

Willy Verstraete

Biography



W. VERSTRAETE graduated as engineer at the Ghent University and subsequently obtained a Ph D degree in the field of microbiology at the Cornell University, Ithaca (USA). He then returned to Ghent , where he became professor and started the Laboratory of Microbial Ecology and Technology (LabMET - Faculty of Bioscience Engineering). Since October 2011, he is emeritus professor.

His R&D has as central theme: **Microbial Resource Management** ; ie the design, operation and control of processes mediated by mixed microbial cultures , more specifically by microbiomes . W. Verstraete has been instrumental in the creation of several spin-offs of the Ghent University in the field of applied microbial ecology (environmental technology; food and feed).

In 2005, he was chosen by an international jury to receive the highest scientific prize in his country i.e. the Excellence in Science Prize , awarded by the National Science Foundation (FWO) .

In 2006, he was awarded by the International Water Association (IWA) the Imhoff Award for his contribution in the domain of water biotreatment.

In 2015 , he became nominated as advisor of the Dutch Water Institute KWR , to deal with the aspects of water and cyclic economy . In September 2018 , the Dutch Water Institute KWR proclaimed him Honorary Fellow for his invigorating resource recovery science and application work.

From 2014 to 2021, he ranked in the list of Highly Cited Researchers .

In September 2016 , he received from the International Water Association (IWA) and the International Society for Microbial Ecology (ISME) , cooperating in MEWE (Microbial Ecology and Water Engineering), the Ardern and Lockett Award for his contributions in the fields of water engineering and microbial ecology

In april 2016 , Willy Verstraete was elected President of the board of the National Science Foundation FWO Belgium . In 2020 , his term was extended . In march 2023 , he was awarded the 5-yearly honorary doctorate degree at the Wageningen University .

Willy Verstraete is particularly proud of his long list of master and doctoral students which today are taking the lead in the domain of sciences in general and environmental engineering in particular .

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