Partnership Initiated for the Development of a Wood to Chemicals Reference Plant in Delfzijl

Amsterdam, 9th February 2017 – Avantium, a leading chemical technology company and forerunner in renewable chemistry, announces a partnership with AkzoNobel, Chemport Europe, RWE and Staatsbosbeheer for the development of a reference plant at the Chemie Park Delfzijl. This important step marks the next stage of a collaborative effort to determine the feasibility of a wood to chemicals biorefinery in Delfzijl.

Breakthrough technology: the Zambezi process
The new reference plant in Delfzijl will be based on a new technology that has been developed by Avantium. This Zambezi process aims for a cost-effective process for the production of high-purity glucose from non-food biomass such as forestry residue, pulp or agricultural by-products, so called second generation feedstock. This breakthrough technology converts woody biomass into sugars and lignin. It is particularly suited for making high purity glucose required for the production of a wide range of biobased chemicals and materials for the chemical industry of tomorrow. This glucose is suitable for both catalytic and fermentation processes for the production of a new and growing generation of sustainable materials (such as PLA, PEF, PBAT, PHA). The lignin is an excellent feedstock for renewable bioenergy applications, as its energy content is significantly higher than that of woody biomass.

Partnership of strengths
Each partner brings their core strength to the project; from feedstock, throughout the supply chain to end products. The main feedstock of the plant will be locally sourced forestry residue coordinated by Staatsbosbeheer. The planned reference plant builds on the strong synergies of the infrastructure, utilities and expertise of the AkzoNobel site in Delfzijl. RWE will supply feedstock and use bio-lignin residue from the Zambezi process for the generation of renewable energy. Chemport Europe brings strategic support from the Northern Netherlands Region working via a range of initiatives to facilitate the project. Further synergistic partnerships and collaborations are currently under development.

The partnership expects, together with the geographical, technical and logistical benefits of the Delfzijl area, to enable the cost competitive production that will help accelerate the roll out of the biobased economy. The reference plant will be constructed with an expansion-ready footprint enabling rapid increase of capacity after demonstration.
About Avantium
Avantium is a leading chemical technology company and a forerunner in renewable chemistry. Together with its partners around the world, Avantium develops efficient processes and sustainable products made from biobased materials. Avantium offers a breeding ground for revolutionary renewable chemistry solutions. From invention to commercially viable production processes. One of Avantium’s success stories is YXY technology®, with which it created PEF: a completely new, high-quality plastic made from plant-based industrial sugars. Since October 2016 all YXY activities are located in Synvina®, the joint venture of Avantium and BASF. Avantium is now working on a host of other ground-breaking projects such as Zambezi process; a biorefinery technology to produce sugars for the production of chemicals and fuels from non-food materials. The proprietary process is highly feedstock-flexible allowing use of forestry residues (e.g. woodchip), corn-stover, bagasse, sugar beet residue and produces a high purity 2G glucose product and lignin for energy and other applications; all in near quantitative yield. Avantium’s offices and headquarters are based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Further information at www.avantium.com.

About Akzo Nobel Industrial Chemicals B.V.
AkzoNobel creates everyday essentials to make people’s lives more liveable and inspiring. As a leading global paints and coatings company and a major producer of specialty chemicals, we supply essential ingredients, essential protection and essential color to industries and consumers worldwide. Backed by a pioneering heritage, our innovative products and sustainable technologies are designed to meet the growing demands of our fast-changing planet, while making life easier. Headquartered in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, we have approximately 45,000 people in around 80 countries, while our portfolio includes well-known brands such as Dulux, Sikkens, International, Interpon and Eka. Consistently ranked as a leader in sustainability, we are dedicated to energizing cities and communities while creating a protected, colorful world where life is improved by what we do.

About Chemport Europe
Changing the nature of chemistry - In Chemport Europe, agricultural and chemical businesses, knowledge institutions, and regional and national governments work closely together to capitalize on opportunities that are created by market demand for sustainable products and processes. The Northern Netherlands strives to develop Chemport Europe into an important green port with one of the most sustainable chemical clusters in Europe by 2030. This ambition is facilitated by a strong bio-based chemical and recycling cluster and by the link between the energy sector and the agricultural sector in the region. All these elements turn Chemport Europe into an extremely attractive location for new initiatives and businesses.

About RWE Generation NL
RWE Generation is a pan-European energy company with one of the largest power portfolios in the world, with over 40 GW of generating capacity. The company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of RWE AG. RWE Generation brings together the international expertise and experience of RWE Generation NL, RWE Generation UK and RWE Power to form one company which provides our clients with power 24/7. In the coming years, RWE Generation NL will transform its coal fired power plants in the Netherlands to supply sustainable heat and power. With these transformations, RWE Generation NL will significantly contribute to the energy transition in the Netherlands. The power plant Eemshaven has been granted SDE+ subsidies for 15% sustainable biomass, already, and the Amer power plant will replace 80% of the coal input by sustainable biomass.
About Staatsbosbeheer
Staatsbosbeheer is committed to its continuing development as a vital public enterprise and to strengthening the position of nature in the Netherlands. As a leading national public body, our focus continues to be directed towards enhancing the green heritage of our country. As land owner and manager of 265,000 hectares of forests and national parks across the Netherlands’ 12 provinces, Staatsbosbeheer contributes in essential ways to the realization of national priorities – these include, water safety strategies along the coast and large river systems, wood and biomass production, environmental education and outreach, supply of clean drinking water, regional economic development and social cohesion.

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Click here to watch an animated video about the Zambezi Process of Avantium: https://www.avantium.com/renewable-chemistries/zambezi/.