

# Press release



Auxerre, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023

## Communauté de l'Auxerrois selects SUEZ to provide its inhabitants with premium quality drinking water under the label “AuxR\_EAU”

With the ambition of supplying inhabitants with premium quality drinking water and preparing the wastewater system of the future, Crescent Marault, Chairman of the Communauté de l'Auxerrois (Greater Auxerre Authority) and Arnaud Bazire, CEO Water at SUEZ, today signed two new major utility contracts for water and wastewater, respectively for 20 years and five years. As with the community's structural projects, the ambition of the Communauté de l'Auxerrois is illustrated by the AuxR Eau label, which represents high service in water service provision for all inhabitants of the region.

### Major investments with the construction of two drinking water plants

*"With water cuts set to become more frequent in France over the next few years, the councillors at Greater Auxerre have decided to provide all the residents of the Auxerre region with premium quality water that is available at all times. We are adopting a long-term strategy by innovating in our drinking water distribution and management system for the next 20 years,"* comments Crescent Marault, Chairman of the Communauté de l'Auxerrois.

To meet this ambition, 98 million euros will be invested over the next 20 years by the Communauté de l'Auxerrois, and 42 million euros by SUEZ, making a total investment plan of 140 million euros.

SUEZ undertakes to guarantee access to high-quality water for the 70,000 inhabitants of the Communauté de l'Auxerrois<sup>1</sup> through the construction of two new drinking water plants. With work scheduled to commence in 2025, both plants will be commissioned by the end of 2026.

These high ecological performance facilities will be equipped with innovative **low-pressure reverse osmosis** technology: a membrane filtration system that removes most of the undesirable mineral salts naturally present in drinking water (nitrates, sulphates and excess calcium), as well as most micropollutants (pesticides, medicine residues, etc.) and pathogenic viruses and bacteria.

This innovative, and environmentally friendly process produces premium quality water with no chlorine taste and much less limescale, thereby improving the quality of life of the community's residents.

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<sup>1</sup> SUEZ supplies drinking water to 28 of the 29 municipalities in the Communauté de l'Auxerrois, the exception being Escamps.



Boisseaux plant photo mock-up

### **Conserving water and making it the pride of the community**

At a time when preserving water is a priority, SUEZ, working alongside the local authority, wants to promote Auxerrois water as a natural and locally sourced foodstuff, and aims to obtain ISO 22000 certification (food safety management) by 2028.

The Communauté de l'Auxerrois and SUEZ are also embarking on **an ambitious network renewal programme**, with an efficiency rate target of 85% from 2031, compared with 75% at present. This should save 14 million cubic metres of water over the life of the contract, equivalent to 3 years' consumption across the community. Each year, the Communauté de l'Auxerrois will replace 1% of its water distribution network, almost double the national average. This represents €4 million worth of work each year, or €80 million over the next 20 years.

With this water of higher quality and better taste, SUEZ is supporting the local authority in its educational approach, in particular with a Maison de l'Eau project in Auxerre city centre. Here, the goal is to encourage people to adopt environmentally friendly practices, with a view to increasing the consumption of tap water and using less bottled water.

*"We take great pride from being able to contribute to the ecological transition of this community by supporting the Communauté de l'Auxerrois in its water distribution and wastewater treatment projects. We have a clear commitment for the next twenty years: to deploy innovative and resilient solutions to provide the residents of the Auxerre region with access to high-quality, safe and environmentally friendly water, and optimise the performance of the network to conserve water resources more effectively,"* explains Arnaud Bazire, CEO Water France at SUEZ.

Finally, SUEZ is committed to ensuring that by 2025, all residents will be able to benefit from remote meter reading, thanks to the installation of **35,000 new-generation meters that will enable them to track their usage in real time**, benefit from accurate billing and access a range of new services, such as leak alerts.

### **Preparing the wastewater network of the future**

SUEZ will support the Communauté de l'Auxerrois<sup>2</sup>, which has been in charge of the entire region's wastewater activities since 1 January 2020, in its desire to **build a long-term wastewater blueprint**.

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<sup>2</sup> SUEZ treats the wastewater of 28 of the 29 municipalities in the Communauté de l'Auxerrois, the exception being Venoy.

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Over the next five years, several upgrading projects will be conducted, and heightened network supervision will be deployed.

### **A sustainable commitment alongside local stakeholders**

From 2023, all the sites operated by SUEZ under these contracts will be supplied with 100% renewable energy. Some sites will be equipped with solar panels installed on “trackers” made in Burgundy that follow the path of the sun to increase their efficiency and meet up to 25% of the water service's energy needs.

SUEZ has also made a commitment to vocational integration alongside two local partners, ID'EES 89 and Renouer, with more than 50,000 hours of work experience planned.

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### **About Communauté de l'Auxerrois**

*At the gateway to Burgundy and located barely an hour and a half from Paris, the "Pays d'art et d'histoire" labelled Greater Auxerre region encompasses 29 municipalities and provides its 72,000 inhabitants with a vibrant and pleasant living environment in a privileged natural setting. Crossed by the River Yonne and the Nivernais canal, its vineyards are internationally renowned, and its heritage appreciated by tourists. Thanks to affordable land prices, it offers living conditions conducive to both professional and family fulfilment. Auxerre city centre is the Yonne department's principal commercial and employment hub, offering a unique historic setting. St-Germain Abbey is home to some of the oldest crypts in France. The city also has a rich cultural life, with a "Stage of national interest" theatre, Silex, a contemporary music venue, and the Auxerexpo exhibition centre, which hosts a wide range of events throughout the year. With more than 1,080 clubs and their members, a sports complex on the banks of the Yonne, the legendary AJ Auxerre football club, and a water sports stadium with an outdoor Olympic pool nestling in a green setting, the Communauté de l'Auxerrois is a magnet for sports enthusiasts. Young people, meanwhile, can take advantage of high-quality academic courses at the University of Burgundy and a wide choice of block-release courses. With its 2021-2031 regional development plan, the local authority aims to enhance the appeal of the region and meet the challenges of the future, through a number of emblematic and structural projects: the development of the first green hydrogen ecosystem, the creation of a new district on a 17-hectare brownfield site in the city centre on the banks of the Yonne, a plan to revitalise the city centre, the creation of three business parks, and an overhaul of transport systems to promote environmentally-friendly travel. Sustainable development issues are a recurring component of these projects.*

### **About SUEZ**

*Faced with growing environmental challenges, SUEZ has been delivering essential services that protect and improve our quality of life for more than 160 years. SUEZ provides its customers with innovative and resilient solutions for water and waste services. With 40 000 employees across 40 countries, the Group works with customers to create value over the full lifecycle of their assets and services, and to drive their low carbon transition. In 2022, SUEZ provided drinking water for 68 million people worldwide and sanitation services for more than 37 million people. The Group generated 3.7 TWh of energy from waste and wastewater, and avoided 4 million tons of CO2 emissions. In 2022, SUEZ has generated revenues of 8.8 billion euros\*. For more information: [www.suez.com/](http://www.suez.com/) Twitter @suez*

*\*restated on a 12-month basis.*

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