First delivery: AustroCel Hallein supplies OMV with advanced bioethanol

- The test run of the world's largest bioethanol plant based on wood has proven successful
- OMV and AustroCel start cooperation with second-generation bioethanol
- 1.5 million liters a month of the advanced biofuel will be delivered from January 2021
- Substituting biofuel for fossil fuel will save around 45,000 metric tons of CO2 per year

The first successful trial delivery of advanced bioethanol marks the start of the long-term cooperation between OMV, the integrated, international oil, gas and petrochemicals company headquartered in Vienna, and AustroCel Hallein GmbH. Die Hallein-based bioethanol plant has an annual capacity of up to 35 million liters, making it the world's largest bioethanol plant based on wood. In the first year AustroCel Hallein will already supply more than 1.5 million liters per month of second-generation bioethanol to OMV. With this, the cooperation partners are contributing to climate protection.

“Austria's first plant for the production of second-generation bioethanol is now up and running in Hallein and we have started our trailblazing cooperation with OMV. With our advanced biofuels, we are taking a responsible approach to resources and helping to reduce fossil fuel use. We will continue to pursue our long-term strategy of ‘Green AustroCel’, uniting sustainability and economic success”, said Jörg Harbring, CEO of AustroCel Hallein.

Bioethanol from Hallein will be produced exclusively from cellulose scrap, making it exceptionally environmentally friendly as no food or animal feed is used in the process. The bioethanol is extracted from the wood sugars left over in cellulose production before being fermented and distilled. This sustainable basis means that the bioethanol from AustroCel Hallein falls under the category “advanced biofuels”, allowing it to be added to gasoline fuels in the future. Substituting fossil fuels will save around 45,000 metric tons of CO2 a year. This product will thereby help reduce the carbon intensity of the OMV product portfolio and aid in meeting OMV's 2025 Sustainability Targets. Thomas Gangl, OMV Executive Board member responsible for Refining & Petrochemical Operations: “We are delighted to have found a reliable partner in AustroCel and are proud of the start of our cooperation that will allow us to secure the supply of biofuels in Austria for years to come. With the use of advanced, second-generation biofuels, OMV is making a valuable contribution to meeting international climate targets”.
AustroCel GmbH has invested around EUR 42 mn in the new bioethanol plant on its compound in Hallein and created ten new jobs. “Despite the challenges of the current situation, we have succeeded in delivering the project on time and on budget while adhering to the highest safety standards throughout. This is an incredible achievement by our team and partners. The plant is ready and entered its trial operation successfully”, reported Franz Dieterich, Head of Project Management at AustroCel.

The plant will operate at full capacity in January 2021, when regular deliveries of bioethanol to OMV begin.

Images

Picture text 1: The first successful trial delivery of advanced bioethanol marks the start of the long-term cooperation between OMV and AustroCel. The Hallein-based bioethanol plant is the world’s largest bioethanol plant based on wood.
Picture credit: AustroCel / Michael Schartner; editorial use free of charge

Picture text 2: The test run of the world’s largest bioethanol plant based on wood has proven successful. 1.5 million liters a month of the advanced biofuel will be delivered from January 2021 by AustroCel to OMV.
Picture credit: AustroCel / Michael Schartner; editorial use free of charge

Background information on biofuels

A number of directives regulate the use of biofuels in the EU. Several binding targets were laid out in 2009/28/EG, the EU’s 2009 Renewable Energy Directive (RED): to fulfil 20% of its total energy needs (power, heating and transport) with renewables, along with a minimum of 10% of transport fuels from renewable sources. This was followed in December 2018 by the Renewable Energy Directive II (EU 2018/2001 or RED II), which establishes a new binding renewable energy target for the EU for 2030 of at least 32%, as well as a target of 14% renewables in the transport sector by 2030. A higher target for advanced biofuels (second generation) has also been determined. The target has been set at 0.2% for 2022, rising to 1% for 2025 and 3.5% by 2030. Conventional biofuels (first generation) may account for a maximum of 7%.

About AustroCel Hallein GmbH

AustroCel Hallein GmbH currently has more than 280 employees and is the market leader in China for textile fibers from coniferous wood, with total revenue of around EUR 130 mn. It produces up to 155,000 metric tons of viscose pulp in its bio-refinery in Hallein, Austria, as well as 100 GWh district heating and 100 GWh green power. This allows the Hallein-based high-tech firm not only to power its own manufacturing operation with cleaner energy, but also to provide green electricity to 25,000 households and district heating to 10,000 homes. With the world’s largest bio-ethanol plant based on wood, AustroCel will produce up to 35 million liters of second-generation bioethanol every year.

OMV Aktiengesellschaft

OMV produces and markets oil and gas, innovative energy and high-end petrochemical solutions – in a responsible way. With Group sales of EUR 23 bn and a workforce of around 20,000 employees in 2019, OMV Aktiengesellschaft is one of Austria’s largest listed industrial companies. In Upstream, OMV has a strong base in Central and Eastern Europe as well as a balanced international portfolio, with Middle East & Africa, the North Sea, Russia and Asia-Pacific as further core regions. Daily average production was 487,000 boe/d in 2019. In Downstream, OMV operates three refineries in Europe and owns a 15% share in ADNOC Refining and Trading JV, with a total annual processing capacity of 24.9 mn tons. Furthermore, OMV has a 75% participation in Borealis, one of the world’s leading producers of polyolefins. The Company operates about 2,100 filling
stations in ten European countries. OMV runs gas storage facilities in Austria and Germany. In 2019, gas sales volumes amounted to around 137 TWh. Sustainability is an integral part of OMV’s corporate strategy. OMV supports the transition to a lower-carbon economy and has set measurable targets for reducing carbon intensity and introducing new energy and petrochemical solutions.

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