



With its industrial demonstrator, METEX produces the first glycolic acid of natural origin

Clermont-Ferrand, 1 December 2020 – (FR0004177046 METEX), METabolic EXplorer (METEX), a specialist in the design, development, industrialisation and sale of environmentally responsible bioprocesses to produce functional ingredients, has announced that it has obtained, at the demonstrator stage, the first samples of bio-sourced glycolic acid (GA) aimed primarily at the cosmetics market.

With this first glycolic acid of natural origin, METEX is expanding its portfolio by adding a new pre-industrial maturity process for a premium product on a market seeking more natural-based solutions.

Manuela Falempin, Head of Business Development at METEX, says: *“Today, glycolic acid is exclusively manufactured using petrochemical processes. METEX is the first company in the world to validate, at the stage of the industrial demonstrator, an alternative process and patent based on fermentation. This is a major asset that will set us apart as we focus primary on the cosmetics market.”*

The characterisation of this first cosmetic-grade GA of natural origin will allow for the validation of its performance in formulations of dermo-cosmetic products. This step will also allow make it possible to fix the process for manufacturing batches that will serve to provide samples, in the first half of 2021, to market actors interested in substituting petrochemical GA with the same active principle of natural origin in their formulas.

GA is a reference anti-ageing active ingredient used in cosmetics and a precursor of two biodegradable polymers: PGA (poly glycolic acid) and PLGA (poly lactic-co-glycolic acid). The biodegradability of the polymer is determined by the proportion of GA incorporated. This property is currently used in medical applications for the manufacture of absorbable surgical suture thread and will soon be used to manufacture 100% bio-sourced plastic with short life cycles. Overall, the global GA market is valued at more than €130m in 2020¹. METEX is primarily targeting a market whose growth, estimated between 5 and 10%, could accelerate with an initial bio-sourced solution. New applications, notably in biodegradable bioplastics, represent additional growth potential.

The developments to be carried out on the GA project in 2021 have a twofold objective: to make a decision on the industrial application of the technology aimed at the cosmetics market by the

¹ Source: Expert interview Advancy

end of 2021, and to build industrial partnerships to focus on the polymer applications, first and foremost for the high added value medical sector.

Benjamin Gonzalez, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of METEX, said: *"This step forward allows us to begin focusing on methods of industrializing GA technology. Several methods are available to us to make a decision on industrial application by the end of 2021."*

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About METabolic EXplorer – www.metabolic-explorer.com

Using renewable raw materials, the company develops and industrialises innovative and competitive industrial fermentation processes as alternatives to petrochemical processes to meet consumers' new societal expectations and the objectives of the energy transition. Its functional ingredients of natural origin are used in the formulation of cosmetic and nutrition-animal health products and as intermediates for the synthesis of biomaterials. The construction of its first production unit, through its subsidiary METEX NØØVISTA, will bring 1.3 propanediol (PDO) and butyric acid (BA) on the market.

Based at the Clermont Limagne technology park, near Clermont-Ferrand, METabolic EXplorer is listed on Euronext in Paris (Compartment C, METEX) and is included in the CAC Small Index.

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Investor relations – ACTIFIN

Benjamin LEHARI
Tel: + 33 (0) 1 56 88 11 11
E-Mail: blehari@actifin.fr

Media relations – ACTIFIN

Isabelle DRAY
Tel: + 33 (0) 1 56 88 11 11
E-Mail: idray@actifin.fr