



Group Machiels becomes majority shareholder of Waterleau

'We succeeded keeping this technological gem in Belgium.'

HASSELT / LEUVEN, 3 July 2019 – Today Group Machiels, the family-owned and operated provider of environmental solutions, announced securing a majority participation in Waterleau, an acknowledged green tech company and authority in water and wastewater treatment. With this move, both family-owned specialists in environmental technologies will expand their reach while anchoring valuable water purification expertise in Belgium. Further developing the South American market will be the new group's next major objective.

Waterleau holds an enviable record in wastewater treatment, water production as well as water reuse. Located near Leuven, the company also acquired expertise in air purification, biogas production as well as energy recovery. Over the past 20 years, Waterleau has turned into a global player developing environmental technologies and providing green solutions helping industrial as well as public clients reach their sustainable development goals.

Welcoming a family-owned and reference shareholder

During the last few years, Waterleau has been carefully screening potential investors to sustain its growth. Bart Goedseels, CEO of Waterleau: 'We weren't going to jeopardize our growth strategy. We had some very intensive talks over the past few months. We discarded some equity providers with purely financial objectives. **We strongly believe in Group Machiels, because of the nature of its core business, the obvious synergies, as a well its similar company culture being a family-owned and operated business. With the investment, Group Machiels will hold a majority participation (51%). The remaining shares remain in the hands of the founding partners, the Vriens family as well as the management.** Group Machiels investment underlines its faith in Waterleau's growth potential.

Opportunities in water purification and in South America

The Waterleau management team will continue to develop its growth path. Louis Machiels, president of the board of directors at Machiels Group, is also appointed president of the Waterleau Board. Louis Machiels underlines the importance of a common company culture for achieving success. But there are far more opportunities with this investment: " We both have established a successful business in the environmental industry by developing a very complementary set of solutions and services. Furthermore, Waterleau brings in its **extensive know how in water purification** technology. In a world facing water shortage, this is an valuable asset;"

The partners also share a **global strategy: 'Group Machiels has established a strong market position in South America, offering opportunities for Waterleau : "We are already well established in Chili, but also in Peru and Colombia"** But also Waterleau has an international track record : it has built treatment facilities in 85 countries and was awarded the Lion Export, an award acknowledging its outstanding export performance.

Keeping Belgian technology in Belgium

The synergies between the two companies offer opportunities. Louis Machiels is very happy with Group Machiels' latest investment: 'I'm very proud of Group Machiels, being a Belgian company, having succeeded acquiring a majority share in such a successful and 100 EUR million turnover company employing over 500 environmental specialists. This is indeed our most important strategic investment in years. And I'm particularly delighted we succeeded keeping valuable water treatment know-how in Belgium where other and larger global parties were also keen to invest. But nevertheless our global focus, we want to develop our business in our home country as well.'

About Group Machiels: Group Machiels is a global player in environmental services, renewable energy, real estate and timber frame constructions. The company has its headquarters in Hasselt (Belgium), and a strong presence in South America (with a subsidiary in Chili). Group Machiels focuses on sustainability, innovation and internationalisation.

About Waterleau: Waterleau is a global and leading water Technology Company committed to protect the eco-system. The company provides integrated solutions for water and wastewater treatment as well as for the treatment of its by-products. Its mission is helping municipalities and businesses reaching their sustainable development goals. Waterleau has a turnover of 100 EUR million and employs over 500 environmental specialists.

More info:

Hilde Thevis
Executive Assistant Operations and Communication Group Machiels
hilde.thevis@machiels.com
+ 32 (0) 474 69 39 91
+ 32 (0) 11 28 70 27
www.machiels.com

Alain Buyle
Press officer for Waterleau
marketing@waterleau.com
+32 (0) 473 53 01 22
www.waterleau.com