts to the needs of the societies in which it has a presence to offer the best service possible to 26 million people. In 2013, Agbar posted income of €2,036 million.

### **About Aigües de Barcelona, Empresa Metropolitana de Gestió del Cicle Integral de l’Aigua, S.A. (“Aigües de Barcelona”)**

Aigües de Barcelona is a public-private company that efficiently manages the integral water cycle, from collection to purification, transport and distribution. The company is also in charge of the waste water treatment and purification service to return this water to the environment or reuse it. The company offers service to around 3 million people with absolute health guarantees in the municipalities of the metropolitan area of Barcelona.

The company has developed a management policy focused on proximity to the client; excellence in rendering services; commitment to innovation and the talent of its professionals; cooperation with other companies, entities and public administration to generate value; and the development of a sustainable business model as a strategic cornerstone.

### **About Suez Environnement**

Natural resources are not infinite. Each day, Suez Environnement (Paris: SEV, Brussels: SEVB) and its subsidiaries deal with the challenge of protecting resources by providing innovative solutions to industries and to millions of people. Suez Environnement supplies drinking water to 92 million people, provides waste water treatment services for 65 million people and collects the waste produced by 52 million people. Suez Environnement has 79,219 employees and, has a presence in five continents. In 2013, Suez Environnement posted revenues of €14,6 billion.

### **About Criteria CaixaHolding**

Criteria CaixaHolding, wholly owned by the “la Caixa” Banking Foundation, is the “la Caixa” Group’s investment company, which manages shareholdings in strategic sectors such as financial, energy, infrastructure and services, and has a presence in the real estate business. The company seeks to generate value by actively managing its portfolio and assets.