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## India, EU plan Rs 80 crore recycled wastewater project

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New Delhi : India and the European Union have decided to jointly work on a Rs 80-crore (about €12 million) project that seeks to recycle industrial and domestic wastewater and use the same for agriculture purposes.

The two sides, which signed an agreement to this effect on January 29, will also work on other products that come out of wastewater. Termed 'Water4Crops-India, the project would also be looking at recycling and judicious reuse of treated wastewater, along with enhanced water-use efficiency.

The two partners will also share experiences, technologies and knowledge to benefit farmers, researchers and policy-makers.

The Hyderabad-based International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) will lead one of the two consortia with 34 member companies, universities and research organisations.

The Indian consortium partners include The Energy Research Institute (TERI), National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Euro India Research Centre (EIRC), University of Agricultural Sciences Bangalore (UASB), University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad (UASD), MS Swaminathan Research Foundation(MSSRF),SABMiller, India and Jain Irrigation Systems Ltd(JISL).

The project has seen a contribution of Rs 40 crore each from India's Union Department of Bio Technology and six EU countries for the four-year project.

As per the agreement, the consortium will also work on three types of industrial wastewater, mainly from the SABMiller's Charminar Breweries, the onion and fruit processing plant at JISL and Ugar Sugar's sugar factory.

Also, treatment of domestic wastewater will be studied and used in Hyderabad, Kolar (Karnataka) and in Nagpur (Maharashtra) and saline wastewater from industries in the coastal regions. The consortium will also address the issue of rehabilitating degraded lands using untreated wastewater at some sites to be identified.

CNRS (Centre national de la recherche scientifique), EU consortium Director Antonio Lopez told the media that under the initiative, "EU and India will share technologies and expertise for recycling of industrial and domestic waste water for agricultural use to improve the livelihood of the rural poor particularly those in the country's dryland areas".