

**Paris, January 19, 2015**

**Press release**

**GDF SUEZ and SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT sign a solar-powered seawater desalination research contract in Abu Dhabi**

At the World Future Energy Forum in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, a research contract to study seawater desalination using solar power was signed by Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company, Masdar Institute of Science and Technology, GDF SUEZ and SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT in the presence of Ségolène Royal, French Minister of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy. The contract provides for a study of possible use of 100% solar power to desalinate seawater, a feat that would be a world premiere.

This project is part of a contract signed in June 2014 by the SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT subsidiary Degrémont to construct a pilot seawater desalination plant potentially powered by 100% renewable energy and with minimal environmental impact. The challenge is important for a region experiencing strong economic development, with limited water resources.

Given heavy energy consumption involved in the desalination process, the use of solar energy to power seawater desalination plants is a major technical and economic challenge, even though over the past 15 years significant progress has been made in cutting the energy required in half. GDF SUEZ and SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT have for years positioned themselves in the region for these questions.

SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT, world leader in seawater desalination using reverse osmosis through its subsidiary Degrémont, is a major player in the Middle East in water treatment and desalination. Following the construction and operation of water treatment plants in Jordan, Degrémont completed the 5<sup>th</sup> expansion of the Doha West wastewater treatment plant, as well as wastewater treatment plants at Barwa City and Lusail in Qatar. The company recently supplied and installed 33 modular desalination units for treating brackish water at Riyadh (Saudi Arabia).

For its part, GDF SUEZ is the leading independent power and desalinated water producer in the Gulf Cooperation Council region where the Group owns 5 electricity generation and water production plants in the United Arab Emirates and manages a portfolio with an electricity production capacity of 27 GW and a desalination capacity of 5,273,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day, in operation and under construction.

The research contract signed today will be performed by "GDF SUEZ Lab Middle East, India & Africa" the new GDF SUEZ R&D laboratory at Abu Dhabi, supported by Laborelec and in collaboration with the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology and Degrémont.

Gérard Mestrallet, CEO of GDF SUEZ, declared: *"This new contract perfectly illustrates the desire of GDF SUEZ to focus its Research and Development on the most innovative sustainable development technologies. R&D is thus serving our strategy to be leader in energy transition."*

Marie-Ange Debon, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT in charge of the International Division, declared: *"Our company, which is at the cutting edge of water treatment technologies, is proud to participate in this project and to go further in providing sustainable solutions through renewable energy applications."*

#### **About GDF SUEZ**

GDF SUEZ develops its businesses (power, natural gas, energy services) around a model based on responsible growth to take up today's major energy and environmental challenges: meeting energy needs, ensuring the security of supply, combating climate change and optimizing the use of resources. The Group provides highly efficient and innovative solutions to individuals, cities and businesses by relying on diversified gas-supply sources, flexible and low-emission power generation as well as unique expertise in four key sectors: independent power production, liquefied natural gas, renewable energy and energy efficiency services. GDF SUEZ employs 147,200 people worldwide and achieved revenues of €81,3 billion in 2013. The Group is listed on the Paris, Brussels and Luxembourg stock exchanges and is represented in the main international indices: CAC 40, BEL 20, DJ Euro Stoxx 50, Euronext 100, FTSE Eurotop 100, MSCI Europe and Euronext Vigeo (World 120, Eurozone 120, Europe 120 and France 20).

#### **About SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT**

Natural resources are not infinite. Each day, SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT (Paris: SEV, Brussels: SEVB) and its subsidiaries deal daily with the challenge of protecting resources by providing innovative solutions to industry and to millions of people. SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT supplies drinking water to 92 million people, provides wastewater treatment services for 65 million people and collects the waste produced by 52 million people. SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT has 79,550 employees and, with its presence on five continents, is a world leader exclusively dedicated to water and waste management services. SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT generated total revenues of EUR 14.6 billion in 2013.

#### **About Degrémont**

A subsidiary of the SUEZ Environnement group, Degrémont has been the world water treatment specialist for more than 70 years. Operating in more than 70 countries with over 5,000 employees, Degrémont generated revenues of €1,110 million in 2013.

#### **About Laborelec**

A Belgian subsidiary of GDF SUEZ, Laborelec is specialized in electricity technologies R&D. It has a work force of 250 employees with skills and activities covering the fields of electricity generation, transmission, distribution, storage and end-use energy. Its expertise focuses on reducing the environmental impact and improving the availability and maintenance of the energy systems of the future.

#### **GDF SUEZ press contact:**

Tel. France: +33 (0) 1 44 22 24 35

Tel. Belgium: +32 (0) 2 510 22 76 70

Email: [gdfsuezpress@gdfsuez.com](mailto:gdfsuezpress@gdfsuez.com)



@gdfsuez