

AVENEER® – Construction of the first MMA production plant slated for 2014 – location to be decided on in 2011

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- Catalytic process improves ACH yield by up to 10 percent
- AVENEER® reduces CO₂ emissions dramatically

Like the traditional ACH sulfo process, AVENEER® is based on the starting materials ammonia, methane, acetone, and methanol. It dispenses, however, with the sulfuric acid that is normally used.

Just recently, Evonik Industries demonstrated its outstanding process engineering expertise in optimizing production processes by successfully launching the world-scale methacrylate integrated production network at its Shanghai site. The investment, worth €250 million, was used on the familiar C4 process, which was nevertheless significantly redeveloped for the first time. This investment considerably broadened the technology platform in the business unit, a strategy Evonik is systematically continuing with AVENEER®.

The three-year operation of the AVENEER® pilot plant at the facility in Worms, Germany, will enter the final stage in the next few days. “Over the last few years, we’ve worked feverishly on proving that the new process is technically feasible—and that it saves costs and conserves resources as anticipated—but also on optimizing it in a number of ways,” said Gregor Hetzke, the president of the Performance Polymers Business Unit. On account of the potential AVENEER® showed from the very beginning, the work continued unabated even in the crisis-hit 2009. “In contrast to other MMA manufacturing processes”, Hetzke continues, “AVENEER® offers major advantages in terms of resource efficiency, capital investment requirements, and choice of location.”

“For our customers, AVENEER® ensures optimum security of supply for the VISIOMER® methacrylate monomers, something that is especially important given the increasing scarcity of fossil resources,” says Thomas Müller, head of the Acrylic Monomers Business Line. In the future, AVENEER® will allow renewable resources to be used as feed, an area in which a lot of work is currently being done.

With an overall yield of 95%, the process is already intensively using the resources deployed, which ultimately has benefits for the environment.

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An internal study also showed that, in contrast to established processes, CO₂ emissions from the AVENEER® process are lower than 1,000 kg CO₂/mt MMA, virtually half of the previous figure.

Work on clarifying the location of the first AVENEER® plant (nominal capacity: 150–200 kt MMA) is currently underway. A decision will be reached in 2011.

About Evonik

Evonik Industries is the creative industrial group from Germany. In our core business of specialty chemicals, we are a global leader. In addition, Evonik is an expert in power generation from hard coal and renewable energies, and one of the largest private residential real estate companies in Germany. Our company's performance is shaped by creativity, specialization, continuous self-renewal, and reliability. Evonik is active in over 100 countries around the world. In its fiscal year 2009 about 39,000 employees generated sales of about €13.1 billion and an operating profit (EBITDA) of about €2.0 billion.

Evonik Industries has been producing specialty chemical products in China since the early 1990's; with wide-ranging trading relations already in place prior to this. The Group now has a total of 20 companies and 16 production sites in the Greater China region. Evonik regards China as one of the driving forces of the global economy, and we consequently intend to increase our business in Greater China to around €2 billion in the medium term.

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