

European Water Association



Sustainable Management of Wastewater Systems for the 21st Century - Report from the WATERSHED 2001 in Tokyo

On 26 and 27 July 2001 occurred the first joint conference of the European Water Association (EWA), the Water Environment Federation (WEF) and the Japan Sewage Works Association (JSWA), taking place in Tokyo. The 354 participants did not only see lectures about the topic " Sustainable Management of Wastewater Systems for the 21st Century", but also an industry presentation with about 370 exhibitors, a poster presentation and field trips.

Seven of the total 24 lectures were presentations from Europe. A very broad range of topics was presented, among others sewer systems, wastewater treatment, sewage sludge disposal, financing of wastewater utilities, wastewater management and specifications for wastewater treatment plants. It struck that the question of disinfection was of much higher importance to the American and Japanese experts than to the Europeans. On the other side in these countries the question of nutrient removal is of less importance. A three years study carried out over 53 Japanese wastewater treatment plants presented the relatively new problems of endocrine disrupters.

A very interesting field trip was the visit of the Ariake wastewater treatment plant, situated closely to the conference centre. This plant, constructed in 1995 as twelfth sewage treatment plant for the area of Tokyo, cannot be identified as one from the exterior, as the major part of its elements are constructed subterraneously. The main buildings of the plant comprise the control room, pumping installations, blower installations, and machinery for exhaust air cleaning. An outstanding exhaust air cleaning is especially needed as sport facilities are situated on, in and close to the treatment plant. On the roof of the main building for example a big indoor swimming pool can be found, and in the upper floors of the second main building a gym and a sports hall.

The whole conference was characterised by the Japanese hospitality and the strive for a perfect organisation. It is intended to continue the event as a series of conferences in a three years interval. The next conference will take place in 2004 on the invitation of WEF in the United States.

Report: Johannes Lohaus, ATV-DVWK (German Association for Water, Wastewater and Waste)

Translation: Kirsten Overmann, European Water Association