

▪ **President Belbusti, water is a precious commodity, but also an opportunity to create 'sustainable business', especially in those places where water is a problem for national and local communities. PROTECNO SRL is an example of 'good business practice' at international level and its plants and drinking water systems are ubiquitous. In your opinion, economy and sustainability of natural resources, along with the development of SMEs, is still a viable challenge?**



A sustainable development is not only possible, but also feasible and innovative. The current challenge we have in front of us is to sensitize businesses to make them competitive and congruent with the new environmental strategies of the European Union. Water is a basic element of nature and humans cannot live without it. That is why the cycle of water management and purification become an important opportunity for those who want to produce wealth for the community and, at the same time, to create sustainable business. Our mission is to select rigorous specialized technologies to build systems for primary water and sewage treatment and, working mainly abroad, we observed that the 'sustainable development' also represents an opportunity to front the crisis.

▪ **Doing business through the financial opportunities offered by the EU, by creating partnerships between public and private: Do you see a way out of the crisis?**

The crisis is also changing and the way out prospects are encouraging and challenging, especially considering the tools and opportunities that the EU provides to SMEs and to local authorities. Planning in partnership by using European funds, both direct and structural, means to create good opportunities for development and sustainable growth. The new planning for 2014-2020 gives us all the opportunity to invest, innovate and be competitive in the context of a new economic and territorial cohesion, in which the development and sustainable management of natural resources are certainly a growth factor for those areas characterized by good practices. As PROTECNO, we are already successfully acting this way and, in the future, we will persist knowing that nowadays this is the only important way to go.

▪ **President Belbusti, in your opinion, innovation and competitiveness are the ingredients that can implement the model of Italian SMEs in Europe?**

Italian companies have always been distinguished in the world for originality and innovation, leading to competitiveness, growth and employment especially for our young generations. Now the challenge is even more interesting because there is an opportunity for 'networking' with other public and private partners of the 28 Member States and not only. The conditions for implementing our SMEs model are not missing and, in this context, the 'European SME Week' could represent a good occasion to create agreements, projects and partnerships based on financial opportunities, offered by EU through structural funds and through those funds addressed to growth and sustainable economy.