



PRESS RELEASE

Students and Young Professionals awarded at Industrial Leaders Forum during the Aquatech
'Dyeing for a change' wins the second Wetskills Water Challenge in The Netherlands

Amsterdam –

On Thursday 7 November a team of five water talents won the prestigious Wetskills Water Challenge The Netherlands 2013 with their innovative concept “Dyeing for a change”. The award ceremony took place during the Industrial Leaders Forum as part of the Aquatech. The international team existing of Inge Phernambucq (The Netherlands), Alia Amer (Egypt), Rionildo de Nelton (Mozambique), Yen-Ting Hsu (Taiwan), Thendo Matidze (South Africa) highly impressed the jury, headed by Mr. Menno Holterman (CEO Nijhuis Water Technology). The jury awarded the team, because of their innovative and unique idea, which is practical realisable in a time span of three to five years. Inge Phernambucq, Utrecht University and presenter of the winning team: *“This Wetskills was an unforgettable experience for everyone! I hope that this idea will have a follow-up and that the results will be presented in 2015”.*

Two Cases

During the Wetskills Water Challenge five mixed teams with various nationalities are challenged to come up with innovative ideas for practical water issues. In this edition the two main study cases focussed on sustainable water use of industrial water: securing water for food in northern countries and improving the water use in the textile branch in Bangladesh. In this first case the participants had to find a method to decrease the water footprint of the food industry in northern countries. The second case focused on the efficiency of the production process of the textile branch and reducing its consumption of water. The winning team focused on the use of bacteria for painting the cloths. This would lead to less use of water and less pollution of water, but maintaining the output for the industry. During the presentations of all Wetskills teams, the winning team convinced the jury of their idea with their pitch, a two minutes presentation without visual help.

Future Leaders Event

A special event within the Wetskills event was the so-called Future Leaders Event. Young Water Professionals and students and some Young Industrial Leaders came together to work on water challenges of the teams. A movie was made as input for the Industrial Leaders Forum. The Future Leaders Event was held at PwC in Amsterdam on Tuesday October 29th and was organised by the Aquatech and the Wetskills organisation.

About the Wetskills Water Challenge

The Wetskills Water Challenge is a two-week event for students from all over the world. The participants developed their own innovative and creative concepts for broad water issues in a changing world. In multidisciplinary and intercultural groups, the students gained more in-depth knowledge on the challenge topics by workshops of renowned water experts and field trips. It

was the tenth edition of the international challenge that has previously taken place in China, Morocco, Netherlands, Indonesia, Oman, South-Africa, Egypt, Romania and Mozambique. Wetskills is a program under the umbrella of the Human Capital program of the Netherlands Water Partnership in cooperation with Royal Netherlands Water Network. Main partners were: H2Oost, Vitens, KOOP, RAI/Aquatech.

This Wetskills event was part of the larger Young Water Professional program of the International Water Week, which was organised under the umbrella of the Young department of Royal Netherlands Water Network.

Valuable contribution

Supervisor Janneke Duiven (Vitens) states: *“This is the third time to I am supervising a Wetskills event. Every time I am surprised about the enthusiasm of the participants, but also about their fresh ideas. For my it is more than clear how valuable the contribution of young professionals and students can be! Although it is quite difficult for them to be heard in this sector, the Wetskills Water Challenges shows the valuable contribution of young professionals and students.”* Johan Oost (H₂Oost) as program manager of Wetskills is looking back at a successful Wetskills Water Challenge. *“This event was the tenth edition of Wetskills. For the tenth time it showed to be a valuable contribution on an event where the Dutch water sector presents itself. The cooperation of young professionals and students with a passion for water provides so much energy that it is a real ice-breaker. With my Wetskills team I am very proud about the results of last four years and we would like to continue with this.”*

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