

## PRESS RELEASE

*The first time Wetskills Water Challenge is organized in Israel*

### **Wetskills Israel starts off with a Brain Hurricane**

#### **Haifa -**

**On the first of December 2013 Wetskills Israel started off the working days with a real Brain Hurricane! This event consisted of the official opening, background information, teambuilding and a speed date. All the participants, supervisors and experts were messed up but energized after this hurricane of information and experiences.**

#### **Welcome**

Professor Oded Shmueli, the Executive Vice President for Research at Technion, welcomed the participants and said that, "Global challenges on water issues are both cross national and cross cultural. Collaboration has become the essence of scientific research". After an introduction of the Wetskills program by Mr. Johan Oost (program manager Wetskills), Professor Avi Shaviv, Director of Grand Water Research Institute at Technion briefed the participants on the water problems facing Israel and its neighbouring countries in the Middle East. He shared his profession and expertise. This was followed by presentations of the study cases, by professionals of the supporting organisations.

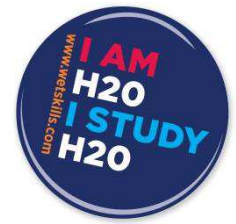
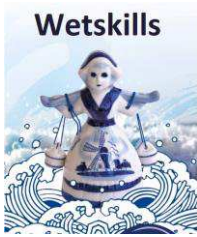
#### **Speed-dating**

Both invited experts and Wetskills students were challenged by means of a brainstorm session in a speed dating format. All the experts, with each his/her own background and expertise just had ten minutes to answer the questions, prepared by the team in half an hour. A Wetskilda alarm (a bell with the logo of Wetskills) measured and pressured the time that was available to get acquainted with one another and share ideas and inspiration. By doing this, the teams had a kick start of the further brainstorm to come up with ideas about their study case.

#### **Wetskills-team in Israel**

Johan Oost (Netherlands Water Partnership), Eran Friedler (Technion University) and Janneke Diels (Waterschap Groot Salland) are supervising the Wetskills event in Israel. The case studies that are provided by different Israeli companies are:

1. **Mekorot (National Water Company** of Israel)– The company asked students to find a solution to reduce single-celled parasitic pathogens of the Cryptosporidium and Giardia type in drainage basin of Lake Kinneret.
2. **Water Corporation of Shefar'am area** – The Association, established in 2009, treats water and sewage systems belonging to the city of Shefar'am and other nearby villages. Shefar'am would like the students to come up with a solution for farmers to use the agricultural fields again and offer them alternative crop options that can be irrigated by reclaimed water (treated wastewater).
3. **Technion University** – The team members are expected to come up with an extraction method of water vapour from the atmosphere either by "milking" of fog or by passively collecting dew without investing energy, or by actively cooling surfaces.



4. **Jewish National Fund (JNF)** (in Hebrew **Keren Kayemet LeYisrael**) – The JNF wants to encourage the growth of natural forest species stimulated through assisted irrigation. JNF has challenged the students to develop more efficient irrigation methods that will lead to increased forest growth.

#### **Water Seminar**

On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> of December, the teams will present their idea by means of a Pitch and Poster session at the Water Seminar of the Wittenberg Council in Tel Aviv. This water seminar will be organised during the official Dutch government delegation to Israel. The delegation is headed by Dutch Prime Minister Rutte, who is accompanied by Dutch ministers Timmermans and Ploumen and exists of three missions (Water, Energy and Agro, Food & Technology), from business and science. A jury of Israeli and Dutch water experts will judge their ideas and decide on the final winner of Wetskills Israel 2013. The awarding session will be led by Mr. Bernard Wientjes,

Wetskills is a program under the Human Capital Water & Delta program, organised by Netherlands Water Partnership. The Wetskills event in Israel is supported by, H<sub>2</sub>Oost, Waterschap Groot Salland, Top Sector Water, Dutch & Israeli Embassy, Technion University and Grand Water Research Institute

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More information can be found on: [www.wetskills.com](http://www.wetskills.com), <http://wetskillsisrael2013.blogspot.co.il/> or Facebook  
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