

Press release 1 Wetskills – announcement event

Wetskills celebrates Challenge #25 in Romania!

Wetskills has something to celebrate. With all partners worldwide the foundation managed to organize her 25th Water Challenge in Bucharest, Romania. From May 4 till 18 an international group of students and young professionals will work on out of the box solutions for actual water related problems. It's the third time that a Wetskills event is organized in Romania.

The event is hosted by Politehnica University of Bucharest, partnered by Technical University for Civil Engineering of Bucharest, Romanian Water Association, Embassy of Kingdom of The Netherlands in Romania and Wetskills Foundation. During the event 12 Dutch participants and 12 Romanian participants will be divided in small teams, to work on their own case. The final presentations and awarding will be organized during the ExpoApa, the largest Water Technology Conference and Exhibition of Eastern Europe. An expert jury will choose the winning team.

Romania and water

'Romania is an interesting country to organize a Wetskills Challenge', says Johan Oost, project manager. 'The country joined the EU in 2007 and a lot of work needs to be done to meet the several water related European Directives, like Water framework Directive and EU Flood Directive. With the Carpathian Mountains till the delta, Romania is a country with many different water systems. Specific challenges are so-called flush floods, dike management, drinking water and sanitation in rural areas. The Romanian level of education in the engineering field is high, but their approach of is mainly theoretical. Compared to the Dutch, Romanians are less used to translate their knowledge to practice or to think in integral solutions. It's exactly because of this difference, that our Romanian counterparts are very enthusiastic about the upcoming Wetskills Challenge.'

Challenging cases

The cases for this Wetskills edition are challenging. For example the Dutch Hanze University of Applied Sciences asks the participants to find ways create 'Climateproof Megacities'. Their question is: how to improve the engagement of stakeholders in areas with a hightend risk of flood? Another case is submitted together by the Dutch Rijnland Water Authority and the Romanian Prut-Barlad Water Basin Administration. Their team will be challenged to come up with designs for the Baseu river, that will lead to a permanent water flow. The case of World Water Academy is about the development of a business-wise manner of capacity development and training in the water sector.

Breakthroughs

'With our Wetskills events, we hope to contribute to valuable breakthroughs', says Oost. 'Our previous experiences with Romania are promising. Several solutions of Wetskills teams and the use of the established Wetskills' network lead up to follow up projects, or 'WetsNext' projects. One of them is 'Flood Proof Romania', this initiative will probably lead to a testing facility for temporary embankments in Romania. Also a team of students did a research on how temporary embankments could be used in the Danube Delta.'

About Wetskills

Wetskills started out in 2010 as a small initiative. By now, Wetskills is an official and growing foundation. Since 2010 24 events have been held in 17 different countries. By now almost 500 students and young water professionals participated in a Wetskills Challenge. About 100 case owners received innovative solutions for complex and challenging water related issues.

More information

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