



Tessenderlo, 22 January 2010

## Press release

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# Innovative soil sanitation at Tessenderlo Group

**In collaboration with Ghent University and various soil experts, Tessenderlo Group has devised a new method to clean up the soil of its factory grounds. On the strength of its innovative nature, the project is now being recognised and enjoying financial support from the European Commission through the LIFE+ programme. Today, the project got underway.**

The soil underneath the Tessenderlo-based MVC factory contains a level of pollution that is the result of the historical accumulation over the past decades. The sources of this pollution have since been eliminated. Meanwhile, the company set out in search of suitable sanitation solutions. Pilot tests and further investigations have since resulted in an innovative and environmentally-friendly sanitation technology involving the use of bacteria.

A unique bacterium, going by the name "*desulfitobacterium dichloroeliminans* strain DCA1" was found in and isolated from the soil underneath the factory grounds. Given an oxygen-free environment, these bacteria are capable of decomposing contaminants into harmless components. Today, they are set to be used for soil sanitation purposes on a large scale. Using a special proprietary system that was purpose-developed for places that have little in the way of natural groundwater flow, the bacterium will be exposed to the pollution underground.

On the strength of these innovations and the commitment to make this technology available to interested parties and stakeholders, the project has now been given European recognition and financial support through the LIFE + programme. In doing so, the new technology is being made available to other industrial enterprises, enabling it to be used alongside the sanitation technologies already in operation.

*Tessenderlo Group is an international chemicals group with over 100 branches in 20 countries. The group employs a workforce of 8 200 staff. Consolidated turnover in 2008 totalled 2 765 million EUR from the Group's three business groups (Chemicals, Plastics Converting, Specialities). The group is European market leader and enjoys world leadership status for most of its products. The Tessenderlo manufacturing site where this project is being implemented, is known as **Tessenderlo Chemie**. The site produces a wide number of basic commodities that are used in everyday life. The MVC factory produces monovinyl chloride, chiefly used as the basic ingredient for PVC.*

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