

Press release, January 20, 2020

WAGA ENERGY STARTS UP TWO NEW WAGABOX® UNITS 20,000 homes fuelled by renewable gas and 30,000 tonnes of CO₂ avoided each year

A pioneer in the production of biomethane at landfill sites, Waga Energy started up two new WAGABOX® units in January 2020, in Normandy and Occitania. Their construction was financed by Waga Energy and Meridiam, a firm specializing in the development, financing and management of public infrastructure projects. With nine WAGABOX® units in operation, Waga Energy now supplies more than 20,000 French households with biomethane, and avoids the emission of 30,000 tons of CO₂ per year into the atmosphere.

Waga Energy, a young innovative company specializing in the production of biomethane at landfill sites, started up two new WAGABOX® units in January 2020. The first is installed in Normandy and offers a capacity of 25 GWh/year. The second is located at the Liéoux site (Haute-Garonne), operated by Sivom SGMAM (Saint-Gaudens, Montréjeau, Aspet and Magnoac), and has a capacity of 35 GWh/year. The construction of these new WAGABOX® units represents an investment of 6 million euros, co-financed by Waga Energy and Meridiam, the main investor in both projects.

Five years after its creation, Waga Energy now operates nine WAGABOX® units in France, installed on sites managed by public authorities (Trigone, Lorient Agglomération, SGMAM) or industrial players (Coved Environnement, Suez, Veolia). Representing a capacity of 180 GWh/year, these units supply more than 20,000 households with biomethane, a clean, local and renewable gas that replaces fossil natural gas in the distribution network. They thus avoid the emission of 30,000 tons of CO₂ per year into the atmosphere.

Meridiam is one of the European leaders (France, Germany, Spain, Poland, Belgium) in the recovery of organic household, industrial or agricultural waste into renewable energy (electricity, heat and green gas) and natural fertilizers. With these two new projects, the company is now developing, financing and managing 12 biomethane plants in France, which avoid approximately 50,000 tons of CO₂ per year, equivalent to the emissions of more than 30,000 cars. These projects demonstrate the company's commitment to energy transition and its contribution to reducing soil and air pollution by avoiding CO₂ emissions.

Improving environmental performance storage sites

For Mathieu Lefebvre, CEO and co-founder of Waga Energy: "WAGABOX® technology contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and fighting global warming, a major challenge of our generation. It improves the environmental performance of landfill sites, which become places for producing renewable energy and storing the carbon contained in waste. With this innovation, we are helping to develop in France one of the world's most energy/climate- and cost-efficient final waste treatment processes. Our ambition is to accelerate its international deployment by supporting environmental players who, like us, are embarking on the path of energy transition," explains Mathieu Lefebvre, CEO and co-founder of Waga Energy.

For Thierry Déau, CEO of Meridiam: "These projects are a further illustration of our ability to support innovative SMEs in the region and to contribute to the emergence of a local industry that promotes ecological transition in all its forms and which the biogas sector perfectly embodies. The projects carried by Waga Energy reflect our desire to contribute to the emergence of a truly circular economy. In Occitania, our intervention is accompanied by a bioGNV component through support for a project to deploy biogas-fuelled refueling stations, intended in particular to supply the region's household waste bins. With these projects, we will therefore ultimately be able to contribute to an exemplary regional industry from waste to wheel".

The reference solution for biogas recovery storage sites

The result of ten years of R&D, born out of French excellence in gas engineering, WAGABOX® technology has become the benchmark solution for biogas recovery from waste storage sites. Produced spontaneously by the degradation of organic matter present in household waste, this biogas contains a high proportion of methane (CH₄), an energy gas and the main component of natural gas. However, this methane must be purified to obtain biomethane that can be injected into the distribution network. The operation is all the more complex as biogas from landfill sites contains air and its composition and flow rate varies according to climatic conditions. In the absence of an efficient recovery solution, half of the 20,000 or so landfill sites in operation around the world allow biogas to escape into the atmosphere, which contributes to global warming because methane is a powerful greenhouse gas. In some countries, including France, operators burn it in flares or in engines that produce electricity, with energy yields three times lower than the biomethane production of a WAGABOX® unit.

Combining membrane filtration and cryogenic temperature distillation, WAGABOX® technology meets all the challenges of biogas purification at landfill sites. It provides operators with a turnkey solution to develop circular economy projects on a regional scale. By recovering a by-product of waste treatment, it also produces the cheapest biomethane on the market.

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About Waga Energy

Founded in 2015, Waga Energy mobilizes French expertise in gas engineering to produce biomethane, a renewable substitute for fossil natural gas, by recovering the gas produced spontaneously by the degradation of organic matter in landfill sites. Waga Energy designs, finances and operates WAGABOX® units under contracts with waste operators. This model, combined with technological innovation, guarantees the optimal use of this resource for energy transition and the fight against global warming.

About Meridiam

Meridiam was founded in 2005 by Thierry Déau, with the belief that the alignment of interests between the public and private sectors can provide critical solutions to the collective needs of communities. Meridiam is Benefit Corporation, within the meaning of the french law, specialising in the development, financing, and management of long-term and sustainable public infrastructure projects and assets in three sectors : mobility of people and goods, energy transition and social infrastructure sectors. It currently manages EUR 7bn worth of assets and more than 75 projects. Meridiam is certified ISO 9001: 2015, ISO 26000 Advanced by VigeoEiris and operates on a proprietary methodology in relation to ESG (environmental, social and governance criteria) and impact based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs).

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