

Water As Leverage

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What is it all about?

Water As Leverage invites investment banks, local actors and engineers around the table to face the world's most urgent problem: the excess, scarcity and pollution of water. They develop and realise concrete water-related projects and a method to tackle this global problem quicker and all around the world.

More

Floods, drought, pollution ... Water is one of the world's most complex challenges, especially as we cannot separate it from climate change, migration, urbanisation pressure, population growth and the rising demand for food and energy. Water is a risk, but we can also turn it into an opportunity. Just because of its central position, we can use water to steer the major global transitions in the right direction.

Nowhere in the world are water-related disasters so widespread and expensive as in Asia, where 83% of the population might be affected by sea level rise or the dehydration of delta areas. To tackle this, we have set up a partnership with a multi-donor investment bank and with three exemplary locations: Chennai (India), Khulna (Bangladesh) and Semarang (Indonesia). In cooperation

with the three cities, we have documented the specific local issues. On this basis, we launched a call for consortia of designers, engineers and consultants on April 22nd 2018. After local work sessions in September, we organize a first collective design session in Brussels with the six selected consortia. They then continue to work on concrete, integrated urban water projects. These will be submitted to the investment bank for implementation in 2019.

The objective of the project is not only to arrive at projects for a sustainable and inclusive transformation in the three Asian cities. The aim is to develop an approach and replicable knowledge, with which comparable tasks can quickly enough be brought to qualitative projects, financing and implementation in several cities.

Water as Leverage (WaL) is an initiative of International Water Envoy Henk Ovink, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam and Architecture Workroom Brussels. The first program of WaL is the Call for Action 'Water as Leverage for Resilient Cities: Asia' which was launched on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on April 28th 2018 by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency and supported by 100 Resilient Cities, the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Global Centre of Excellence on Climate Adaptation and UN/World Bank High Level Panel on Water.