

PRESS RELEASE

Bio-On S.p.A. – Gruppo Hera

Clean energy for Bio-on's new biopolymers “factory” thanks to a trigeneration plant built by Gruppo Hera

Bologna, 16 January 2018 – Bio-on, the leader in eco-sustainable chemical technologies, and Gruppo Hera, one of Italy's main multi-utility providers, have reached an **agreement for the supply of clean energy** thanks to the realisation and management of a new technological-energy hub that will house a newly designed trigeneration plant. The deal was signed by Bio-on S.p.A. with Hera Servizi Energia, a subsidiary of Gruppo HERA, and will **guarantee clean electric energy for the new plant producing innovative biopolymers that Bio-on is currently constructing in Castel San Pietro Terme, outside Bologna.**

The plant, due to open by the middle of 2018 and begin PHAs bioplastic production thanks to a 15 million Euro investment, will employ approximately 40 people. The plant will occupy an area of 30,000 m², 3,700 of which is covered and 6,000 land for development, and will have a production capacity of 1,000 tons per year expandable to 2,000. It will be equipped with state-of-the-art technologies and the most advanced research laboratories, where Bio-on will test and develop new types of PHAs bioplastic using agricultural and agro-industrial waste as raw material. Bio-on also demonstrates its focus on environmental sustainability in its choice of site, opting to convert a former factory, meaning no new land is wasted.

Through the agreement, Gruppo Hera will supply Bio-on's new plant with **a) Power** produced and self-consumed, **b) Heating** in the form of steam, and **c) Cooling**. The multiannual agreement includes the realisation and maintenance of the entire technological-energy hub associated with the supply of energy, for a total investment from Hera Servizi Energia of 2.4 million Euro.

Hera Servizi Energia is the landmark ESCO in Gruppo Hera's industrial sector, which over the years has developed a portfolio of cogeneration plants built with the best technologies on the market, able to guarantee major energy and economic savings.

The project developed for Bio-on envisages the realisation of the entire technological-energy hub comprising a 1 MW trigeneration power plant, two steam boilers, two high-efficiency industrial coolers and a modern water treatment plant. The energy saving generated is over 800 TOE (tonnes of oil equivalent) per year, equivalent to the amount of CO₂ **a 320-hectare woodland absorbs in one year or the equivalent of 810 diesel cars being taken off the roads.**

“We are extremely proud of this agreement,” explains **Bio-on S.p.A.** Chairman and CEO **Marco Astorri**, *“because it allows us to increase and complete the industrial sustainability of our new production plant. We chose to not use agricultural land by converting a derelict plant, and with HERA we can add strong GREEN credentials in our energy usage to produce a biopolymer like MINERV PHAs that is sustainable and completely biodegradable in nature.”* Bio-on, a fast-growing company, fundamentally met the objectives of its business plan presented on 22 November 2016 for 2017 and looks to 2018 with major new projects, including its sustainable energy collaboration with **HERA**.

All the **PHAs (polyhydroxyalkanoates)** developed by **Bio-on** are made from renewable plant sources with no competition with food supply chains. They can replace a number of conventional polymers currently made with petrochemical processes using hydrocarbons; they guarantee the same thermo-mechanical properties as conventional plastics with the advantage of being completely eco-sustainable and 100% naturally biodegradable.

The agreement between the two companies has come out of a highly dynamic territory that represents the technological cutting edge in Italy.

*“For a company such as ours, which has innovation and sustainability at its foundations,” explained **Giorgio Golinelli**, managing director of **Hera Servizi Energia**, “the collaboration with Bio-on is a natural meeting of the minds and a convergence of views that we believe can be developed with an increasing number of players operating in sustainably developing the economy and the territory. With this agreement, thanks to the breadth and quality of our service offering, we can put an additional green stamp on a project that aims to change the world of eco-plastics. Hera has been at the forefront of this sector for some time, encouraging the transition towards a circular economy model that extends the life of raw materials and resources through recycling, reuse and longer-lasting products.”*

GRUPPO HERA

It is one of Italy's largest multi-utility providers working in Environment (waste collection and treatment), Energy (electricity and gas distribution and sale) and Water (waterworks, sewers and purification). The Group employs over 9,000 people and works every day to meet the many and varied needs of over 4.4 million citizens. It serves over 350 local municipalities mainly in the Emilia Romagna, Marche, Tuscany, Abruzzo, Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia regions.

www.gruppohera.it

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Bio-on S.p.A.

Bio-On S.p.A., an Italian Intellectual Property Company (IPC), operates in the bioplastic sector conducting applied research and development of modern bio-fermentation technologies in the field of eco-sustainable and completely naturally biodegradable materials. In particular, Bio-On develops industrial applications through the creation of product characterisations, components and plastic items. Since February 2015, Bio-On S.p.A. has also been operating in the development of natural and sustainable chemicals for the future. Bio-On has developed an exclusive process for the production of a family of polymers called PHAs (polyhydroxyalkanoates) from agricultural waste (including molasses and sugar cane and sugar beet syrups). The bioplastic produced in this way is able to replace the main families of conventional plastics in terms of performance, thermo-mechanical properties and versatility. Bio-On PHAs is a bioplastic that can be classified as 100% natural and completely biodegradable: this has been certified by Vincotte and by USDA (United States Department of Agriculture). the Issuer's strategy envisages the marketing of licenses for PHAs production and related ancillary services, the development of R&D (also through new collaborations with universities, research centres and industrial partners), as well as the realisation of industrial plants designed by Bio-On.

www.bio-on.it

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