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Biotech pioneers, Bruce Rittmann and Mark van Loosdrecht, win 2018 Stockholm Water Prize

Stockholm, Sweden (22 March 2018) – Professors Bruce Rittmann and Mark van Loosdrecht are named the 2018 Stockholm Water Prize Laureates for revolutionizing water and wastewater treatment.

Professors Mark van Loosdrecht and Bruce Rittmann are widely recognized as leaders in the field of environmental biotechnology-based processes for water treatment. Their pioneering research and innovations have led to a new generation of energy-efficient water treatment processes that can effectively extract nutrients and other chemicals – both valuable and harmful - from wastewater.

Mark van Loosdrecht is Professor in Environmental Biotechnology at Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands. Bruce Rittmann is Regents' Professor of Environmental Engineering and Director of the Biodesign Swette Center for Environmental Biotechnology at the Biodesign Institute, Arizona State University, USA.

On receiving news of the prize, Professor van Loosdrecht said: "I'm very excited and pleased! This is a recognition not just of our work but of the contributions microbiological engineering can make to the water sector".

In its citation, the Stockholm Water Prize Nominating Committee recognizes Professors Rittmann and van Loosdrecht for "pioneering and leading the development of environmental biotechnology-based processes for water and wastewater treatment. They have revolutionized treatment of water for safe drinking, and refined purification of polluted water for release or reuse - all while minimizing the energy footprint".

The professors' research has led to new processes for wastewater treatment currently being used around the globe. "Traditionally we have just thought of pollutants as something to get rid of, but now we're beginning to see them as potential resources that are just in the wrong place," says Professor Rittmann.

"Together, Professors Rittmann and van Loosdrecht are leading, illuminating and demonstrating the path forward in one of the most challenging human enterprises on this planet – that of providing clean and safe water for humans, industry, and ecosystems," says SIWI's Executive Director Torgny Holmgren.

H.R.H. Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden will present the prize to Professors Rittmann and van Loosdrecht on behalf of H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, Patron of Stockholm Water Prize, at a royal award ceremony on 29 August, during World Water Week in Stockholm.

Note to Editors:

For more on the Laureates: <http://www.siwi.org/swp2018>

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