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Water recycling solution recognised at inaugural WIPO global awards

By [Liv Martin](#)



Climate change, pollution, drought and overpopulation are just some of the many factors that have left many regions in the world struggling to access clean water. According to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), two-thirds of the world could be impacted by water shortages by 2025.

Hydraloop, a start-up from the Netherlands, has developed a solution to reduce and recycle household water waste. The company was one of five winners in the first-ever World Intellectual Property (WIPO) Global Awards, held in Geneva last week.

The awards ceremony celebrated solutions focusing on economic, social and cultural progress, with an emphasis on intellectual property rights. The winners were chosen by a seven-person international jury from 272 submissions across 62 countries.

Giving water a second life

Most household water – the water we use when we brush our teeth, take a shower, wash our clothes, or any number of activities – quickly ends up back down the drain.

“[Hydraloop] started with the basic thought: how absolutely ludicrous it is that in the 21st century we are still flushing toilets, washing our clothes and irrigating our gardens with pure tap water,” Sabine Stuiver, CMO and co-founder of Hydraloop, told Geneva Solutions.

Based in the Netherlands, the company was founded in 2015 and entered the market in 2017. Hydraloop spearheaded a new chemical-free technology to treat water and give it a second life. It now makes an array of products aimed at recycling water in places ranging from small households to sports centres to hotels.

Hydraloop’s treatment tanks look like high-end refrigerators but inside, a complex system can save up to 45 per cent of house water consumption. First, sediment is collected at the bottom of the tank and floating dirt (like hair and soap) is skimmed out and released into the sewer.

Then, millions of tiny air bubbles collect small particles, and additional soap is gathered in a foam (think of a fresh pint of beer), and discarded. This is followed by a biological treatment using bacteria to eat the nutrients from the water, and as a final cleaning protocol, UV disinfection takes place every four hours.

This system is patented – one aspect of the intellectual property system, which includes copyright and trademarks. It enables Hydraloop to sell products to consumers.

Hydraloop’s H300 and H600 treatment tank models don’t come cheap, with a price tag of between 4,000 and 7,000 euros. Both are geared towards homes, with the H600 model able to accommodate water waste from more than five people in the household. The company is in the process of developing a smaller model that can be mounted on the wall for space-saving in apartments, though a price has not yet been announced.

However, Stuiver said the company is also aiming to cater to larger-scale housing development projects. A 950-home project is planned for Johannesburg, South Africa, a city which has experienced extensive water shortages. Each home would have its own Hydraloop.

“Our product is also scalable for commercial property. So, we created a calculator, and depending on what the building is like, we can calculate how many units we need in the basement to treat all that water,” said Stuiver, referencing Hydraloop’s newer Cascade model.

Hydraloop has expanded to offices in the United States and the Middle East, plus business units in Canada and Australia. In addition to Hydraloop, other WIPO Global Awards winners hail from Singapore, China and Japan.

“Early cancer detection, energy-saving lights, water recycling, dementia diagnosis and enhanced medical imaging: The winners of the inaugural WIPO Global Awards are each working to build a better world,” said WIPO director general Daren Tang in a press release.

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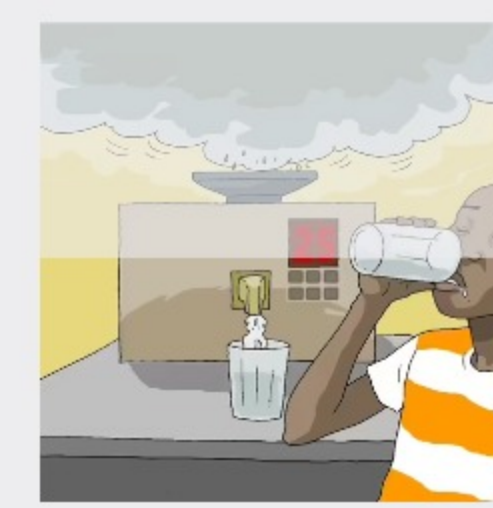


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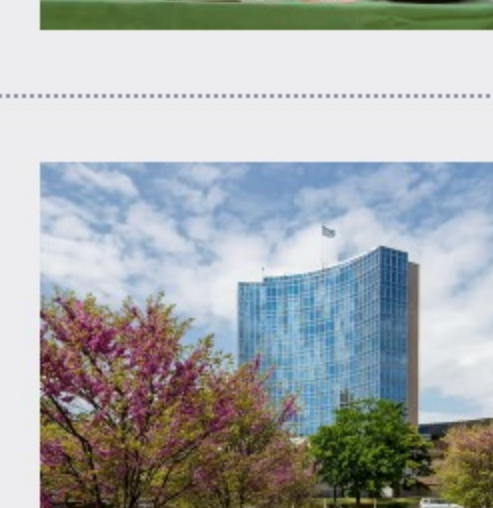
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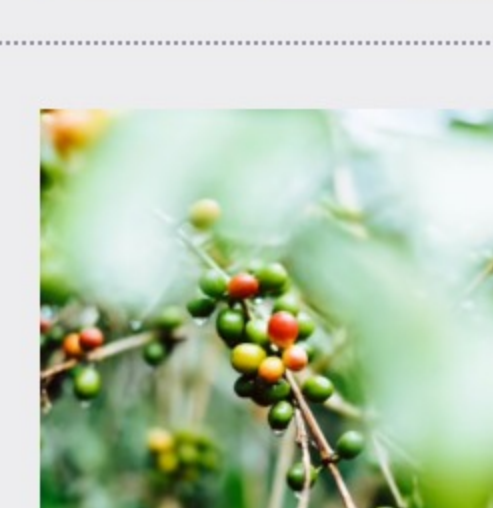
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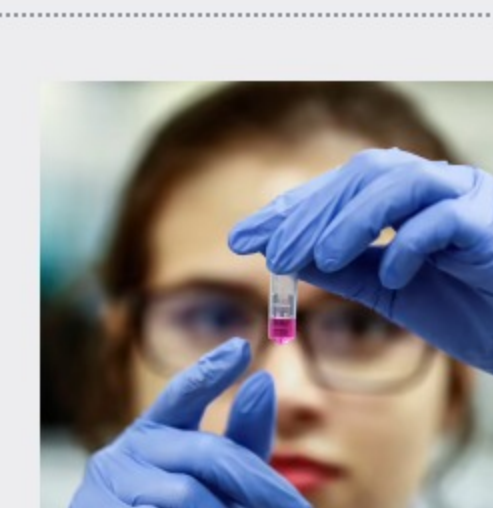
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