

Press release

marketing communication

TenCate Geosynthetics and Witteveen + Bos collaborate on Smart Tailings

A consortium of innovative Dutch companies, led by Witteveen + Bos and TenCate Geosynthetics, has developed through constructive collaboration the Smart Tailings concept, which aims at managing remnants of pulverized rocks from metal, oil or coal extraction. This waste concerns one of the largest environmental problems in the world. The Smart Tailings concept answers the challenges of large scale rehabilitation assignments with an effective integral remediation design based on enhanced site survey and monitoring techniques.

The consortium brings together top-end expertise on remediation design and risk assessment. TenCate Geosynthetics and Witteveen + Bos provide the consortium with complementary measuring and monitoring techniques. Collectively these companies exchange know how and provide insight into the efficient management of mine tailings. Harry Webers, Managing Director of Witteveen + Bos says: 'By applying the collective expertise of TenCate Geosynthetics, the Smart Tailings consortium, and Witteveen + Bos on the real-time activity occurring at the mine tailings site, the effectiveness of remedial measures increases. And associated costs decrease. We are uniquely positioned to implement this innovative method of remediation and rehabilitation on the environmental and safety problems of mine tailings'.

Tailings specific solutions

Most mine tailings are stored in large basins or valleys behind dams. Improved understanding of the processes occurring in the deposited tailings and solid mine waste also opens possibilities for more tailings specific solutions such as applying alternative covers as TenCate Geosynthetics last year implemented at the Volgermeerpolder landfill nearby Amsterdam, the Netherlands. TenCate Geosynthetics here also provided TenCate GeoDetect[®], an integrated geosynthetic solution using a unique sensing technology that includes a composite geotextile fabric, fiber optics, instrumentation equipment, and data acquisition software.

Wally Moore, Group Director TenCate Geosynthetics says: 'The future of TenCate Geosynthetics is less about products and more about providing integrated solutions for geotechnical challenges through an open innovation approach. Coupling our geosynthetic and sensing technology with partners such as Witteveen + Bos, gives us an innovative and differentiated approach to detecting potential failures or problems in the mine tailings segment of our Water & Environment business'. The principles of tailings specific solutions can also be applied worldwide to reinforcement applications and to the dewatering of high moisture content sludge and sediment using TenCate Geotube[®] technology.

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TenCate Geosynthetics
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Note for the editor:

Digital photos are available on request through: media@tencate.com

For more information on the Smart Tailings concept visit: www.smart-tailings.com

The consortium includes the following companies, but is not limited to these partners:

- Witteveen + Bos : www.witteveenbos.com
- TenCate Geosynthetics : www.tencategeosynthetics.com
- Bioclear : www.bioclear.nl
- Ecoflight : www.vb-ecoflight.nl
- Hansje Brinker : www.hansjebrinker.com
- Koenders Instruments : www.koenders-instruments.com
- Medusa Exploration : www.medusa-online.com
- Paleo Terra : www.paleoterra.nl

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TenCate Geosynthetics develops solutions and systems for transportation infrastructure, water management & cleaning, and environmental applications, delivered through synthetic woven, nonwoven, knitted products and grids. TenCate Geosynthetics has production operations in North America, Europe and Asia.

Witteveen + Bos provides consulting and engineering services in the fields of water, infrastructure, spatial development, the environment and construction. With some 900 employees, the firm focuses primarily on complex projects requiring advanced knowledge and an integrated approach. The multi-disciplinary approach, which involves intensive co-operation between specialists in different disciplines, is key. Witteveen + Bos has a unique ownership structure, with the shares wholly owned by its staff. The clients are government agencies, private companies and alliances. They are served from the head office in Deventer, eight Dutch offices and foreign offices in Belgium, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Russia and Vietnam. In 2010 the firm's turnover totalled 104.5 million euro and its income after tax came to 12.1 million euro.