

News release

Together for a sustainable circular economy in the plastics industry

Oerlikon Barmag and Evonik – strategic partnership in the growing market for chemically recycled PET

Remscheid, Essen / Germany, January 23, 2025 – Oerlikon Barmag and Evonik have announced their cooperation to promote chemical recycling of Polyethylene terephthalate (PET) waste. Both companies are committed to develop technologies for robust and efficient depolymerisation and purification processes, coupled with an integrated concept for repolymerisation and the associated EPC business models.

Oerlikon Barmag and Evonik are both leading suppliers in their respective key markets. The Remscheid-based machine and plant manufacturer Oerlikon Barmag contributes its expertise in polymer processing for the production of chemical fibers and packaging materials to the new partnership. In addition, as a core brand of Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Solutions of the Swiss Oerlikon Group, the company has excellent international market access in the polymer processing industry.

Evonik is one of the world's leading manufacturers of specialty chemicals, dedicated to driving sustainability initiatives and developing next-generation solutions. The partnership with Oerlikon Barmag aims to advance technology and process solutions for the chemical recycling of PET, leveraging innovative catalytic processes.

Investing in a sustainable future

The partners plan to fully launch and commercialize the jointly developed chemical recycling technology solution by the end of the current decade. The intensive involvement and active participation of other companies within the ecosystem (including feedstock, technology and production) and the establishment of a global development partner network are planned.

“We are firmly convinced that with Evonik we gained a strong and experienced partner in the field of specialty chemicals, and together we will establish a significant market position as a total solution provider in the growth market for chemical recycling of PET, but also drive the next generation of sustainability within the plastics industry,” says Georg Stausberg, CEO of Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Solutions.

“This partnership marks a great step forward in the chemical recycling of PET. Our new catalytic processes and chemical technologies will complement the current mechanical recycling approach enabling high recycled PET content from heavily contaminated and mixed PET waste that would otherwise be incinerated or landfilled. This way we are actively supporting a sustainable circular economy,” said Max Preisenberger, Head of Catalysts at Evonik.

Seamless integration into PET production processes

The PET recycling technology will bring numerous advantages. From a chemical perspective it is a highly efficient process, and it can be seamlessly integrated into existing PET production processes. Operational costs, investment cost and scalability are the key drivers in the development.

The combination of cooperational know-how in catalyst and process technologies will allow a chemical recycling of polyester materials from many closed- and open-loop sources, which need chemical technology to allow for high, fossil-like recycle qualities.

“The strong and complementing technological knowhow and expertise of both companies in combination with Oerlikon Barmag’s market access and PET processing knowhow, establishes a competitive and unique partnership within the emerging chemical PET recycling industry. With the goal of creating a circular economy for all types of PET waste that is currently incinerated or landfilled, we want to scale our technology to a significant size and make it available to global PET producers and processors. In this way we will enable our customers to become more sustainable and contribute to a circular economy,” explains Lukas Adamek, Head of Strategy & Business Development of Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Solutions.

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Caption:

Jochen Adler, CTO, and Georg Stausberg, CEO, both Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Solutions, Dr. Max Preisenberger, Head of Catalysts at Evonik, Lukas Adamek, Head of Strategy & Business Development Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Solutions, and Dr. Gerd Löhden, SVP R&D Smart Materials Evonik at the official founding of the new partnership between Oerlikon Barmag and Evonik.

About Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Solutions

With its Oerlikon Barmag, Oerlikon Neumag and Oerlikon Nonwoven brands, Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Solutions is one of the leading providers of manmade fiber filament spinning systems, texturing machines, BCF systems, staple fiber systems and solutions for the production of nonwovens and – as a service provider – offers engineering solutions for the entire textile value added chain. As a future-oriented company, the research and development are driven by energy-efficiency and sustainable technologies (e-save). With its range of polycondensation and extrusion systems and their key components, the company caters to the entire manufacturing process – from the monomer all the way through to the textured yarn. The product portfolio is rounded off with automation and Industrie 4.0 solutions. The primary markets for the product portfolio of Oerlikon Barmag are in Asia, especially in China, India and Turkey, and – for those of Oerlikon Neumag and Oerlikon Nonwoven – in the USA, Asia, Turkey and Europe. Worldwide, Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Solutions has about 2,500 employees and a presence in 120 countries with production, sales and distribution and service organizations. At the R&D centers in Remscheid, Neumünster (Germany) and Suzhou (China), highly qualified engineers, technologists and technicians develop innovative and technologically leading products for tomorrow’s world.

Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Solutions is part of the publicly listed Oerlikon Group, headquartered in Switzerland, which has more than 12 600 employees and generated sales of CHF 2.7 billion in 2023.

For further information: www.oerlikon.com

About Evonik

Evonik is one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals. The company is active in more than 100 countries around the world and generated sales of €15.3 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of €1.66 billion in 2023. Evonik goes far beyond chemistry to create innovative, profitable, and sustainable solutions for customers. More than 33,000 employees work together for a common purpose: We want to improve life today and tomorrow.

The Smart Materials division includes businesses with innovative materials that enable resource-saving solutions and replace conventional materials. They are the smart answer to the major challenges of our time: environment, energy efficiency, urbanization, mobility and health. The Smart Materials division generated sales of €4.46 billion in 2023 with more than 8,100 employees.

Disclaimer

In so far as forecasts or expectations are expressed in this press release or where our statements concern the future, these forecasts, expectations or statements may involve known or unknown risks and uncertainties. Actual results or developments may vary, depending on changes in the operating environment. Neither Oerlikon Barmag or Evonik Industries AG nor its group companies assume an obligation to update the forecasts, expectations or statements contained in this release.

Contact:

Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Solutions
André Wissenberg
Marketing, Corporate Communications
& Public Affairs
Tel. +49 2191 67 2331
andre.wissenberg@oerlikon.com

Evonik Industries AG
Anabel Tennassie
Head of Market Communications
Catalysts business line
Tel. +49 6181 59 3763
anabel.tennassie@evonik.com