

PRESS NOTE

PAOLA BERTOSSI, FISIA ITALIMPIANTI CEO (WEBUILD GROUP): WATER SECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIC FOR DEVELOPMENT AND IN ITALY, ALSO WITH PNRR FUNDS

Rome, Nov. 21, 2023 – "Italy must make the most of the available funds to deal with the tangible consequences of climate change, with 2 billion euros allocated by the PNRR for issues concerning drinking water and infrastructure improvements. On the one hand, Italy is among the countries that suffer the most from reduced rainfall (both in frequency and quantity), leading to 21% of the territory risking desertification (with peaks of 70% in Sicily). On the other, its greater intensity can increase the phenomenon of heavy rains and flooding. A trend that can be somewhat reversed by targeted investments in infrastructure, like those made by the Webuild Group and Fisia Italimpianti, particularly worldwide."

These were the words spoken by Paola Bertossi, CEO of Fisia Italimpianti (Webuild Group), at the Women Economic Forum 2023. This major international event was organized for the first time in Italy, and aims to allow corporate CEOs and policymakers to meet and confront each other, with aim of promoting women's economic empowerment and influence in all sectors.

Ms. Bertossi, speaking as part of the panel "Climate Justice in Action: Fostering Equality, Environmental and Water Stewardship and Ecological Resilience," emphasized how women can play an instrumental role in a highly developing sector such as the water one. "At Fisia Italimpianti, in an industry like the EPC, typically dominated by men, we have 32 percent of women, and not only in administrative roles, but also in engineering and project management ones. We are well on our way, but there is still room for improvement," she said. At the Webuild Group level, women account for 21 percent of the staff.

These numbers are set to grow, thanks to the Webuild Group's extensive programme for developing initiatives to increase the presence of women in key roles in an industry that has traditionally been characterized by low female presence. Initiatives that include the "*Ingenio al Femminile*" Thesis Award, which aims to enhance female talent and professionalism in engineering, while also promoting greater access for women in the work arena.

Bertossi's speech was an opportunity to talk more about "unconventional" water sources. And to also highlight that while some countries, especially in the Middle East area, see desalination as the answer to drought – while the numbers are growing on a global scale – others, about 60 worldwide, rely instead on water reuse.

"An improvement of the regulatory framework, initiated with the Drought Decree (*Decreto Siccità*) and the simplification of the authorization procedures for desalination plants, as a response to the issue of water scarcity, should also provide for the adoption of measures for the short term," continued Bertossi, who then concluded by also recalling how there is currently "greater confidence among people toward reusing water from unconventional sources, also because scientific evidence states that it is of excellent quality."

Webuild is a global infrastructure leader in the water sector, with 25 percent of the Group's total revenues (as of June 30, 2023), derived on a cumulative basis, from the clean hydro energy and clean water sectors. A major area of development for the Group is sustainable design and the construction of water treatment and desalination plants. Fisia Italimpianti, with an experience gained from more than 95 years in the sector, is among the most competitive global contractors in the industry, with wastewater treatment plants already installed and under construction for more than 10,900,000 people worldwide. While its desalination plants serve more than 20 million people every day, particularly in the Middle East.



Webuild is a global leader in the design and construction of large, complex projects in the sectors of sustainable mobility (rail, metro, bridges, roads, ports), hydropower (dams, power plants), water (treatment and desalination plants, wastewater management, irrigation dams) and green buildings (civil and industrial buildings, airports, stadiums, hospitals). It supports clients in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the United Nations. The recognised leader in infrastructure for the water sector, it operates in 50 countries. It has 85,000 direct and indirect employees from 100 nationalities, and a supply chain of more than 17,500 businesses. In its 117 years of applied engineering on more than 3,200 projects, the Group has built 14,118 kilometres of rail and metro lines, 82,509 kilometres of roads and highways, 1,018 kilometres of bridges and viaducts, 3,396 kilometres of tunnels, and 313 dams and hydropower plants. Projects include the Genoa San Giorgio Bridge, the second Panama Canal, the Lake Mead Third Intake hydraulic project near Las Vegas in the United States, the Airport Line in Perth, Australia and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center in Athens. Projects under construction include the Brenner Base Tunnel, Line 4 of the Milan metro system, the Terzo Valico dei Giovi-Nodo di Genova in Italy, and the North East Link of Melbourne in Australia. . As of June 30, 2023, the Group had total orders worth €61 billion, with more than 90% of the Group's construction backlog related to projects linked to the advancement of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Webuild, subject to the direction and coordination of Salini Costruttori S.p.A., is headquartered in Italy and is listed on the Milan stock exchange (WBD; WBD:MI; WBD:IM). Since 2021, it is member of the MIB ESG, the index of Italian companies with the best ESG practices.

[More information at www.webuildgroup.com](http://www.webuildgroup.com)



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