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Press Release

IFAT India 2019: Seawater Desalination - Technology with a Promising Future

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- Water scarcity in India continues to be dramatic
- Expert: "Seawater desalination is indispensable for India today"
- Growth forecasts of 15 percent

The Indian subcontinent is facing an increasing water scarcity. The latest example is Chennai: The capital of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu needs to be supplied with the "blue gold" by special trains. According to the Desalination Institute DME, located in Duisburg, Germany, 52 different desalination technologies are currently available and could help to cope with this challenge. At IFAT India 2019, which will be held in Mumbai from October 16 to 18, numerous exhibitors will present technologies and components for seawater desalination – all aiming to become a part of the solution.

Problem: water quantity and quality

Water demand is increasing with the growth of the Indian industry and population. In March 2019, the Desalination Institute DME reported that unpredictable precipitation patterns due to climate change, extreme groundwater withdrawal and contamination of available surface and groundwater resources caused by the discharge of untreated sewage have impacted the subcontinent's water volume and quality. The per capita water availability from freshwater reserves is expected to decrease from 1,820 cubic meters in 2001 to 1,140 cubic meters in 2050, the institute predicts.

And even according to a World Bank study published in 2016, India's water demand will no longer be adequately covered by present sources as from 2020. Therefore, the implementation of sustainable water management practices in India is essential.

The solution: seawater desalination

"The desalination of seawater or salty groundwater is now indispensable for India and an integral part of the water supply," says Claus Mertes, Managing Director of DME, which is a partner of IFAT. This technology is already making a

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significant contribution to curbing water scarcity in India and is already being applied on a large scale: "Our database currently has 393 desalination plants in India. This includes small to large plants", Mertes says. The most recent example, with which India now also marks the beginning of the solar age in the supply of drinking water: the 10,000-litre solar-powered desalination plant, developed by the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M), was put up this year in Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu. Government subsidies for the construction of large-scale plants are available as well. "The central government grants discounted loans to the individual districts, which are then forwarded to the respective municipal utilities for the construction of such facilities," Mertes explains. According to Mertes, projects for seawater desalination have been in place in India since 1947. Originally, such plants were used there in the areas of "ship building" and "power plants". From Mertes' point of view, the future prospects for desalination technologies in India are extremely positive: "Today, we expect a growth rate of 15 per cent in this market."

Subject at IFAT India 2019

"The issue of seawater desalination will play a more important role than ever at IFAT India this year," says Katharina Schlegel, Project Director of the IFAT trade fairs abroad at Messe München. "Numerous manufacturers of key components of this technology have already signed up and will be presenting the performance of their products at the Bombay Exhibition Centre from October 16 to 18. All of them will once again convert IFAT India into the central solution platform for India's most urging environmental challenges." To name but a few: in addition to the DME, there are the Indian company Jay Water Management, the US-based company Hydranautics and the German company Lanxess – all three companies are manufacturers of reverse osmosis membranes, also known as spiral wound modules. Moreover, the French producer Suez will be presenting water treatment solutions. Also, on site will be the Irish company Pentair, which provides spiral wound modules, components and housings for the energy sector and manufacturing industry, the South Korean chemical group LG Chem, manufacturer of reverse osmosis modules, and the German company Thermax, whose portfolio includes products for industrial heating technology and fire protection.

More information is available on the website: ifat-india.com.

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About IFAT India

IFAT India is India's leading environmental technology fair for the water, sewage, waste and recycling segments. With an exhibition space of around 11,000 square meters, the last event witnessed 242 exhibitors from 25 countries and 7,449 visitors from 32 countries. The next event of the trade fair, held once every year, will be in the Bombay Exhibition Centre (BEC) in Mumbai from October 16 to 19, 2019. With IFAT Delhi, there will be a regional variant of the trade fair for the North of India as from 2020 – the first edition takes place from January 29 to 31, 2019 in the India Habitat Centre.

IFAT worldwide

In addition to the world's leading trade fair IFAT, Messe München has profound competencies in the organization of further international trade fairs in the field of environmental technologies. These include: IE expo Chengdu in Chengdu, IE expo Guangzhou in Guangzhou, IFAT Africa in Johannesburg, IFAT Eurasia in Istanbul as well as IFAT India in Mumbai and IFAT Delhi in New Delhi. All IFAT trade fairs together form the world's leading network for environmental technologies.

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With more than 50 proprietary trade fairs for capital goods, consumer articles and New Technologies, Messe München is one of the world's leading trade fair organizers. Every year, more than 50,000 exhibitors and about 3 million visitors come to the over 200 events on the Munich fairground, the ICM (International Congress Center Munich), the MOC (Veranstaltungszentrum München) and abroad. Together with its affiliates, Messe München organizes trade fairs in China, India, Brazil, Russia, Turkey, South Africa, Nigeria, Vietnam and Iran. Having a network of holding companies all over Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America and about 70 agencies abroad working for more than 100 countries, Messe München is present all over the world.