

September 2, 2022

Sulzer acquires stake in CELLiCON to scale up groundbreaking technology for renewable biopolymer

Sulzer has partnered with CELLiCON to scale up its groundbreaking manufacturing technology for nano structured cellulose – a highly sustainable, plant-based alternative to conventional polymers. The technology slashes the traditionally high costs and footprint associated with nanocellulose, allowing it to be scaled and used as a building block for a wide variety of everyday products, from textiles to glues. The partnership is part of Sulzer’s strategy to continue its grow path in renewables and enable its customers’ sustainable manufacturing practices. Sulzer has acquired a minority stake in CELLiCON with an option to increase its holding in future.

Obtained from renewable plant-based resources, cellulose is the most abundant biopolymer on Earth. Its crystalline form, also known as nanocrystalline structured cellulose (in short: nanocellulose), is considered one of the most promising alternatives to conventional polymers which are derived from petroleum oil. The partnership will boost the scale up and commercialization of nanocellulose as a sustainable alternative.

CELLiCON has developed groundbreaking technology, known as G2 technology, that greatly reduces the costs, cycle times and environmental footprint associated with the production of nanocellulose, thereby enabling the large-scale adoption of this highly sustainable biopolymer. Nanocellulose is a building block for a multitude of materials and products such as textiles and high-performance fibers, composites like superglues and coatings, transparent films, and replacements for starch and polystyrene.

Sulzer Chemtech will support CELLiCON in the scale-up and commercialization of the G2 technology. As a result, the collaboration will help CELLiCON achieve its strategic goals and long-term vision while strengthening Sulzer Chemtech’s portfolio of processing technologies for bio-based and renewable feedstocks. In particular, the solution can be used to further enhance the properties of polylactic acid (PLA), the most used bioplastic worldwide for which Sulzer Chemtech is the global leader.

Paul O’Connor, Co-founder, and Director at CELLiCON, comments: “We are very pleased that Sulzer Chemtech has given this commitment to support our business. Partnering with a company that shares a similar philosophy and approach to driving sustainable manufacturing and has extensive experience in processing technology is key, as it will support this new chapter as we seek to maximize value for customers worldwide.”

Daniel Rytz, Head of Strategy and Business Development at Sulzer Chemtech, adds: “We are thrilled to support CELLiCON and further drive the global adoption of greener materials produced with sustainable processes. With our extensive know-how in scaling up technologies, we are an ideal partner for innovative companies like CELLiCON. This collaboration is a further step in our strategy to enable circular, eco-conscious manufacturing and processing practices on a global scale.

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