



Versalis signs agreement with Pirelli for joint research project on guayule-based natural rubber

San Donato Milanese (Mi), March 19 2013 – Versalis (Eni) and Pirelli have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to kick off a joint research project for the use of guayule-based natural rubber in tire production.

The research project will run over a period of three years. On an exclusivity basis, Versalis will provide an innovative range of guayule-based natural rubber materials, while Pirelli will carry out trial tests to validate the performance of the materials for tire production.

As soon as new industrial quantities become available, Versalis will supply Pirelli with guayule-based natural rubber to complement the current set of synthetic rubber that Versalis is already supplying to Pirelli for the production of conventional tires.

The agreement with Pirelli follows the announcement of a milestone partnership between Versalis and Yulex Corporation USA for guayule production and for the construction of an industrial complex to be based in Southern Europe.

Guayule (*Parthenium argentatum*) is a renewable, non-food crop that requires little water usage, no pesticides and is an alternative source of natural rubber thanks to its latex allergy-friendly properties, unlike Hevea rubber.

The agreement is consistent with Versalis' strategy of pursuing partnerships with key leaders in the field of bio-based chemical products. The agreement is also part of an overall plan to drive a solid integration process between a range of innovative technologies and the current portfolio of conventional products with a particular focus on the elastomers business, all of which is critical to improving Versalis' competitive edge at the international level.

The agreement with Versalis integrates and extends Pirelli's commitment in the search for new materials from renewable sources and especially from biomasses. Pirelli, which already produces

tyres with raw materials derived from rice husk (the inedible part of the grain usually used as fuel), aims to gradually reduce the heavy reliance on fossil resources, replacing them with alternative raw materials which induce better performance and match up with higher standards of environmental sustainability in terms of processes and products.

“This new partnership between Versalis and Pirelli builds on a series of initiatives to develop technologies for tire applications with a focus on performance and energy efficiency. Both companies are well-established industry leaders at an international level; they represent a sound model for undivided commitment to all levels of research, including the green sector,” said Daniele Ferrari, Chief Executive Officer of Versalis.

“Pirelli has always been dedicated to the development of innovative solutions that prioritize sustainability, and this means safety and respect for the environment. In this regard, it is essential to prioritise research on renewable raw materials, an area where we hold industry leadership at an international level. The research project into guayule-based natural rubber is one of our key activities that fully engages our team of researchers; it also underlines the strategic importance of long-standing partnerships like the one we have announced today with Versalis,” said Maurizio Boiocchi, Chief Technical Officer of Pirelli.

Company Contacts:

Press Office: Tel. +39.0252031875 – +39.0659822030
Freephone for shareholders (from Italy): 800940924
Freephone for shareholders (from abroad): +39. 800 11 22 34 56
Switchboard: +39-0659821

ufficio.stampa@eni.com
segreteria.societaria.azionisti@eni.com
investor.relations@eni.com

Web site: www.eni.com



Ufficio Stampa Pirelli Press Office – Tel. +39 02 64424270 – pressoffice@pirelli.com
Pirelli Investor Relations – Tel. +39 02 64422949 – ir@pirelli.com

www.pirelli.com