

Sydney, Monday 31 July 2023

Navigating towards a sustainable water future: the appointment of SUEZ Australia and New Zealand's new CEO

Global player in water, wastewater and waste management, SUEZ, has appointed Kevin Werksman as the new CEO for Australia and New Zealand. As the water industry faces unprecedented challenges, Kevin's appointment is a crucial milestone. With this new chapter unfolding, Kevin will address these obstacles, steering SUEZ towards success through a united purpose and forging a path towards a more resilient water future.

At the heart of SUEZ's purpose is the understanding that water is a finite and precious resource, and the company is committed to providing people and the planet with essential resources for a common future. With an enviable track record in sustainability practices worldwide, SUEZ is well-positioned to make a transformative impact in the Australian and New Zealand water landscape. The company brings a wealth of global and local experience to the table, and Kevin's leadership will be instrumental in amplifying these efforts.

Bringing over 20 years' experience in strategic, commercial, economic and leadership, Kevin has been involved in the delivery of over 100 high-profile infrastructure projects, with a key specialisation in the water sector. During this time, Kevin has advised Sydney Water, WaterCare, Yarra Valley Water, WaterNSW, SA Water, Urban Utilities, Icon Water and Commonwealth Government Water entities on redesigning their operating models, as well as transforming their business strategies for infrastructure investment, divestment and growth.

Joining SUEZ from Aurecon, Kevin led the development of the organisation's water strategy by connecting its 'why' with the way it does business.

"SUEZ's purpose should reflect our people's 'why'. It underpins what drives us, ultimately building a culture and approach of how we work," he says.

"Our purpose is what makes us get out of bed every morning."

Leveraging opportunity

The myriad of challenges such as climate, water scarcity, water security, ageing infrastructure, water quality, and the need for sustainable practices demand creative solutions, and Kevin's acumen will be essential in devising a comprehensive strategy for local market.

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“Our industry and our world are facing some wicked challenges, starting with climate change, he says.

“I believe the biggest opportunity for SUEZ in Australia and New Zealand is to embrace a true collective mindset. We can create an IP of collaboration and partnership driven by a hunger for bringing innovative ideas to overcome these obstacles together.”

According to Kevin, the sector is also facing a decade of significant change and investment in water.

“There are a few things our customers and the industry need to make this decade a success: making the right investment, delivering projects effectively by drawing from global technology, knowhow and innovation, driving efficiencies to enable greater investment opportunities, and stretching how we operate to meet increasing service standards and expectations.”

Beyond these areas, fostering meaningful, long-term partnerships within the community is essential.

“SUEZ has always recognised the value of engaging with governments, NGOs, industry bodies and local communities to address water challenges comprehensively,” he states.

“As a Director on the Board for the Australian Water Association, I have a fabulous window into what’s on the mind of our industry. We’re actively working together to build a sustainable future, care for the environment and create liveable communities with safe drinking water and sanitation.”

Kevin’s leadership will play a pivotal role in cultivating these relationships, ensuring SUEZ remains an active participant in solving local water issues, whilst helping customers towards their ecological transitions.

Creating a great place to work

With a visionary leader at the helm, SUEZ is poised to embrace fresh perspectives and ideas, ensuring that its workforce represents a rich tapestry of talents and experiences.

“I’m a huge advocate of diverse teams, and diversity in all its forms - gender, culture, style, experience, neurodiversity.” Kevin explains.

“An important draw card for me to join SUEZ is the chance to work with Sabrina Soussan, SUEZ’s inspiring energetic female global CEO who comes from outside the water industry. Sabrina has drawn several people with different backgrounds onto her global executive and is actively seeking diverse global leadership.”

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For SUEZ in Australia and New Zealand, Kevin is committed to enabling the workforce to make a real difference.

“By fostering an inclusive and supportive environment, we will be encouraged to think beyond conventional boundaries and approach challenges with creativity and enthusiasm,” he says.

“Collaboration will become the cornerstone of our efforts, as different minds come together to design and deliver sustainable water solutions for a rapidly changing world. Together, we will build a great place to work, marked by diversity of thought, innovation, and a unified drive to create a more sustainable water future for all.”

By cultivating a culture of ‘continuous curiosity’, Kevin will inspire SUEZ to explore new horizons, form strategic partnerships, and stay at the forefront of cutting-edge technologies and trends that will continue to shape the water industry.

“As we collectively embrace a collaborative growth mindset, we will be better equipped to tackle complex water challenges and seize opportunities for transformative change.”

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. SUEZ generates revenues of 9 billion euros. For more information: www.suez.com/ Twitter @suez

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