

Executive Summary



Creating Impact with The Dutch Water Sector

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**Water technology
in the Gulf region**

June 23, 2020
10.30 – 12.30 hrs. CET



Water technology in the Gulf - Executive Summary June 23, 2020

Covid-19 has placed tremendous stress on businesses globally, with Dutch technology exporters, particularly SMEs facing unique challenges. The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO), the Dutch embassies in the Gulf Region, Water Alliance and the Netherlands Water Partnership jointly hosted a webinar on 23 June on how to work with market intermediaries in the Gulf region. This webinar was tailored to Dutch water technology SMEs and explored the channels available to enter the Gulf market via intermediaries such as distributors, agents and contractors/sub-contractors, without the costs and barriers associated with typical business development or opening local offices.

Agenda

- 10:20 Virtual walk-in
- 10:30 Welcome by NWP and Water Alliance
- 10:40 Presentation by Nellie Swanepoel – engage with local partners in the Gulf
- 11:10 **Q&A Session**
- 11:15 **5-minute leg stretch & networking**
- 11:20 Presentation by Dutch Embassies in the Gulf and Netherlands Enterprise Agency
- 11:30 Moderated discussion with panel
- 11:55 **Q&A Session**
- 12:10 Wrap up and closing remarks
- 12:15 Networking



Participants



5PL
ANDRITZ
Arcadis
Artechno growsystems b.v
BAM International
Bouwcoach consult
Bright Spark BV
Brightwork
Bureau Don Offermans
Centre of Expertise Water & Energy
Colubris Cleantech
Consulate General of the Netherlands in Dubai
De Eendracht Financial Consulting
Embassy of the Netherlands (Thailand)
Federal University of São Paulo - Brazil
Fugro
GWI
H2O Biofouling Solutions
Holland Water B.V.
IPM - Intelligent Pollutant Monitoring
IsDB
Konkaav Consultancy & Innovation
Landustrie Sneek BV
Lenntech
Maai International
Masdar

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Netherlands Business Council UAE
Netherlands Embassy Abu Dhabi
Nijhuis Industries
NLinBusiness
NXFiltration
PB International
Rainmaker Holland BV
REDstack BCV
RVO
Sabisk
SE
SSEPL
SWT
Technofer B.V.
Technoserve trading
TGS agribusiness solutions
Tu Delft
Van Essen Instruments B.V.
Van Oord
Wageningen University & Research
WaterHygge
Wetskills Foundation
Witteveen+Bos EMEA DMCC
World Waternet
WTB
Zimatic

1. Water & Energy Related Business in the Gulf Region

The first presentation during this webinar was held by Ms Nellie Swanepoel. She presented her research on how to conduct Water & Energy Related Business in the Gulf Region.



President and Chief Executive Officer of JDCEX International -
Based out of Dubai

In my role I am applying both my leadership skills and my expertise in the subject matter of Water-, Process- & Energy Management. I have supported various organizations Globally (South Africa, Sub Saharan Africa, East-, West- & Northern Africa, Middle East, Asia Pacific, China, Europe, North and Latin America). This includes but are not limited to GE Water & Process Technologies (General Electric) and Sealed Air where I have pioneered ground-breaking methods in different industries

This covers the following dimensions:

Business strategy, Analysis, Strategic alternatives by Subsector / Region, Sustainability, Understanding of core value proposition, New business model development, Growth

drivers, Resource, and Investment requirements (OPEX, CAPEX, P/L) to execute business objectives, Risk assessment and Change management and Training methodologies I am an agile leader with 30+ years' experience who believes in a hands-on delivery and execution within the team environment. Furthermore, I have a vast education ranging from a MBA at a top tier university to several diplomas in the fields of HR, water & process treatment, power generation, petrochemical and refinery, steel, mining minerals, inclusive of processing, pulp and paper, chemicals, automotive industry, food and beverage, pharmaceutical and institutional facilities & resorts.

On doing business in the Gulf region:

1. The Dutch missions in the Gulf region have adopted a multi-year strategy focusing on the water-energy-food nexus, with an emphasis on **supporting innovative Dutch SMEs to find opportunities in those sectors.**
2. Significant opportunities exist in these areas, particularly within the water sector. Many Gulf countries are looking to improve their demand side management of water and energy for both sustainability reasons, as well as due to rising water and electricity tariffs.
3. **Governments in the region have begun the progressive phasing out of water & electricity subsidies, which is creating an 'efficiency' market and incentivizing private sector entry.**
4. Even with interest in doing business in the region, Dutch SMEs often face barriers to entry if they do not set up a local office. **Customers (often public sector entities) are reluctant to do business with companies operating outside the country and have rigid procurement and vendor policies that make it difficult to do so.**
5. **Market intermediaries, such as partners, agents and contractors/sub-contractors offer a medium for Dutch SMEs to enter the Gulf market without the costs and barriers associated with opening a local office.**
6. The above has formed an important pillar in the Gulf Region WEF Nexus strategy, whereby regional missions seek to improve their partner and contractor networks for better match making with Dutch SMEs.



Ms Swanepoel first went into the general economic situation in the GCC countries. These countries experienced high economic growth in recent decades due largely to wealth generated from oil and gas reserves. This growth has also been accompanied by a globally unparalleled rise in urbanisation, infrastructure development and change in overall socio-economic conditions. They all have one view in mind: A sustainable water sector, safeguarding the natural resources and the environment of the region and providing cost-effective supply and high-quality services.

As an example, see the strategic objectives on water resources of Saudi Arabia below



Strategic Objectives:
Saudi Arabia
Water resources

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Ms Swanepoel emphasized that, given the fact that water is our most precious resource, we expect to see more initiatives to trade water and rights to water based on market dynamics. Efforts to demonstrate water stewardship will be a key theme for utilities and water users in coming years and These could include setting up local markets, selling abstraction licenses or more radical steps such as long-term water trade agreements This can also help build better relationships with stakeholders, local communities and regulators. Close collaboration between utilities, regulators and all users of water is required

Ms Swanepoel stressed the importance of having partners in the region and went into detail on the definitions of partners, which partners you need for which markets, the preferred partner profile and how to prepare for setting up business with local partners.

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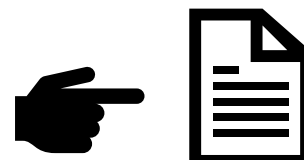


<https://www.jdcexec.com/>



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/nellieswanepoel/>

The full presentation of Nellie Swanepoel can be found here



2. Partners for International Business (PIB) and other programmes by RVO and Dutch Diplomatic Network in the Gulf

After the presentation of Ms Nellie Swanepoel, Gazizah Bahmany from RVO and, from the Dutch diplomatic network, Roeland Kollen presented on the services provided from the government in encouraging Dutch businesses to work in the Gulf region. They highlighted the [Partners for International Business Programme](#). Partners for International Business (PIB) is a programme that allows Dutch businesses to enter into a public-private partnership to realise their international ambitions. Businesses may be confronted with trade barriers, a lack of knowledge among local government bodies and businesses or restrictive local laws. By joining forces with other businesses from the water sector and with the Dutch government, a 2-year or 3-year action plan can be developed which will list strategic activities to provide the best possible platform abroad. Starting now would give you and other businesses, the opportunity to be informed about and connected to the opportunities in the region towards the EXPO, which will be held in 2021 in the UAE.



Focus Regional Business Development team for the Gulf (GCC)

- RBD focus on **business development** from a regional perspective.
- Promote export, investments and innovative collaboration/partnerships, position Dutch companies/consortiums for contracts/deals.
- RBD specifically focuses on the **generation of deals** for companies
- RBD Gulf is working in close collaboration with the missions in the region (GCC): ABU, DBA, DOH, MUS, KWE, RIY including LNV en NFIA.
- DIO, RVO, NLinBusiness, public and private partners in NL

The full presentation of Gazizah Bahmany and Roeland Kollen can be found here.



3. Panel discussion with:



Mr Ahmed Hayajneh
Metito

Mr Ahmed Hayajneh – [Metito](#)

Ahmed Hayajneh joined Metito in March 2004. With over 22 years of industry experience in strategic planning and sales

in the water and wastewater treatment sector Ahmed contributed significantly to the company's overall gross turnover. Ahmed has worked on a wide variety of projects in the Middle East and other regions and has a hands-on experience in project management with a proven track record of achieving quick and sustainable results. Ahmed's expertise includes working with the majority of treatment technologies in the field of water and wastewater including membrane desalination using reverse osmosis, microfiltration and ultrafiltration, domestic wastewater treatment, advanced wastewater treatment with membrane bio reactors, water recycling and reuse. Ahmed holds a Masters of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Jordan University of Science and Technology.



Mr Anand Kumar
AquaChemie

Mr Anand Kumar - [AquaChemie](#)

Mr Kumar is a Chemical Engineer from

Education

Annamalai University, India with over 28 years of experience in Cooling, Boiler, Water & Waste Water,

- Bachelor of Business (Marketing) - Boston University, Boston, MA, USA

Desalination, Process treatment in both Refinery & Petrochemicals etc. Primary working Experience has been in Sales & Technical, which involves in providing solutions to Refineries, Petrochemicals, Fertilizers, Power & Desalination etc for both Water & Process treatments. Besides promoting business through customer value proposition/ consulting, currently involved in the handling of Sales for the entire GCC. Formally trained in GE's headquarter (in Croten Ville, USA), in a workshop for CEO's and Business Leaders, around the world.



Mr Emre Pelin - [Andarakis](#)

Major Client Consultancies

- Hilton Worldwide
- Audi Middle East
- King Abdullah Economic City
- Alsalam Aerospace Industries
- Al Rajhi Building Solutions
- Dar AlArkan Real Estate Development
- Alkhorayef Commercial Company
- Deira Enrichment Project
- One Za'abeel
- Waterfront Market
- Al Hamriyah Trade Free Zone
- Tawreeq Holdings
- Ministry of Hajj & Umrah
- SAMACO Automotive
- Ministry of Culture - KSA
- McKinsey & Company
- Emirates Industrial Laboratories
- SAMACO Automotive
- Ministry of Hajj & Umrah
- Kellogg's
- Tea Trading International
- Public Investment Fund - KSA:
 - King Abdulaziz International Airport City
 - Jeddah Downtown
 - Amaala
 - Medina Ajwa
- Saudi Post
- Union Beverages
- REI Agro
- Saudi Paper Group
- Tea Trading International
- Deerfields Mall
- Umm Al Qura Development
- Pasta Regina
- Supermax

Partner

Diversity, drive and depth have been the guiding principles in Emre's approach to professional life. Having developed himself and career in multiple geographies, business sectors and senior roles,

Emre builds on these foundation stones to consistently deliver coherency and detail across business needs; from strategy to engagement, branding to communication that are relevant, actionable and result oriented.

Experience Timeline

2011 - Present
Andarakis Advisory Services
Partner

2008 - 2009
Hamptons International, Int'l Sales Board Member
Sales & Marketing Director

2000 - 2003
Petromin
(Saudi Aramco & Mobil JV) Brand
Manager

2009 - 2010
GlaxoSmithKline Consumer
Marketing Director MEPITEL

2003 - 2008
Aujan Coca-Cola
Marketing Manager

1993 - 1999
The Coca-Cola Company Brand
Manager

4. Panel discussion

1. *What are your forecasts for the water tech market post corona and how does it compare to before? Which sectors from your work have you found impacted, whether negatively or positively?*

Mr Anand Kumar:

EXPO2020 has been postponed to 2021; this makes that we see more opportunities in the water sector. The governments will want to be safe for things like COVID19 and they will have to have water available for different situations. We see more initiatives on water saving, water recycling and more regulations on things like zero liquid discharge. The last couple of years they start to realize to treat and re-use the water.

It is true that it is a difficult time now due to COVID19 and things might be delayed. However, there are more opportunities coming up and we expect to be on the normal level again soon.

Would you say it is a good time now to enter the market?

- Yes, once the oil price comes to a decent level the projects will restart again.
- This is the time to talk to the companies, establish contacts and partners.
- *Which countries in the gulf are driving the main demand and present the greatest opportunity?*

Mr Emre Pelin:

Due to population growth, demand for clean water will increase. Cleaner resources are the future for the middle east, especially while building new cities in the Gulf. In the Middle East, diversification will drive cleaner choices and we see the biggest potential in Saudi Arabia. Examples are:

- project NEON in Saudi Arabia offers possibilities
- Umm Al Hayman WWTP
- *Do you see a demand for innovative technologies and products from your clients? What is the current buzz (i.e. IoT, AI, circular solutions etc.)?*

Mr Ahmed Hayajneh:

One of the most challenging thing is experience and have good references for projects. A lot of times for innovations, it's difficult to show experience, history, references. Metito will work and support your innovation to show that the innovations work and have added value in the region.

COVID19 affects the business at the moment. We monitor it closely, however, water demand did not go down. It even increased due to the measures taken on COVID19. We don't anticipate water use to go down so the demand for water and water technology will continue to grow.

2. *Could you provide a successful partnership model with a water tech-company, in which it was a clear win-win situation?*

Mr Anand Kumar

An example is the cooperation with a Japanese company; they wanted to have their products and services promoted in the GCC countries and they chose 1 partner for all 6 GCC countries. We started 3 years ago and today we accessed the market and their business grew in the past 3 years.

They had the product and services, we had resources on the ground as we have around 200 people working in the GCC region.

Working with a local partner also means the local partner will advice on if the product is suitable for private or public partnership projects.

3. *What can you say about payment issues*

Your partner in the region, can very much help that with the connections. There is always a risk regarding payment issues. But if you know the people, have a good network, it makes the payments much easier. We do not expect a change in the water demand, so projects will continue.

Mr Ahmed Hayajneh: It is very common, you will be asked for a bid bond from a GCC bank and cover 1% of the bid value. A local partner could also help with local bid bond?

4. *What can you say about wasta (the use of connections) in the region?*

Wasta is getting less but is definitely still there. The local partner is important to create a good relationship and good network.

5. *Which technologies are you looking for?*

Mr Anand Kumar:

Especially interested in industrial waste water technologies. Zero Liquid Discharge for example.

Mr Ahmad Hayajneh:

We are always open to new technologies in water and waste water. We have different partners: most strategic partnerships with Europe. No specific technologies, the process has so many different elements, we are looking for innovative solutions for all.

We know that the Dutch water sector has a good reputation and we are looking forward to work together.

Mr Emre Pelin:

- The Dutch are well known for their water management and technologies.
- In the GCC there is no inland water, any Dutch company starts with plus 1
- Challenge: to make sure to meet the right partners in the region

Stay in touch with our team!



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Closing Remarks

- Interested in a PIB?

Contact NWP

- Interested in EXPO2020?

*Contact NWP or Water Alliance
And follow the news on dutchdubai.com*

On social media:



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[@RVO Nederland](https://twitter.com/RVO_Nederland)
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