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Press Release

IE expo China 2017: New market momentum from sponge cities

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- **Government program promotes new designs and redesign of urban water infrastructure in China**
- **By 2030, 80 percent of Chinese cities will be sponge cities**
- **For the first time, sponge city technologies are a separate segment at the environmental technology trade fair IE expo China 2017**

From May 4 to 6 this year, the international environment industry will come together at IE expo China at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre (SNIEC). “As the leading trade fair for environmental technologies in Asia, IE expo China aims to constantly have its finger on the pulse of the latest developments in organizing its exhibits,” emphasizes Stefan Rummel, Managing Director of Messe München, and adds: “These promising and far-reaching developments have now been supplemented in China by the recently introduced sponge city concept.” At this year's IE expo China, a separate segment will be dedicated for the first time to sponge cities and the technologies they require. The topic will also be part of the fair's extensive conference program.

Severe flooding caused by surface sealing

Background: Many cities in China suffer from serious water shortages – and are also plagued by flooding. One of the reasons for this is that underground urban development, such as the drainage system, has been unable to keep pace with China's rapid urbanization over the past decades. In addition, many lakes, ponds and canals in the cities and the wetlands near the cities disappeared as houses were built. This means that when there is heavy rain, the water is unable to trickle away fast enough or be retained in other ways.

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Goal: To absorb and store as much water as possible

To counteract these problems, the Chinese government launched the Sponge City Program in 2015. The idea is that districts, residential estates and regions will be developed with storage facilities, filtration basins and wetlands and roads and sidewalks will have water permeable surfaces. These measures will be supplemented with modern wastewater systems, suitable adapted industrial areas and public green spaces. According to the planners, the cities will absorb as much water as possible and store it for future use – like sponges. One goal is that at least 70 percent of rainwater will be absorbed through the ground instead of being directed directly to rivers. The program envisages that by 2020 every fifth city in China will have the corresponding infrastructure. By 2030, this will have risen to 80 percent.

At least CNY 400 million annually for each sponge city

Since its launch in April 2015, the Chinese central government has so far included 30 cities and regions in the program. Each of these municipalities receives an annual grant of at least 400 million renminbi (almost €55 million). According to Lu Kehua, Vice Minister in the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, 130 cities already have plans to be converted into sponge cities.

Market opportunities for foreign providers

Based on estimations by the Chinese-German information, networking and marketing platform econet china, the sponge city initiative also opens up promising market opportunities for foreign companies, especially in the area of urban planning and water utilization concepts. Also in demand are technologies and components to store and treat water, for wastewater systems and for ground surfaces. Analysts also see opportunities in measurement and instrumentation.

Registration documents for exhibitors are available [online](#). More information on IE expo China can be found at www.ie-expo.com.

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About IE expo China

IE expo China – presented by IFAT – is Asia's Leading Trade Fair for Environmental Technology Solutions: Water, Waste, Air and Soil. The organizer of the event is MM-ZM Trade Fairs Co. Ltd – a joint venture between Messe München Shanghai Co. Ltd. and Shanghai ZM International Exhibition Co. Ltd. IE expo 2016 attracted 1,303 exhibitors from 30 countries and 42,208 visitors; the show occupied around 72,000 square meters of exhibition space. The next edition will be taking place at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre (SNIEC) from May 4 to 6, 2017. With IE expo Guangzhou there is now also a regional edition of the trade fair, focusing on the market in South China.

IFAT worldwide

Messe München's competence in organizing environmental-technology events is demonstrated not only in the world's leading trade fair for the sector, IFAT, but also in a range of other international trade exhibitions around the world. The spectrum encompasses IFAT Africa in Johannesburg, IFAT Eurasia in Istanbul, IFAT India in Mumbai, and IE expo in Shanghai and Guangzhou.

Messe München

Messe München is one of the world's leading trade-show companies. It organizes some 40 trade shows for capital and consumer goods and key high-tech industries in Munich and abroad. Each year more than 30,000 exhibitors and some two million visitors take part in events held at the Messe München trade-fair center, the ICM – Internationales Congress Center München and the MOC Veranstaltungszentrum München. In addition, Messe München organizes trade shows in China, India, Turkey, South Africa and Russia. Messe München has a global business presence with affiliates in Europe, Asia and Africa and more than 60 foreign representatives serving more than 100 countries.

About Shanghai ZM International Exhibition Co. Ltd. (ZM)

Shanghai ZM International Exhibition Co. Ltd is a professional company with experience in organizing large-scale exhibitions and conventions nationally and abroad, highly valued in the business community. Established in February 2000, Shanghai ZM International Exhibition has set up Domestic Departments, an International Department and MP Zhongmao International Pte Ltd, a new joint-venture with Singapore MP Group. With a proven record of success in organization and planning, Shanghai ZM International Exhibition has held numerous professional exhibitions in the environmental protection industry sector, water industry, petrochemicals, fluid and electric power, pharmaceuticals, food and beverages, auto parts, etc.