

PRESS RELEASE

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Imtech and World Mobile Plants convert used cooking oil into bio diesel in Soweto

Unique CSR project: combating poverty and promoting environmental protection, improved quality in the food chain, better employment prospects, transfer of knowledge and increased use of clean bio-diesel

Gouda, The Netherlands / Johannesburg, South Africa - On 18 October, a multidisciplinary development team from technical services provider Imtech will be travelling to Soweto (Johannesburg, South Africa) for a unique Corporate Social Sustainability (CSR) project. The Imtech team will be making all the preparations needed for what is to become a large-scale production of environment-friendly bio diesel from used cooking oil in the near future. This project is an initiative of World Mobile Plants, founded by Carlo Bakker, a Dutch CSR entrepreneur in South Africa. The goal of the project is to increase employment among disadvantaged women, to protect the environment, to improve health in the food chain, boost local employment opportunities, initiate the transfer of knowledge and significantly stimulate the use of environment-friendly bio diesel.

Unique CSR project

World Mobile Plants in Soweto will be producing clean biodiesel from used cooking oil. This oil will be collected from the thousands of restaurants (some large but most small) in Johannesburg by disadvantaged women, thus enabling them to earn an income. The first steps in this project have already been taken. The goal is to form a co-operative foundation under the name 'Miss Collect'. The collected cooking oil is to supply a small mobile biodiesel manufacturing plant that is already in place. It takes approximately half a day to produce 1,350 litres of high-quality biodiesel oil from 1,500 litres of used cooking oil (90%). The residual products (10%) - glycerine and water - are used to make soap products. The biodiesel complies with the highest European norms (EN 14214) and is directly suitable for use as fuel for cars, pumps and generators. In a number of cases the used cooking oil has been used for so long that it contains carcinogens, which could enter the food chain. A payment is made for all the oil collected, making it possible to replace the old oil with clean cooking oil and to prevent this dirty oil from ending up in the environment. In the near future World Mobile Plant has the goal to create a chain of around 70 mobile bio diesel manufacturing plants produced locally in the southern part of Africa, for national collection organisations, which are run by disadvantaged women ('Miss Collect'). This gives an enormous impulse to local employment as well as educational opportunities for the local population.

Goal Imtech team

The multidisciplinary team that Imtech will be sending consists of eight professionals who between them have the social, technical and logistical competences required for realising the following goals:

- drawing up a technical-logistical plan for collecting the used cooking oil by 'Miss Collect' in Soweto;
- optimising the production process of the present plant, including a professional maintenance plan, and passing on the technical know-how required for this;
- carrying out a feasibility study on the possibility of producing this sort of plant locally in South Africa on a large scale.

The team will be supported by various parts of the Imtech organisation before and after its visit.

Support by SharePeople, De Baak and Hivos

Imtech is carrying out this project completely free of charge as part of its CSR policy. A total of around 0.5 million euro has been invested in the project. Imtech co-operates with SharePeople, an organisation that brings sustainable entrepreneurs in developing countries in contact with professionals and larger European companies such as Imtech. By exchanging local know-how and experience, all parties involved are able to contribute to a sustainable society and a better world. For the training and coaching of the Imtech team, SharePeople is working together with the Baak Management Centre VNO-NCW. The 'Miss Collect' initiative is supported by Hivos, a non-governmental organisation that stands for emancipation, democratisation and combating poverty in developing countries.

René van der Bruggen: 'unique initiative'

Chairman of the Imtech Board René van der Bruggen describes the initiative: 'It is relatively unique for a technical company such as Imtech to provide active support completely free of charge to a CSR project of this size. Nearly 50 Imtech employees are involved in this initiative, either directly or behind the scenes. Our goal is to underline Imtech's CSR policy, to mobilise employees to get involved in other CSR initiatives, to further expand our know-how regarding environment-friendly bio diesel production and to present Imtech as a modern, involved employer. Meanwhile Imtech generates revenues of 750 million euro (22% of Imtech's annual revenues of more than 3.3 billion euro) in the markets of energy, environment, water and mobility. Besides this, Imtech is actively involved in CSR, for example by reducing emissions from its vehicle fleet, by sustainable purchasing, assessing its own energy consumption and developing a new ecological Imtech office that will actually produce energy. Currently Imtech is providing the infrastructure for five major bio diesel manufacturing plants in Europe.'

Carlo Bakker: 'CSR initiative in rapid tempo'

CSR entrepreneur Carlo Bakker of World Mobile Plants: 'With Imtech's support, my initiative has taken off in rapid tempo. During an official state visit of the President of Mozambique to the Netherlands, I was invited to give a presentation, followed by a dinner with Queen Beatrix. Princess Maxima, Minister President Jan Peter Balkenende and Ministers Maxime Verhagen, Jacqueline Cramer and Bert Koenders were also present. It is very motivating to experience that politicians as well as the business community are becoming increasingly aware that such initiatives offer chances to disadvantaged women in the third world and at the same time contribute to the sustainable development of a healthy economy, more employment and a better environment. The 'Miss Collect' project in particular, in which women - sometimes with the aid of microcredit - are actively involved, has received a positive response. Soweto, the largest township in South Africa, is our primary focus of attention. But we are also negotiating with Mozambique, Malawi and Tanzania to help with the collection of carcinogenic used cooking oil and converting this into clean bio diesel. This is a dream come true.'

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Meer informatie

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Imtech profile

Imtech N.V. is a European technical services provider in the fields of electrical engineering, ICT and mechanical engineering. With over 19,000 employees, Imtech achieves annual revenue of more than 3.3 billion euro. Imtech holds strong positions in the buildings, industry and infrastructure/mobility markets in the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Eastern Europe, the UK, Ireland and Spain and in the global marine market. In total Imtech serves 15,000 customers. Imtech offers added value in the form of integrated and multidisciplinary total solutions that lead to better business processes and more efficiency for customers and the customers they, in their turn, serve. Imtech also offers solutions that contribute towards a sustainable society, for example in the areas of energy, the environment, water and mobility. Imtech shares are listed on the Euronext Stock Exchange Amsterdam, where Imtech is included in the Midcap Index. Imtech shares are also included in the Dow Jones STOXX 600 index.