PRESS RELEASE

European Commission signs Grant Agreement with TU Delft to invest 17 Million Euro to WATER MINING to demonstrate clean water solutions

Delft, The Netherlands, 14 April 2020

Today, the European Commission has signed the Grant Agreement for investing 17 M Euro to WATER MINING, a project to demonstrate innovative water resource solutions. Demonstrations in Cyprus, Spain, Portugal, Italy and The Netherlands will be built to show novel efficient ways to reclaim nutrients, minerals, energy and water from industrial and urban wastewater and seawater. The public-private consortium consists of 38 public and private partners and 4 linked third parties in 12 countries and is led by the Delft University of Technology.

The project aims to provide examples for real-world implementation of the Water Framework Directive to help the transition to Circular Economy, incorporating EU Green Deal packages. The demonstrations will integrate selected innovative technologies developed by partners and from previously funded EU projects. The value-added end-products (water, platform chemicals, energy, nutrients and minerals) are expected to provide regional resource supplies to fuel economic developments.

Mark van Loosdrecht (professor Environmental Biotechnology, TU Delft) "Water is essential for human health, certainly in urban areas. Flushing sanitary waste out of the city is one of the main functions. This program will aid to recover the water and convert waste components to resources, thereby contributing to a stronger circular economy."

Unique feature of the project is that the implementation of the novel technology will be co-designed with a range of stakeholders. Through Science Musea such as NEMO in The Netherlands and Living Labs throughout Europe we also invite public input in considering the social impacts and concerns. With augmented technology we will present and discuss the science behind the technology, the measured ecological footprint and the possible social impacts.

"We will organise over 24 workshops with experts, policy makers, industry, civil communities and the public to show the innovations and discuss the implications such as ecological footprint, local changes and consequences" says Patricia Osseweijer, professor Biotechnology and Society, TU Delft and coordinator of the project. "Their input will be used to improve the innovations and their implementation in society. I am really looking forward to this process."

Novel technology for waste water treatment and desalination also requires new rules and regulation and business models. Together with industry, city councils and regional water organisations we will agree and develop new policies and business models. Collaboration will be key to reduce costs and increase efficiency and social benefits.

Dr. Dimitris Xevgenos who is part of the coordinating team with Mark and Patricia: "Having been working on the exploitation of alternative water resources and the circular economy through brines since 2010, it has been made clear to me that solutions need a systemic innovation approach to ensure market exploitation and social embedding."

WATER MINING aims to be an example for social embedding of innovative solutions in a wide spectrum of technology applications. The project will start 1 September 2020.

Notes to the editors

Delft University of Technology – Department of Biotechnology

Research and education in the Department of Biotechnology at Delft University of Technology focusses on multidisciplinary approaches to industrial and environmental biotechnology, with an open eye for the ethical and societal aspects of technology in these fields. Our research aims at fundamental knowledge and understanding of molecular biosciences and bioengineering. More information: www.tudelft.nl and https://www.tudelft.nl/en/faculty-of-applied-sciences/about-faculty/departments/biotechnology/

HERE: link to your own organisation plus contact details

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HERE: link to your own contact details and ensure you can be reached there!

Partners WATER MINING:

SEA-MINING

Lampedusa, Italy

Almeria, Spain

URBAN-MINING

Utrecht, The Netherlands

Pharo, Portugal

Larnaca, Cyprus

Barcelona, Spain

INDUSTRIAL-MINING

Rotterdam, The Netherlands

India

Water Mining concept and demonstration sites