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## India

### Water4Crops-India kicks off at ICRISAT

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The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) here has kicked off yet another ambitious project - 'Water4Crops-India' - aimed at recycling and judicious reuse of treated wastewater. Combined with enhanced water-use efficiency, the project promises increased crop productivity and improved livelihoods of smallholder farmers, and the rehabilitation of degraded lands in India and the European Union (EU). Aiming to address issues of water scarcity, poverty and food insecurity through wastewater reuse for agriculture, ICRISAT leads a consortium of national partners in the implementation of India's component of the project 'Integrating bio-treated wastewater reuse with enhanced water use efficiency to support the green economy in EU and India.' The project was launched here on January 29 at a meeting attended by the EU and

Indian consortia partners from state agricultural universities, national research institutes, non-government organisations (NGOs), and private industrial partners.

The initiative is a mirror of EU's Water4Crops project composed of 21 consortium partners led by the Istituto di Ricerca Sulle Acque - Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (IRSA-CNR), Department of Bari, Italy. Through this initiative, Europe and India will share experiences, technologies and knowledge to benefit farmers, researchers and policy makers.

The consortium will be working on three types of industrial waste water mainly from the Charminar Breweries of SABMiller, in Andhra Pradesh; the Onion and Fruit Processing Plant at JISL, Jalgaon in Maharashtra; and the Sugar Factory from Ugar Sugar in Karnataka. Treatment of domestic waste water will be studied and used in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh; Kolar, Karnataka; and Nagpur, Maharashtra; and saline waste water from industries in the coastal regions. The consortium will also address the issue of rehabilitating degraded lands using untreated waste water at certain sites to be identified. The project is led in India by Dr Suhas P Wani, Assistant Research Program Director, Resilient Dryland Systems, ICRISAT and in Europe by Dr. Antonio Lopez, Head of Unit, National Research Council, Water Research Institute, Italy. Ten scientists from Europe participated in the launching programme. Highlighting ICRISAT's pioneering role in the area of efficient water management in agriculture, its Director General William Dar says: 'Water reuse is of critical importance to the semi-arid regions of the world. Following ICRISAT's successes with rainwater harvesting and management, we will now lead the Indian consortium in venturing into recycling industrial and domestic wastewater for agricultural use to improve the livelihoods of the rural poor particularly those in the country's dryland areas.' Under the Water4Crops-India project, ICRISAT along with its consortium partners will be embarking on recycling of treated waste water (grey water) from domestic uses and industrial waste water.

The consortium is unique as national and international research organisations and universities have joined hands with private entrepreneurs to find a win-win solution to waste water disposal using bio-treatments for reuse in agriculture. This initiative will benefit farmers, industries, researchers as well as government organizations. Among the Indian consortium partners are: 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 Limited (JISL). UNI XC RP1615 NNNN

