(Waste)Water as a Resource

G-STIC 2017 concluded that "Resource recovery from wastewater is ready to transition to full-scale market applications. The technologies to do so are available, affordable, accepted and applied in cities and industries alike, at large and small scales. Adding the function of resource recovery to a wastewater treatment facility has the potential to create additional sources of income or cost savings, including from the sales of bulk water, bio-energy or fertilisers, or the reduction in energy costs through on-site bio- and renewable energy production."

The "water" discussions at G-STIC 2018 zoomed in on (waste)water as a resource in support of the sub-target of SDG 6.3: " .... **halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantively increasing recycling and safe reuse globally**". This sub-target translates in connecting approximately 500,000 citizens per day to some form of wastewater treatment - and do this every day between now and 2030!

G-STIC 2018 identified that the priority actions to make such resource recovery a common practice at the global level and hence contribute to achieving the water treatment and reuse target of the Agenda 2030, were as follows:

- **Act now delivering wastewater treatment solutions, leaving no one behind and learning from doing.** Even if this implies working with less than perfect solutions, celebrating short-term successes will enable to deliver long-term results.
- **Develop, adopt and implement new regulations**, including tariff reforms, that promote (1) higher effluent standards for wastewater treatment and (2) enable the sales of recovered products (energy, nutrients, water, etc);
- **Develop and implement new business models and financial mechanisms** to establish wastewater treatment as a new asset class, mobilising public and private financing for infrastructure & refurbishing of "resource-recovering" wastewater treatment plants;
- **Establish results-oriented public-private-people partnerships** for monitoring, reporting and verification. We need bankable projects but even more importantly, we need projects with tangible results;
- **Clarify and exploit the benefits that water brings to health, energy and agriculture, to establish strong synergistic cases** that combine water technologies with other technologies;
- **Strengthen the empowerment of people to accelerate change.** Strong, local reuse cases start with people recognising the value that water brings to them. Adequate quality monitoring systems and open communication channels need to be established to build trust.