

Södra becomes the world’s largest kraft lignin producer – how?

From one tree grows thousands of opportunities, that’s what we believe in within the Södra group. We are an cooperative / economic association in the southern part of Sweden, owned by more than 50.000 members / forest owners. We are constantly trying to optimize the usage of our raw material, the forest, which we have proved with a lot of different innovations and investments during the last couple of years. The latest one (got officially last summer) is our kraft lignin, where Södra with this plant will be the biggest producer in the world, opening up for a lot of different value chains to find a sustainable choice to fossil based raw materials.

Biochemicals & Materials

# Södra first in the world with fossil-free biomethanol

20 February 2020 by Bioenergy International

Swedish forest owners association Södra has completed the world's first plant for commercial biomethanol, a sustainable fuel from forest biomass, at Södra's pulp mill in Mönsterås, southeast Sweden. Over the next few days, a first pilot delivery will go to Danish biofuels producer Emmelev A/S that will use biomethanol instead of methanol in its biodiesel production.



Swedish forest owners association Södra has completed the biomethanol, a sustainable fuel from forest biomass, at its p Sweden. Over the next few days, a first pilot delivery will go to Danish biofuel producer Emmelev A/S that will use biomethanol in its production (photo courtesy Södra).

Södra's breakthrough will enable large-scale textile recycling

At present, no one in the world can recycle fibres from blended fabrics on a large scale. Södra now has a unique solution that will enable circular flows in the fashion and textile industry.

"Only a negligible proportion of the global production of clothing and textiles is recycled today. Virtually everything is sent to landfill or incineration. But Swedish innovation and a willingness to help mitigate climate change can now influence the game at a global level," said Lars Idemark, President and CEO of Södra.

One of the major obstacles to textile recycling is that the fabrics are often made from blended materials. Södra's new technique can separate the cotton and polyester in polycotton blends, which are one of the most widely used textiles on the market.



Södra

PRESSMEDDELANDE

Ämnen: innovation, hållbarhet, skogsägare, sustainability, Lars Idemark, massa, PULP, textil, Om Södra, Johannes Bogen, Helena Claesson, Öreskölse

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and especially the fashion industry. It's a big day for nes Bogen, President of Södra Cell Bioproducts.

tonnes of used textiles. At present, Södra can only oil is also to investigate the possibility of extracting a arvice provider Berendsen delivered the test material of bathtubs from hospitals and hotels.

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Picture of vegetable tanning agent from bark.

Södra to invest in bark-based tanning agent production

Södra is investing in a production line at Virå which will create a vegetable tanning agent from bark. This new tannin can be used to process leather in a more environmentally friendly way. Scheduled to be commissioned in 2025, the plant will have the capacity to produce tannins for millions of square metres of leather.

Södra's Board of Directors has approved the project which will be an integral part of the Virå mill and is expected to be able to produce tanning material equivalent to millions of square metres of leather.

"This investment decision fits well with our overall ambition to increase the added value from every tree and thus contribute to the profitability of our members' forest estates," explains Lotta Lyrik, CEO of Södra. Developing more environmentally friendly alternatives by making additional products from the forest is an excellent example of how we use our experience, knowledge and innovation expertise to make the most of the forest's resources.

Since 2005, Södra Innovation, a business area within the member-owned forest group, Södra, has been exploring how tannins found in the bark of trees can be efficiently processed and used as tanning agents. Using bark for tanning is not new, but Södra is now industrialising the process in which the tanning substance is leached from the bark and turned into a product for tanning leather.

"With this new patented process, we can now make a product from an, until now, unused resource. A product that can be used in a completely different industry and support the leather industry in its transition to more sustainable tanning methods," says Catrin Gustavsson, Business Area Manager at Södra Innovation.

For new value chains and new products, often the market risk tends to be the trickiest one to attack. Here we have proven, together with UPM (official PM), that through collaborations things can happen!

Södra to become the largest producer of kraft lignin in the world

As a step in the strategy of getting more out of every tree, Södra is now establishing a new business to become a world leader in the production of kraft lignin. Södra's production facility will be the first commercial facility in Sweden and the largest of its kind in the world. This is an investment of over two billion SEK and expected to be in operation in 2027.

Kraft lignin can replace fossil materials in, among other things, glue, batteries, rubber, composites and form the basis for new biofuels and biochemicals. The market and demand for replacements for fossil chemicals are increasing and Södra has for some time been exploring the opportunities on the market, had dialogue with potential customers and signed official agreements for a significant part of the production volumes. There is good possibility for kraft lignin production both to contribute to the green transition and the profitability of the forest estate.



Photo courtesy

"The forest is being called on for many things as society seeks to replace fossil based materials. To succeed in that transition, sustainability and profitability need to go hand in hand and Södra's kraft lignin investment is a good example of that. We will make more out of every tree and strengthen our profitability. This is a big investment for Södra and the green transition," says Lotta Lyrik, CEO of Södra.

PRESS RELEASE

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Södra signs agreement to supply UPM with kraft lignin from world-leading new plant

Södra confirms UPM among the first customers for kraft lignin following the major investment announcement earlier this summer regarding kraft lignin production at Södra's Mönsterås site. The plant is expected to be in operation in 2027, when it will be the first commercial kraft lignin production facility in Sweden and the largest of its type in the world.

UPM has a leading position in lignin technologies and markets, based on 15 years of intensive development, which has resulted in a strong patent portfolio. Lignin applications are growing fast, thereby creating demand for sustainable materials and solutions. UPM will use lignin sourced from Södra to produce more sustainable products and materials in several segments. This includes more for the plywood and paper industry and binders for the insulation sector.

Apart from positive performance characteristics, customers are drawn to lignin thanks to its renewable content, reduced carbon footprint and biodegradability. It is also abundant, being nature's second most common polymer after cellulose.

Södra and UPM are closely related to such an agreement, with Södra's success in the field now materialising through more than 90,000 family forest members and availability of taking a new material producer, combined with UPM's application knowledge. Södra also brings scalability, with the potential to produce up to 250,000 tpy of kraft lignin if the technology is applied to all three of its pulp mills.

"From 2027 Södra will play a major role in the growth of kraft lignin as a renewable and sustainable substitute for fossil based materials," said Executive Vice President, Södra Bioproducts, Johannes Bogen. "With UPM as a customer, we will be part of a value chain which can deliver climate effective solutions for the green transition. UPM, in turn, can trust in our responsible forestry and the low carbon footprint of our pulp mills. UPM's experience and knowledge of the sector makes it an ideal customer and we look forward to further partnership."



Lignin could be used as a binder in insulation

PRESS RELEASE

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