

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERS DISCUSS GROUNDWATER ISSUES IN QATAR ON INTERNATIONAL EARTH DAY**

*Local water management company Uniquip-Hoelscher LLC hosts workshop and tour of environmentally-friendly groundwater treatment technologies on the Gold Line of the Doha Metro.*

DOHA – Leaders from Qatar’s public and private sector marked international Earth Day by gathering to discuss the threat a rising water table poses to major infrastructure projects. Hosted by local groundwater management company Uniquip-Hoelscher LLC, the workshop featured prominent technical experts who discussed risks to drinking water, fish stocks and public health from pollution entering groundwater or being discharged to the sea. Experts shared case studies from high profile international projects and demonstrated how the cutting edge groundwater treatment technologies being used by Uniquip-Hoewater LLC on the Gold Line of the Doha Metro are designed to manage the dewatering demands of construction while also purifying the water. Following the discussion, participants toured the water treatment plant at the Ras Abu Abboud metro station.

“Large-scale development, leaks from older infrastructure and seawater intrusion have resulted in a rising water table under much of Doha,” said Professor Patrick Linke, Chair of Chemical Engineering at Texas A&M University Qatar. “This is an issue that poses technical challenges and greatly increases the risk of polluting the sea and groundwater as construction projects pump water away from sites. This issue has already reached a critical state in some areas.”

Addressing the problem in a way that protects human health and the environment is a priority in the National Development Strategy and members of Qatar’s Permanent Water Resource Committee are working across government to set standards and regulations.

Engineer Saleh Hamed Al-Marri, Head of the Renewable Energies Technologies Section of the Conservation and Energy Efficiency Department at KAHRAMAA reminded the group of the critical importance of addressing the environmental, health and economic threats of wasting resources.

“Water is actually more expensive than oil,” said Engineer Al-Marri. “Providing safe drinking water in Qatar is costly and we must take every measure to protect what we have. Through Tarsheed and other programmes, KAHRAMAA is working to educate the community on the importance of conserving both water and energy.”

As a nation built on the heritage of its coastline and entirely dependent on the Arabian Gulf for its source of drinking water and much of its fresh seafood, Qatar has set strict guidelines to ensure that development does not damage one of its most precious resources—water.

“We design, build and operate water treatment plants on the construction site that remove the contaminants and toxins encountered on that particular project,” said Engineer Bjoern Weber, General Manager of the Environmental Department at Hoelscher Wasserbau GmbH—the German partner of Uniquip-Hoelscher LLC.

After showing a 3D animation of how the systems clean-up polluted water and report monitoring levels in real time using online communications systems, Weber invited the audience of governmental experts and industry engineers to see other examples of the company’s green building technologies on their website at

[www.uniquip-hoelscher.com](http://www.uniquip-hoelscher.com).

“As we think about climate change, population growth and continued economic development, it is increasingly clear that water resources will become more and more precious,” said Wael Allen, CEO Middle East of ARCADIS/Hyder Consulting. “Technology and innovative solutions will be the key to dealing with this challenge.”

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