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Biofuel from straw – EnviroChemie builds modular wastewater treatment plant for Clariant’s innovative sunliquid® cellulosic ethanol plant in Romania

EnviroChemie is planning, building, installing and commissioning a wastewater treatment plant in south-west Romania for the Swiss speciality chemicals company Clariant. The objective is to purify the process water from the production of cellulosic ethanol in the recently established plant to a quality that can be discharged directly. The modular wastewater treatment plant also provides the customer with options for flexible production expansion or relocation.

EnviroChemie is proud that the wastewater treatment has been part of the success of Clariant's innovative project. Clariant is currently building a production plant which will be able to produce 50,000 tonnes of cellulosic ethanol from more than 250,000 tonnes of straw by using the business's in-house sunliquid® technology platform. This innovative process allows agricultural residues to be converted into a climate-neutral, advanced biofuel. The cellulosic ethanol produced in the sunliquid® process reduces CO₂ emissions by around 95% compared to fossil fuels.

The various process wastewaters from the cellulosic ethanol production are treated in stages in the EnviroChemie plant. EnviroChemie completed a series of comprehensive investigations during the preliminary planning stages for the plant using process wastewater from Clariant's sunliquid® demonstration plant in Straubing. The strict values for direct discharge are maintained by using a combination of different processes.

The modular design of the plant was an important factor for Clariant. This ensures that planning and operation of future sunliquid® cellulosic ethanol production plants will be as easy as possible. In addition to short planning and project schedules, the preassembled plants can be transported as modular cells to different sites without difficulty and quickly put into operation. Optimum use can be made of synergies and experience from previous projects, significantly simplifying the project. A tried-and-tested wastewater treatment system is therefore available for future cellulosic ethanol production projects.

Press contact

Jutta Quaiser, EnviroChemie GmbH, Head of Marketing & PR,
jutta.quaiser@envirochemie.com, tel. 0049 6154 699872 or mobile 0049 171 3159166
EnviroChemie GmbH, In den Leppsteinswiesen 9, 64380 Rossdorf, Germany