

Japanese firm to extract water purification agents from coffee

Installs treatment plant with soy beans purification agent

By Birhanu Fikade

The Japanese Poly Glu Social Business Co., Ltd. claimed to have introduced a water purification agent extracted from the inner coffee skins which will be processed in Ethiopia in foreseeable future.

Inaugurating a potable water treatment plant on Friday at the town of Burayou, some 15km northwest of Addis Ababa

Japanese firm...

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in the locality called Tache, Kanetochi Oda (PhD), chairman and CEO of the company, announced that the purification plant will have the capacity to serve some 50,000 people in the surrounding area. Furthermore, Oda vowed to scale up the pilot project that purifies water which is soured from the nearby streams and water bodies.

According to Oda, the purification agent that is mainly obtained from poly glutamic acid commonly referred as Poly Glu is an active group of carboxyl chemical that functions as glue to form bridges among small particles. Poly Glu appears as harmless but has a strong purifying chemical agent that absorbs, condenses and sediments particles at various stages of the process. Layered in three stages, the process, in the first step, will require the addition of flocculent and Poly Glu and stir until it dissolves in the crude water. The next stage requires washed sand to be filled in a tank or a pool to filter the water from flocculation and stir tank residues. At the final process, chlorinate and sterilization of water from sand filtration tank takes place making the water to be potable.

The entire process takes 15 minutes to produce 150 metric tons of safe water at the cost of 20,000 dollars. According to Oda, the capacity can be doubled with five thousand dollars more investments. He said the purifying agent costs one dollar per 1,000 liters of water. The simple and easy installation and operation of Poly Glu treatment plan

requires no special skills, Oda said.

Claimed to be instrumental to remove all the water impurities and hence reducing water born diseases in Ethiopia in the coming five years, Poly Glu solution with coffee skin extracts could be a sustainable system of water purification since coffee skin is an abundant byproduct in the country. Oda said that he is also looking for partnerships in research with institutes and universities in Ethiopia.

Recognized for its social and health benefits, Poly Glu purification agent has been in the market for the last eight years in Bangladesh, Tanzania, and Somalia, Oda noted. Furthermore, Oda is also contemplating to set up a poly Glu manufacturing plant here in Ethiopia along with the expansion of its treatment plants.

Kebede Gerba, state minister of Water, Irrigation and Electric said that currently the coverage of potable water in the country remains at 60 percent. The state minister also noted that 30 percent of the population lacks access to clean water supply. Hence, he demanded for more interventions from the embassy of Japan. The embassy funded the treatment plant with a grant of 100,000 dollars as part of the grant assistance package for grassroots and human security projects, which the government of Japan has been funding since 1989.