**Water Operators’ Partnerships: How European Water and Sanitation Utilities are Helping their Peers to Build Resilient Services**

**An INFOPOINT and EU Green Week Event**

**Data and Time:** Rue de la Loi 43, 1000 Brussels, 1pm until 2.30pm, Friday, May 31st

**Language of conference: English and French**

**Language of Q&A session: English and French**

Water and sanitation utilities operating in cities and communities around the world are on the front lines of efforts to get access to safe and well managed water and sanitation services to all, the aim of SDG 6. These operators – with over 100,000 of them estimated at local level - are counted upon to ensure water and sanitation services are inclusive, resilient, financially sustainable and environmentally sound. Many, however, struggle to manage their hefty responsibilities.

Here’s where Europeans are helping their peers. Many European utilities have financial, technical, social, and managerial skills to share with their peers on a not-for-profit basis. Through solidarity partnerships, they are supporting utility professionals in other countries to strengthen their capacities to provide locally-adapted, efficient, sustainable and inclusive services. With rising urban populations, environmental pollution and climate change increasing the pressure on these essential local service providers, collaboration between utilities can help accelerate solutions to address these common challenges.

This session will showcase some of the many ways that European utilities have been helping their peers build more robust and resilient services for all. They will discuss motivates them and and how they do it, by looking at a diverse set of Water Operators’ Partnerships (WOPs) supported with EU funds through the EU-WOP programme.

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| **Time** | **Speaker** | **Content** |
| 1.00 | Chantal Marijnissen, Head of Unit at EU DG INTPA | European Commission – Skills and Solidarity from Europe |
| 1.10 | Mr Bernard Van Nuffel, President of VIVAQUA and Aqua Publica Europea | Resilient Water Utilities – a European perspective |
| 1.25 | Julie Perkins, EU-WOP Programme Manager, GWOPA/UN-Habitat | Introduction to Panel - What is a Water Operators’ Partnership? |
| 1.30 | * Arnaud de Vanssay, EU DG INTPA * Delphine Biquet, Societe Wallone des Eaux * Benedikt Ahner, Hamburg Wasser * Siemen Veenstra, Vitens-Evides | WOP Stories from EU and its Operators – How WOPs are helping improve services and resilience |
| 2.25 | Dyfed Aubrey, Head of UN-Habitat European Liaison Office | Wrap up and close |