

Thessaloniki, 23 January 2026

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **INAB strengthens alliances for sustainable development and quality of life in Thessaloniki** **What does the memorandum of understanding with Thessaloniki Water Supply & Sewerage Co SA provide?**

The development of joint research actions based on the analysis of urban wastewater and terrestrial aquatic ecosystems is foreseen in the Memorandum of Cooperation recently signed by the Institute of Applied Biosciences (**INAB**) of **CERTH** and **Thessaloniki Water Supply & Sewerage Co SA** in the presence of the Deputy Minister of Development, responsible for Research and Innovation, Stavros Kalafatis.

The aim of the memorandum is to strengthen cooperation between the two institutions through the exploitation of sequencing data resulting from samples of urban wastewater and aquatic ecosystems. In this context, the development of joint research actions, the submission of proposals for funding at national and transnational level, the implementation of information and training actions, as well as the creation of databases and information, are envisaged. Among the topics that could be the subject of the collaboration are the study of pathogenic microorganisms, the qualitative and quantitative characterization of genes related to microbial resistance to antibiotics, as well as the epidemiological analysis of selected pathogenic viruses.

The memorandum of cooperation was signed by **the CEO of EYATH S.A., Anthimos Amanatidis, and the Director of INAB/ CERTH, Anastasia Chatzidimitriou**, inaugurating a collaboration that aspires to contribute substantially to the improvement of the quality of life in Thessaloniki, through the utilization of scientific knowledge and innovation.

#### **Research centers close to the needs of citizens**

“Investment in Research, Technological Development and Innovation is at the core of the national development strategy and is a key priority for the Government and the Ministry of Development”, emphasized in his speech **Deputy Minister of Development Stavros Kalafatis**, noting that “through this specific collaboration we are bringing our research centers closer to the real needs of citizens, providing solutions based on science and creating bridges between theoretical knowledge and applied practice”. He also added that this initiative is fully aligned with European and international standards in the field of life sciences and environmental monitoring.

### **Alliances for sustainable development**

**The Director of INAB/ CERTH, Anastasia Chatzidimitriou** emphasized “It is a great honor for the Institute to sign a memorandum of cooperation with EYATH, strengthening the alliances for sustainable development and quality of life in Thessaloniki,”, and she also mentioned that INAB has significant research experience in the detection of pathogens and pollution in aquatic ecosystems. She recalled that INAB has already contributed substantially both to the surveillance of the coronavirus as a regional laboratory of EODY, and to the analysis of wastewater samples in collaboration with Thessaloniki Water Supply & Sewerage Co SA and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

### **Connection with applied research and know-how**

For his part, the **President of Thessaloniki Water Supply & Sewerage Co SA, Agis Papadopoulos**, underlined that “this collaboration marks another essential step towards connecting a public enterprise that manages critical infrastructure with the applied research and know-how of universities and research centers, with the ultimate goal of protecting public health and the environment.” He also recalled the crucial role that wastewater analysis played during the pandemic, functioning as a reliable early warning system for epidemiological surveillance.

### **Wastewater a valuable source of data**

At the event, which took place at the company's headquarters in Thessaloniki, INAB/ CERTH researcher Dr. Fotis Psomopoulos pointed out that "the integration of genomics, environmental surveillance and artificial intelligence is radically changing the way we perceive the microbial world", underlining that wastewater is now a valuable source of data for the prevention and early detection of health threats.

### **Shared vision**

INAB is active in the broad field of life sciences and in the development of innovative applications of high added value, with the main goal of studying pathogenic organisms in the environment and improving the understanding of the relationship between the environment and human health. Together with EYATH, they share the common vision of utilizing applied research for the benefit of society and environmental protection.

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