

First phase of the Antwerp platform upgrade starts up with ethane-based petrochemical production

2, place Jean Millier
Arche Nord Coupole/Regnault
92 400 Courbevoie France

Mike SANGSTER

Nicolas FUMEX
Kim HOUSEGO
Romain RICHEMONT

Tel. : + 44 (0)207 719 7962
Fax : + 44 (0)207 719 7959

Robert HAMMOND (U.S.)
Tel. : +1 713-483-5070
Fax : +1 713-483-5629

TOTAL S.A.
Capital : 6 251 766 872,50 €
542 051 180 R.C.S. Nanterre

total.com

Paris, July 7, 2017 - Total's refining and chemicals platform in Antwerp has started up production of ethylene¹ using ethane feedstock, which is extracted from natural gas and is significantly cheaper than oil-derived feedstock.

Total has invested nearly \$60 million to revamp one of the platform's two steam crackers² and to adapt the site's terminal to enable the import of 200,000 tons of ethane per year by ship from Norway.

The project optimizes supply by providing flexibility to use either ethane, butane or naphtha as feedstock; advantaged feedstock could therefore account for more than 50% of supply.

"The Antwerp project is part of Total's strategy of upgrading its major integrated platforms and expanding its petrochemicals business to take advantage of low cost feedstock. The Group recently launched two such projects on its giant sites in the United States and South Korea," said Bernard Pinatel, President, Total Refining & Chemicals. "The Antwerp investment makes the site more flexible and opens access to the most competitive feedstock."

The project is part of a wider upgrade of the Antwerp facility that also includes the construction of a new refining complex - to convert larger volumes of heavy fuel oil into light products for which there is growing demand - as well as a unit to process refinery off-gas for use as petrochemical feedstock. The platform upgrades are expected to be completed in the second half of 2017.

The Antwerp Refining and Chemicals Platform

Located in the city's port area, the Antwerp refining and chemicals facility has three production sites, forming an integrated platform for both refining (338,000 barrels per day) and petrochemicals (1.1 million tons per year of ethylene). The platform produces various petroleum products, such as heavy fuel oil, gasoline, LPG, diesel and jet fuel. It also manufactures base chemicals — olefins, C4 fractions and aromatic hydrocarbons — some of which are used to make polymers (high-density polyethylene). The Antwerp platform employs around 1,700 people. Its products are used in a number of consumer and industrial applications, such as packaging and automotive components.

¹ Base for plastics

² Steam cracking is a petrochemical process that uses petroleum or gas derivatives to produce monomers (ethylene and propylene), bases for the plastics industry (polyethylene and polypropylene)

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