The Responsible Toward Water Awards presented at the Bled Water Festival

Bled, 11/06/2021 – **A the conclusion of the Bled Water Festival, which was held from June 10 to 11, 2021, five international “Responsible Toward Water” Awards were given out for water innovations.**

This year, the Bled Water Festival, which was co-organised by the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Slovenia and was promoted in partnership with ministries, governmental authorities and international organisations from nine countries, presented five awards for the most innovative projects in the field of maintaining water quality, sustainability and preserving water sources.

An international jury, the composition of which is provided below, has reviewed and assessed twelve projects from seven countries (Slovenia, Bulgaria, Poland, Monaco, Germany, Israel and Finland) and awarded the best five projects in each individual category.

In the **Corporate – micro businesses category**, the award was given to the **Smart hydration station project** by the Slovenian company **MyWater**, which took up the challenge of solving the discarded plastic water bottles problem by developing a smart hydration station. The station is a combination of mechanical equipment and advanced water filtering technology for improving the quality, safety and accessibility of drinking water, which is obtained locally and is free of charge at the place of use. This means a significantly lower carbon footprint compared to water in plastic bottles.

In the **Corporate – small businesses category**, the jury awarded the **PlanetCare Microfiber Filter** project by another Slovenian company: **Planet Care**. The company has developed a unique filter for washing machines, which with its proven 90% efficiency rate and a completely closed loop is able to remove micro plastics from water after each washing cycle, thus preventing them from reaching the oceans.

In the **Corporate – medium-sized businesses** category, the award was given to the **System SPiD** project by the company **WOFIL Robert Muszański.** The goal of the company is to encourage the use of ozone instead of chlorine for oxidating and decontaminating water. The company has developed a mobile version of the system which works according to the plug&play principle and is easy to use **–** on new as well as current water purification systems. The SPiD system operates by imitating natural processes and thus decreases the use of chemicals.

In the **Corporate – large businesses** category, the award was presented to the **Small wastewater treatment plant with filtration medium** project by the Slovenian company **Kostak**. The company has developed an efficient technology for household waste water treatment. The plant itself is located underground and combines processes, such as sedimentation, filtration and dripping. The main process is based on bio-film, which grows attached on the support medium (gravel of different granule sizes in the filtration medium). Due to preserving nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus in the water, households may later on use this water for dipping.

An award was also presented for the **national project** titled **Finnish Water Stewardship Commitment.** The project poses a challenge to Finnish companies, namely to assess their water risks and opportunities, in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goal 6 of the United Nations, and to develop sustainable water use and management in own international value chains. The project, defining concrete solutions for achieving this goal in 2030, concluded in April 2021.

The members of the jury were:

* Prof. Dr. Mihael J. Toman, Biotechnology Faculty. University of Ljubljana – Chairman of the jury
* Romain Ciarlet, General Secretary of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, Monaco.
* Dóra Gere, National Public Health Center, Hungary.
* Elizabeta Kos, Directorate for Water Management and Marine Protection, Ministry of Economy and sustainable Development, Croatia
* Tanja Miškova, Ambassador, Department of International Organisations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovenia
* Dr. Mojca Šraj, Slovenian National Committee for IHP UNESCO, Slovenia

The Responsible Toward Water Awards of the Bled Water Festival were presented for the last time, since due to the programme being expanded in the next year, the European Water Awards will be presented instead.

***About the Bled Water Festival***

*This was the fifth consecutive year of the Bled Water Festival being organised, this time around as an online event. In the span of two days, international experts discussed at five round tables about various topics relating to water and the preservation of water sources – from mineral content and how minerals impact our health, the presence of water sommeliers in restaurants, underground water to water innovations (*[*view the programme*](http://bledwf.com/sl/festival/#1555660010190-ad727002-0134)*).*