

PRESS RELEASE

EU-financed project for sustainable composites based on natural resources - NATEX - to be presented during COMPOSITES EUROPE Show in Stuttgart

September 2009

Natural Aligned Fibres and Textiles for Use in Structural Composites Applications (NATEX), an EU funded project composed of 16 partners across Europe will be introduced for the first time at the COMPOSITES EUROPE Show in Stuttgart (27 – 29 October). The main aim of NATEX is the promotion and development of aligned textiles from natural fibres such as hemp and flax, suitable for use as high-strength reinforced fabrics to produce structural composite materials and components.

Dr. Valentin Polo, Project Coordinator and Head of International Projects Department at AIMPLAS, noted: “It is very important for NATEX project to be present in the COMPOSITES EUROPE exhibition in order to increase the visibility of project activities and potential impact. NATEX partners will have the opportunity of networking with companies, research institutes and technological centres working in the composites field, which will result in future cooperation and increased project results awareness.”

Currently, the bio-composites are available only at industrial level for use in semi-structural applications and not for structural applications where the use of materials from non-food crops is still the main practice. NATEX project aims to overcome these barriers and introduce a sustainable alternative by creating natural resources based products based on innovative processes and methods able to compete in applications where products based on non-renewable sources are used nowadays.

The project will also have a strategic impact for the competitiveness of the European market. The textile sector, dominated mostly by small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and various sectors involved in the new material supply chain are expected to benefit as a result of these innovative alternatives and potentially make the shift from a resource-intensive to knowledge-based industry. The industrial sectors in which the new materials and processes will be implemented include transport, energy systems, agricultural machinery and shipbuilding.

Complete information concerning NATEX objectives and main innovations is provided by NATEX consortium in **hall C2, stand E25 and during the BIOCOSITES Forum on 29 October**. Several partners involved in the project will also be attending the COMPOSITES EUROPE show, including NetComposites, the European Composites Industry Association (EuCIA) and Technological Institute of Plastics (AIMPLAS).

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***NATEX** is a 4 year EU funded collaborative project under the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) targeted to SMEs with a budget of 4.180 million Euros. The project is coordinated by the Technological Institute of Plastics (AIMPLAS), a private non-profit Spanish Association, and composed of a consortium of 16 European partners. The other partners are: NetComposites (UK), EuPC/EuCIA (BE), AGCO (FR), Formax. (UK), EKOTEX (PL), DTU (DK), CHEM (DE), IVW (DE), ASFIBE (ES), BRIERLEY (UK), PIELSA (ES), TFC (BE), TKK (FI), INFMP (PL), ABENSI (ES).*