

An alternative raw material for polyamide 12 Evonik is operating a pilot plant for bio-based ω -amino lauric acid

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In early 2013, Evonik Industries began operating a pilot plant for ω -amino lauric acid (ALS) in Slovenska Lupca, Slovakia. The effort represents Evonik's next step forward in the production of sustainable high-performance plastics. The biobased ω -amino-lauric acid is an alternative to petroleum-based laurin lactam (LL). ALS replaces the monomer LL in the manufacture of sustainable high-performance plastics and yields an identical compound polyamide 12 (PA 12). The pilot plant is the result of intensive research and advances the process development effort to an industrial scale.

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Development of the process was funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Promotion No. 0315205). The biotechnological process relies on renewable resources and is unique the world over. Palm kernel oil, which Evonik has already been using as a base for various other chemical products, is the starting material. Over the long run, the entirely new process has the potential to complement the butadiene-based production of PA12.

With a second conventional, petroleum-based polyamide 12 plant in Singapore in the planning stage, Evonik is in a strong position to be a global market and technology leader in PA12 production technology. "In the long term, this new, alternative raw material makes us less dependent on limited fossil resources and provides our back-integrated production a second pillar to stand on," says Gregor Hetzke, head of Evonik's Performance Polymers Business Unit.

Whether in automobiles, sports, crude oil production or photovoltaics, Evonik produces a complete range of polyamide products with customized properties that have been continuously adapted for more than 40 years in close cooperation with its customers to meet the requirements of innovative, premium applications. VESTAMID® is Evonik's trade name for the construction material polyamide 12, VESTOSINT® for coating powders from Evonik.

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Corporate information

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Evonik is active in over 100 countries around the world. In fiscal 2012 more than 33,000 employees generated sales of around €13.6 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of about €2.6 billion.

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