

Nippon Shokubai to expand SAP by 100 kt to 160 kt/yr and to build a 100 kt/yr Acrylic Acid capacity in Belgium

May 11, 2015: [Nippon Shokubai](#) has confirmed [plans](#) to [expand superabsorbent polymer \(SAP\) production](#) and to [build a acrylic acid unit](#) at the [company's site](#) at [Zwijndrecht, Belgium \(close to the Ineos Oxide Site\)](#)

Nippon Shokubai will [invest](#) a total of [€350 million](#) to [build](#) the [SAP](#) and [acrylic acid plants](#). The [company's board of directors](#), in a [meeting held on 11 May](#), [approved the investment](#).

[SAP capacity](#) at the site will [be increased](#) by [100 kt/yr](#) to [160 kt/yr](#) and the [acrylic acid plant](#) will have a [capacity](#) of [100 kt/yr](#).

[Completion](#) of the [projects](#) is [expected](#) in [October 2017](#), and [commercial production](#) is [expected to begin](#) in [May 2018](#).

Nippon Shokubai [expects](#) demand for [SAP in Europe](#), especially in [Central](#) and [Eastern Europe](#), will [grow steadily](#).

Last October, Nippon Shokubai announced [plans](#) to [expand SAP production](#) at the company's [Himeji \(Japan\)](#), site by [50 kt/yr](#) to [370 kt/yr](#).

<https://engage-solvay.jiveon.com/groups/blog-competitive-intelligence/blog/2014/10/03/nippon-shokubai-confirms-plan-to-expand-sap-superabsorbent-polymers-capacity-at-himeji-japan>

With these [expansions](#) of [SAP capacity](#), Nippon Shokubai's [global SAP production capacity](#) will [increase](#) to [710 kt/yr](#), including:

- [370 kt/yr](#) at Himeji (Japan)
- [160 kt/yr](#) in Belgium
- [90 kt/yr](#) in Indonesia
- [60 kt/yr](#) in the US
- [30 kt/yr](#) in China

With the [new acrylic acid capacity](#) in [Belgium](#), Nippon Shokubai's [total global acrylic acid production capacity](#) will [increase](#) to [880 kt/yr](#), including:

- [540 kt/yr](#) in Japan
- [340 kt/yr](#) overseas

The surprise for some was that Nippon Shokubai did not decide to form a joint venture or supply agreement with an existing acrylic acid producer in Europe for its SAP project (Reminder: we assume that the Glacial Acrylic Acid required by the existing 60 kT Antwerp SAP plant of Nippon Shokubai is supplied by the nearby Acrylic Acid plant of BASF-Antwerp)

It will be also interesting to follow developments in Russia in light of this new announcement as there is an existing plan to build an 80 kT acrylic acid plant in Russia. As previously reported, this Gazprom Neftekhim Salavat project is already rumoured to be delayed beyond its announced 2016 completion date due to the tightening of credit in Russia.

Sources: *Competitive Intelligence Blog-Jerome Spiel (from Nippon Shokubai, Chemweek data) + Tecnon Orbichem Comments*