

Global market leader in catalysts for biodiesel plans to build a new plant in Argentina

- Evonik intends to expand its leading position in catalysts for biodiesel production
- More than 60,000 metric tons p.a. additional capacity
- Start-up by end of 2012
- Proven process technology

Evonik Industries, Essen (Germany) is planning to build a new facility to produce catalysts for the manufacture of biodiesel in Argentina. Basic engineering for this plant, which will have capacity of over 60,000 metric tons p.a., has now been completed and construction work is expected to start in July 2011. Following completion, which is scheduled for the end of 2012 at the latest, the plant will produce ready-to-use alcoholates for use as catalysts in the production of biodiesel from renewable raw materials. The project is still contingent on the approval of the relevant authorities.

"We are expanding our global leadership in catalysts for the production of biodiesel," says Patrik Wohlhauser, Chairman of the Board of Management of Evonik Degussa GmbH and, from April 1, 2011, the member of the Executive Board of Evonik Industries responsible for the South America region. "This investment is part of our strategy to enable us to participate in regional growth in South America," he adds. The new plant will supply the South America region, especially Argentina and Brazil.

The plant will be located in Puerto General San Martin, in the Rosario region, at the heart of Argentina's biodiesel industry. Evonik is planning to build the plant on the same site as Terminal 6 S.A., which operates a large biodiesel facility. "Locating the facility at the Terminal 6 site enables us to use the existing infrastructure and gives us excellent logistics connections. It could therefore be erected swiftly, enabling us to supply catalysts competitively to customers in South America," comments Jan Van den Bergh, who heads the Industrial Chemicals Business Unit.

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Evonik has proven expertise in the production of biodiesel catalysts, backed up by many years of experience. In 2009 it started up a new production facility in Mobile (USA), with capacity of 60,000 metric tons p.a. This plant, which was built in just nine months, serves the growing North American market for biodiesel. Following the success of the new production technology at this US facility, the plan is to use the same technology for the new facility in Argentina. In the new process, alcoholates are produced by reacting alcohol with a lye.

Evonik already ranks among the world leaders in biodiesel catalysts—a position it also holds South America. “The planned new facility in Argentina strengthens our commitment to this region,” says Van den Bergh. “In the mid-term, we are anticipating strong double-digit growth in the biodiesel market.”

Evonik is a global market leader in specialty catalysts for biodiesel and operates a facility in Niederkassel-Lülldorf, near Cologne (Germany) as well as its facility in the USA.

Company information

Evonik is the creative industrial group from Germany. In our core business of specialty chemicals, we are a global leader. In addition, it has energy and residential real estate operations. Our performance is shaped by creativity, specialization, reliability and continuous self-renewal.

Evonik is active in over 100 countries around the world. In fiscal 2010 more than 34,000 employees generated sales of around €13.3 billion and an operating profit (EBIDA) of about €2.4 billion.

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