

## Media Release

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### **Voith inaugurates small hydropower plant “Alte Bleiche” on its factory premises in Heidenheim, Germany**

2017-03-29

- **Innovative concept for electricity generation**
- **Show- and technology room demonstrates Voith’s StreamDiver technology**
- **Great potential for small hydropower plants worldwide**

**Heidenheim, Germany.** Technology Group Voith has built a small hydropower plant on its factory premises in Heidenheim, Germany. A compact, environmentally friendly turbine-generator unit was installed in the river Brenz. The innovative concept will not only generate electricity for the production facilities, but will also serve as a demonstration plant for customers, employees and the interested public.

With a symbolic push of a button, the small hydropower plant “Alte Bleiche” and the associated show- and technology room were officially commencing operations on 24 March 2017 - after a construction period of around one year. As of now it will be available to provide information to customers, employees and interested public. "With an installed capacity of 35 kW, the power plant will produce up to 286,000 kWh of renewable electricity per year that will be fed directly into our production facility. This is roughly equivalent to the annual consumption of 100 households," explains Uwe Wehnhardt, CEO of Voith Hydro and Member of the Corporate Board of Management.

The small hydropower plant “Alte Bleiche” is equipped with the StreamDiver, a new turbine-generator unit developed by Voith. It was designed specifically for river plants with low heads and is thus ideally suited for the Heidenheim location on the Brenz. In comparison with traditional turbines, the StreamDiver impresses as a compact, oil-free submersible turbine, allowing for a standardized and cost-efficient plant



concept. As a result the necessary impacts on the environment during the installation phase were minimized.

The plant was installed into an existing weir system of the Brenz. In cooperation with the Technical University of Munich an ecological solution for a so-called shaft power plant was developed in which turbine and generator are installed in a concreted chamber in the riverbed. By utilizing existing dam structures and eliminating the need for a power house, the facility could be built very cost-efficiently. In addition, the power plant does not cause any noise emission and has minimum impact on the natural scenery.

Most of the existing dams worldwide have not been used to generate energy so far. In Germany alone, only 7,400 of the around 55,000 dams are used as hydropower plants. In North and South America, Southeast Asia and Africa there is also great potential for small hydropower plants.

The StreamDiver is an economical and ecological solution to utilize this untapped hydropower potential. "The small power plant "Alte Bleiche" is another excellent reference facility for the StreamDiver. This compact, submersible turbine has already been used successfully for many years in Sweden and Austria. Other projects in Peru, Indonesia and the USA will go on stream at the end of 2017 or early next year," says Uwe Wehnhardt.

A special aspect of the "Alte Bleiche" project was the extensive involvement of Voith technical apprentices, who participated for example in the design, manufacture and installation of the turbine and also took care of the control cabinet assembly. Furthermore, students from the Cooperative State University Baden-Württemberg were deployed on project management and engineering tasks. "The small hydropower plant "Alte Bleiche" is a major interdisciplinary project for our apprentices, who made a substantial contribution to the project's success. It also reinforces our reputation nationwide as an attractive training company," says Erwin Krajewski, Head of Voith Apprenticeship.

### **The Importance of Hydropower**

Hydropower is the biggest, oldest and most reliable form of renewable energy generation. Worldwide it makes an indispensable contribution to a stable power supply and thus to economic and social development – in industrialized countries and also in regions seeing strong growth. In addition, hydropower contributes significantly to climate-friendly energy produc-

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tion. Since the early days of hydropower exploitation Voith has been a leading supplier of this technology and is constantly developing it further.

## About the company

For 150 years, Voith's technologies have been inspiring customers, business partners and employees worldwide. Founded in 1867, Voith today has around 19,000 employees, sales of € 4.3 billion and locations in more than 60 countries worldwide and is thus one of the largest family-owned companies in Europe. Being a technology leader, Voith sets standards in the markets of energy, oil & gas, paper, raw materials and transport & automotive.

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**Caption 1:** With a symbolic push of a button, the small hydropower plant "Alte Bleiche" officially started operations at the end of March 2017. Persons (from left to right): Ralf Burbaum, Head of Product Group Small Hydro at Voith Hydro; Martin Grath, Member of the federal state parliament of Baden-Wuerttemberg; Uwe Wehnhardt, CEO of Voith Hydro and Member of the Corporate Board of Management; Roderich Kiesewetter, Member of the German parliament.



**Caption 2:** The StreamDiver during installation.



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