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Sulzer supporting Netherlands wastewater utility to become energy neutral by producing biogas from sludge

An innovative bio-power scheme in the Netherlands is using a new process to produce biogas from sludge during wastewater treatment. Sulzer was selected to supply equipment and expertise to the plant, one of the first of its kind. Sulzer's wastewater treatment specialists developed a customized solution to mix the sludge, a key part of the process, helping the plant to increase biogas production by 20-30%. The utility that serves around 90'000 people is now on track to achieve energy neutrality by 2030.

The Rivierenland Water Authority in the Netherlands is investing in new infrastructure to improve the performance of its wastewater treatment systems while also reducing its impact on the environment. The Energie Fabriek West (Energy Factory West) project in Sleenwijk consolidates three wastewater treatment facilities into one and includes new technology to produce biogas from sludge to supply a power generation unit. With this, it plans to become energy neutral by 2030.

The plant's process relies on a highly complex flow-control system, pumping the sludge between different compartments and mixing it to prepare it for maximum biogas production. Sulzer's wastewater treatment specialists developed a customized approach to mix and prepare the sludge, allowing it to be broken down more efficiently to produce increased amounts of biogas. The company supplied a range of pumps, agitators, turbocompressors, diffusers and a flow booster, all with the highest levels of efficiency to help the plant reach its goal of energy neutrality.

Frédéric Lalanne, President of Sulzer's Flow Equipment division, commented: "This project exemplifies our commitment to supporting customers to improve the sustainability of their operations. The new wastewater plant optimizes the performance and efficiency of sewage treatment in the area, serving some 90'000 people. But most importantly the new technology at the plant puts the utility on a path to achieving its goal of becoming energy neutral in the next 10 years."

Construction and commissioning of all the equipment was completed on schedule during 2020. The Energy Factory began full operation in 2021 and has been performing efficiently since.

Sulzer is a global leader in fluid engineering. We specialize in pumping, agitation, mixing, separation and purification technologies for fluids of all types. Our customers benefit from our commitment to innovation, performance and quality and from our responsive network of 180 world-class manufacturing facilities and service centers across the globe. Sulzer has been headquartered in Winterthur, Switzerland, since 1834. In 2020, our 15'000 employees delivered revenues of CHF 3.3 billion. Our shares are traded on the SIX Swiss Exchange (SIX: SUN). www.sulzer.com

MEDIA RELEASE

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Page 2 of 2

Inquiries:

Media Relations: Domenico Truncellito, Head External Communications

Phone +41 52 262 31 68, domenico.truncellito@sulzer.com

Investor Relations: Christoph Ladner, Head of Investor Relations

Phone +41 52 262 30 22, christoph.ladner@sulzer.com

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