



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Press Release

July 12, 2016

Second Edition of Veolia's Think Tank Asia Calls on Industry to Create Sustainable Innovation

Veolia Water Technologies (Veolia) celebrates the successful run of its Think Tank Asia 2 seminar held yesterday, 12 July 2016, at ESSEC Business School's Asia-Pacific campus in Singapore. The full-day executive workshop gathered 20 leaders and influencers from key industries across Asia to explore future business models and to spread environmental awareness in the region.

The demand for raw materials is escalating as a result of a growing global population, rising living standards, and climate change. Slowly, the natural environment is being stretched thin as humanity continues to extract resources, only to use and dispose them. Companies need to adapt their business strategies to become less resource-intensive in the face of increasing resource scarcity. Innovative solutions and green business models have to emerge to achieve economic sustainability, while reducing the industry's overall environmental footprint.

Ivy Latour, Marketing & Communication Director (APAC), Veolia Water Technologies, shared, "After the successful launch of our first Think Tank Asia last December, Veolia initiated a follow-up session as we believe that it's vital to encourage more collaboration, exchange, and partnerships between municipalities and industries, so as to co-construct sustainable growth. This time, we invited more like-minded industry professionals who, like Veolia, strive to drive their businesses forward through innovation in a resource-scarce world, and it proved to be a great knowledge-exchange and networking session for everyone involved."

Designed by the Institute of Sustainable Development and Smart Cities, ESSEC Business School, the workshop engaged participants in a critical discussion of the geopolitical issues and factors around the sourcing of natural resources, and in an exploration and analysis of key business concepts that effectively drive sustainable innovation.

The first session focused on the politics and markets of resources, and participants' discussions were largely centered on how governments and the open markets play considerable roles in determining corporations' access to scarce resources. The attendees were challenged to think about issues faced by corporations when accessing resources, whether directly (e.g. exploration and production) or indirectly (e.g. market procurement).

In the second session, on sustainable sourcing of resources, Ynse de Boer (Managing Director for Strategy & Sustainability at Accenture Strategy), introduced the idea of circular economy business models in supply and value chains. Leading organizations have adopted various new business models – such as the Circular Supply Chain, Recover & Recycle, Sharing Platform, Product Life Extension, and Product as a Service – to gain a competitive edge even as they become more

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sustainable. Business leaders in attendance were encouraged to consider the barriers that prevent companies from transitioning from a linear to a circular economic model, and were inspired to explore beyond the perceived limitations of their current business models.

According to Sylvain Remy, Director of the Institute of Sustainable Development and Smart Cities at ESSEC Business School, achieving better sustainability has become vital for Asia. He said, “The knowledge partnership between Veolia and ESSEC aims to develop a space, a kind of think tank, for the business community – not just to share state-of-the-art knowledge and practices, but also to inspire bold and viable projects. The initiative has attracted very positive responses from global MNCs that are in a position to make significant differences in terms of resource consumption.”

Latour concluded, “Protecting the environment is a priority for Veolia. By facilitating open discussions on how businesses can reduce their ecological footprint, we are one step closer to conserving precious raw materials for future generations. We need to recognize that there are limitations to what we can extract from the environment, and to uncover creative ways to reuse what has already been extracted. We are now operating in a world with limited resources, but if we adapt quickly, we could delay a future where we are left with zero resources.”

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Veolia group is the global leader in optimized resource management. With over 174 000 employees worldwide, the Group designs and provides water, waste and energy management solutions that contribute to the sustainable development of communities and industries. Through its three complementary business activities, Veolia helps to develop access to resources, preserve available resources, and to replenish them.

In 2015, the Veolia group supplied 100 million people with drinking water and 63 million people with wastewater service, produced 63 million megawatt hours of energy and converted 42.9 million metric tons of waste into new materials and energy. Veolia Environnement (*listed on Paris Euronext: VIE*) recorded consolidated revenue of €25 billion in 2015. www.veolia.com

About ESSEC Business School, Asia-Pacific

Established in 1907 in Paris, France, ESSEC Business School is an academic institution of excellence which has been characterized by its pioneering spirit throughout its history.

A research-driven institution with a wide network of corporate and academic partners across the globe, ESSEC focuses its strategic development on three principles: innovation, involvement and internationalization. With more than 4,880 full-time students, 5,000 managers in executive programmes and a faculty of 142 full-time professors, ESSEC runs a wide range of academic and executive programmes internationally and is well recognised for the quality of its programmes and the influence of its research.

ESSEC Asia-Pacific was established in Singapore in 2005. The campus has since welcomed over 5,500 students and managers. ESSEC’s operations in the Asia-Pacific region present an ideal foothold to participate in the vibrant growth of Asia and to share expertise with the business community of the region. In 2015, ESSEC opened the doors to its new campus, located in One North business park, Singapore.

For more information, please visit www.essec.edu/asia

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