# Innovative technology for Water Security

**Date:** Tuesday, 19 October 2021
**Time:** 12:30 – 13:45
**Location:** online
**Chairs:** Mr. Stjepan Gabric, World Bank

## Context and objective

By 2050, the UN estimates that 52 percent of the world's population will be at risk for water insecurity. Climate change is threatening water availability through increased temperatures and drought, unpredictable rain, and the continued threat of growing pollution. As the water supply and sanitation (WSS) sector continues to face increasing pressures, governments and service providers around the globe are under pressure to increase the WSS sector's resilience and sustainability. Innovation and technology are increasingly emerging as key tools in dealing with the issue of water scarcity and safety, water service efficiency, and utility operations. This results in much greater willingness by academia, industry, and utilities to consider, plan, test and adopt promising technologies, and governments working on creating favorable conditions for companies that offer the latest technological innovations in the sector can help advance water security.

This session will look at the state of play when it comes to development of innovative technologies that have the objective to achieve water security, and present some of examples of the innovative thinking, state-of-the-art solutions that are already being applied, and enabling environments for their creation.

## Session structure

| Time | | Content | Speaker |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12:30 | 5' | **Introduction** | **Mr. Stjepan Gabric**, Senior Water Supply and Sanitation Specialist, World Bank, Croatia |
| 12:35 | 20' | **Digital water – key water management tool for 21th century** | **Prof. Vladan Babovic**, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, National University of Singapore |
| 12:55 | 20' | **Israel experiences in developing and implementing innovative technology in WSS** | **Mr. David Balsar** General Manager of innovation and ventures MEKOROT Israel National Water Company |
| 13:15 | 10' | **Corporate innovation acceleration and competitive environment in water sector** | **Ms. Leona Aslanova**, CEO, Innovation Starter Box, Bulgaria |
| 13:25 | 10' | **Using online UV/VIS spectroscopy to monitor the raw water quality of the Viennese water supply** | **Mr. Christoph Wagner**, Chief Innovation Officer, S-can GmbH (in cooperation with **Vienna Water Company**) |
| 13:35 | 10' | **Q&A** | Moderator: **Mr. Stjepan Gabric**, Senior Water Supply and Sanitation Specialist, World Bank |
| 13:45 | | **End of Session** | |

## Speakers' biographies

- **Mr. Stjepan Gabric** holds an MSc in wastewater engineering from IHE Delft (The Netherlands). For 25 years, out of which 18 years in the World Bank, he has been involved in a design, implementation and planning of a wide range of water and wastewater projects in Europe and Central Asia, and analytical studies mainly in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. He is core member of World Bank Danube Water Program (DWP) team since 2014 and is currently involved in preparation and implementation of World Bank water operations in Belarus, Russian Federation and Western Balkan
- **Mr. Vladan Babovic** (Professor, Dept of Civil and Environmental Engineering, National University of Singapore) is a global leading scientist in the field of hydroinformatics where he has been spearheading research in artificial intelligence, machine learning and computer modeling of hydraulics and hydrological phenomena. In more recent years, his work on real options pertaining to decision-making under deep uncertainties in water- and climate-related domains is gaining wider recognition. In addition to being a leading researcher and educator, he is also a scientist entrepreneur working with applied and fundamental research organizations, as well as VC investments for start-up companies.
- **Mr. David Balsar** is the General Manager of innovation and ventures at Mekorot National Water Company. He recently joined `Mekorot` to implement the government resolution and lead the company's investments in water technology companies. He has a multidisciplinary background and academic degrees that include an MBA from INSEAD and Master in Philosophy, and well-rounded business skills that include management, sales, marketing, strategy, business development partnerships.
- **Ms Leona Aslanova** is an innovation expert in leading corporate innovation programs and innovation projects involved in various events and education initiatives. She is founder of Innovation Starter, the first innovation agency in Bulgaria, of innovation's forum Innovation Explorer in partnership with Capital.bg and of Innovation Academy Project – the largest public-private educational partnership in Bulgaria – jointly with the leading Bulgarian universities.
- **Mr Christoph Wagner** studied Technical Chemistry at the Vienna University of Technology specializing on chemical engineering and process analytics. He earned a PhD in spectroscopy after being involved in several research projects. At s::can Christoph oversees Innovation, Product and Application Management.