

Media release

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AkzoNobel provides essential ingredient for cities to embrace urban gardens

The power of urban gardens to revitalize cities and make people's lives more liveable and inspiring is being showcased by AkzoNobel at the Habitat III Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, which starts today in Quito, the capital of Ecuador.

As part of the event's Habitat III Village, a vertical garden has been created to help transform a bleak expanse of concrete into a colorful and more attractive space for local residents. The garden has no soil and is based on a hydroponic system, which uses micronutrients supplied by AkzoNobel to provide essential minerals for the plants.

Organized by the United Nations, Habitat III is one of the most important global conferences focused on urban development and making cities more sustainable.

"A growing world population concentrated around cities is presenting ever-increasing challenges to the urban environment," explained Geert-Jan Beijering, Commercial Manager for AkzoNobel's Micronutrients business in the Americas.

"Making urban areas more pleasant and hospitable is fundamental to our global Human Cities initiative," he continued. "It's also closely linked to the company's Planet Possible approach to sustainability. So the garden in Quito is an excellent example of how we can help improve urban environments by providing solutions that can bring vitality and practicality."

The company's micronutrients have been used to help create the garden, which conceals the concrete wall of a parking lot. Micronutrients are essential for hydroponic-based growing systems that do not use soil, such as vertical gardens and sustainable greenhouse crops. They are also ideal for urban farming, rooftop gardens and enable plants to be grown in areas where space is an issue – a major problem in many cities.

The garden itself is located within the "Ruta de la Experiencia", a people-friendly route designed to improve the lives of local citizens. The Ruta was developed by AkzoNobel in conjunction with several partners, who have joined forces to form a public-private partnership focused on improving urban environments around the world.

"We are very proud to be participating in the Habitat III event," added Peter Kuijpers, General Manager of AkzoNobel's Chelates and Micronutrients business. "We are also working on a plan to educate the local municipality about care and maintenance so that the garden will continue to bring vitality to the area long after Habitat III ends. There are many opportunities for our micronutrient product family to offer valuable solutions to the rapid urbanization trend and we are committed to playing a key role in this."

The Habitat III Conference is designed to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanization. Its mission is to adopt a New Urban Agenda which will set global standards of achievement in sustainable urban development.

About AkzoNobel micronutrients

AkzoNobel's micronutrients are marketed worldwide through designated distributors under the well-known brand names Rexolin and Rexene.

About AkzoNobel

AkzoNobel creates everyday essentials to make people's lives more liveable and inspiring. As a leading global paints and coatings company and a major producer of specialty chemicals, we supply essential ingredients, essential protection and essential color to industries and consumers worldwide. Backed by a pioneering heritage, our innovative products and sustainable technologies are designed to meet the growing demands of our fast-changing planet, while making life easier. Headquartered in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, we have approximately 45,000 people in around 80 countries, while our portfolio includes well-known brands such as Dulux, Sikkens, International, Interpon and Eka. Consistently ranked as a leader in sustainability, we are dedicated to energizing cities and communities while creating a protected, colorful world where life is improved by what we do.

Not for publication – for more information

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