

Solvay launches production of torrefied biomass, a new solution that contributes to energy transition

Brussels, March 11th, 2014 --- Solvay has launched the production of torrefied biomass at an industrial scale in the United States, creating a new business that aims to provide an innovative and renewable energy solution. This business will be run by the recently created Solvay Biomass Energy joint venture between Solvay and U.S. company New Biomass Energy (NBE).

Torrefied biomass, which handles and burns similarly to coal, is produced through torrefaction, a process that modifies the chemical properties of waste wood and biomass. Torrefied biomass can immediately and practically substitute coal, enabling power plants to generate clean energy.

Today, some power plants in Europe use traditional wood pellets to replace coal. Torrefied biomass, however, contains 35% more energy by weight than wood pellets, which also yields significant logistical benefits to customers. Moreover, Solvay is improving the water repellent properties of torrefied biomass to further enhance its storage and handling properties.

“This new business has a two-fold objective: on the one hand, to offer innovative and competitive solutions to utilities and energy companies, allowing them to lower the cost of using biomass in their plants, and in parallel to expand our access to biomass and to create new biosourced applications. Solvay aims to further develop products and technologies that support the global transition to sustainable energy,” said Philippe Rosier, President of Solvay Energy Services.

Torrefied biomass is produced in Quitman, Mississippi at a plant that was built and developed by NBE. Solvay will provide its industrial expertise to more than triple annual production capacity to 250,000 tons by the end of 2014 from 80,000 tons currently. Solvay Biomass Energy will use by-products, such as sawmill residues, from the highly developed timber industry in the area’s managed forests.

Solvay Biomass Energy, majority-owned by Solvay’s business unit Solvay Energy Services, is in charge of the plant’s operations and maintenance, feedstock sourcing, logistics and technology as well as of the product’s marketing mainly to energy producers in Europe and Asia.

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As an international chemical group, **SOLVAY** assists industries in finding and implementing ever more responsible and value-creating solutions. Solvay generates 90% of its net sales in activities where it is among the world's top three players. It serves many markets, varying from energy and the environment to automotive and aerospace or electricity and electronics, with one goal: to raise the performance of its clients and improve society's quality of life. The group is headquartered in Brussels, employs about 29,400 people in 56 countries and generated 9.9 billion euros in net sales in 2013. Solvay SA (**SOLB.BE**) is listed on **NYSE EURONEXT** in Brussels and Paris (Bloomberg: **SOLB:BB** - Reuters: **SOLB.BR**).

Solvay Energy Services is a global business unit of the Solvay Group, specialized in energy and CO₂ management, and in the implementation of new solutions to fight climate change. Located in 14 countries, Solvay Energy Services manages 1 billion euros of energy purchases and develops third parties activities in the field of energy and CO₂ efficiency, renewable energy and biofuels. Solvay Energy Services works for all major industrial sectors (automobile, metallurgy, paper, services, food, chemistry, etc.) to reduce energy costs and CO₂ footprint.

New Biomass Energy LLC is a green energy developer targeting high quality renewable energy opportunities that offer immediate contributions to the green economy. New Biomass Energy’s focus is on torrefaction of wood to be used by coal burning power plants to supplement the coal and thereby enhance the green aspects of the plants. New Biomass Energy developed and operates the first commercial scale wood torrefaction facility located in Quitman, Mississippi.

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