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Locally grown plastics – is it possible?

Locally grown plastics is a newly established, unique partnership that includes the entire manufacturing chain for bio- based plastics – from the forest industry to packaging producers. The project is cooperation between SEKAB, Sveaskog, Holmen, Södra, Borealis, Trioplast, Tetra Pak and SP Processum. SP Processum is the main project sponsor for this partnership.

Most of the plastics are today made from oil. In order to manage the transition to a sustainable society, we need to explore the possibilities for producing plastics from alternative raw materials, like biomass. The project *locally grown plastics* examine the feasibility of building a European industry, where the forestry biomass is collected and converted into bio-based plastic products, such as supermarket carrier bags or caps for Tetra Pak's milk cartons. The majority of bio-based plastics are produced in Brazil, but no production of bio-polyethylene with forest origin exists today in the world.

"Locally grown plastics are an important step in the transition to a bio-based economy. The project can help to realize the potential of the bio-based industry" says Ylwa Alwarsdotter, Executive Vice President Market Development at SEKAB .

The project will identify and evaluate the conditions from a holistic perspective, where sustainability and economic aspects go hand in hand. The initiative puts together a value chain of Swedish companies starting from forest owners, pulp and paper producers, chemical industry and the converters producing the plastic packaging material.. The project will create a transfer of knowledge, where the company's skills within technology and business will help to examine a value chain with the bi-products from the forest as raw materials.

"There is a great interest in using biomass for chemicals and ethanol production in Southeast Asia, China and America mostly focusing on agriculture residues, so this is why it's very interesting to now evaluate a value chain with forestry based biomass," says Thore Lindgren, Executive Vice President of SEKAB E-Technology AB.

Locally grown plastics use already existing potential and create viable business solutions. The overall goal of the project is to evaluate the possibility of realizing a value chain from forest-based biomass to polyethylene. This includes:

- Identifying technical challenges for implementing the value chain
- Identifying the business models that provide the best conditions for realizing the value chain
- Developing and describing technical, economic and market conditions in detail, in order to be able to decide upon a continued realization of the value chain.

PARTNERS

SEKAB is one of Europe's leading ethanol players and their mission is to contribute to a future where the demand for fossil fuels and raw material is reduced. They produce and import ethanol which they refine to both biofuels and green chemicals. Sekab E-Technology has developed a technology called CelluAPP® for conversion of ligno-cellulosic biomass to products such as ethanol, sugars, lignin and biogas

SP Processum AB started in 2003 and has developed from a technology park in Örnsköldsvik to a leading biorefinery initiative, both nationally and internationally. The major parts of the activities concern support and initiatives regarding research and development in the areas biotechnology, energy technology, inorganic chemistry, organic chemistry and raw materials with a focus on sustainability.

Sveaskog is Sweden's largest forest owner and sells sawlogs, pulpwood and biofuel. Sveaskog also works with land transactions and develops the forest as a venue for hunting, fishing and other nature-based experiences.

Holmen is a forest industry group that manufactures printing paper, paperboard and sawn timber and runs forestry and energy production operations. They produce electricity from their own hydro and wind power systems and have been ranked as one of the 100 most sustainable companies, according to the UN Global Compact Index.

Södra More than 51,000 forest owners in southern Sweden are members of the economic association that is Södra. Södra is also a large employer. 3,800 people work for the Group, in areas that range from forestry management and environmental conservation to accounting, sales and product development. The Group's four business areas produce sawn and planed timber goods, interior products, paper pulp and biofuel. In recent years Södra has also become such a large producer of electricity that the Group now produces more electricity than it uses.

Borealis is a leading provider of innovative solutions in the fields of polyolefins, base chemicals and fertilizers. With more than 50 years of experience in polyolefins (polyethylene and polypropylene), Borealis delivers innovative and value creating plastics products.

Trioplast is a Swedish Industry Group with a turnover of 500 million EUR and 1 250 employees and is one of Europe's leading forces in creative and cost-efficient use of polyethylene within the modern plastic and packaging fields. Trioplast develops, manufactures and distributes packaging materials for industrial and agriculture use, hygiene films as well as special purpose films

Tetra Pak® is the world's leading food processing and packaging solutions company. Working closely with our customers and suppliers, we provide safe, innovative and environmentally sound products that each day meet the needs of hundreds of millions of people.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Thore Lindgren, Sekab E-Technology thore.lindgren@sekab.com

Ylwa Alwarsdotter, SEKAB BioFuels & Chemicals ylwa.alwarsdotter@sekab.com , +46(0)70 398 03 02

Lars Pettersson, Borealis LarsE.Pettersson@borealisgroup.com

Camacho Walker, Tetra Pak Walker.Camacho@tetrapak.com

Lars Lundin, Trioplast Lars.Lundin@trioplast.com

Erik Nelsson, Holmen Erik.Nelsson@holmen.co

Mats Wallin, Södra mats.wallin@sodra.com

Fredrik Gellerstedt, Södra Fredrik.Gellerstedt@sodra.com

Jan Wintzell, Sveaskog Jan.Wintzell@sveaskog.se

Björn Alriksson, SP Processum bjorn.alriksson@processum.se

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Society is facing a huge challenge where old energy sources must be replaced. SEKAB wants to contribute to a future where the need for fossil fuels and raw materials decreases. We do this with by producing and importing ethanol that becomes both biofuels in different forms and bio-based chemicals.