



Solaris Biofuel Cooperation Press Release – 28th November 2019

Solaris oil to pave the way for scaling up sustainable local fuel supply in South Africa

2016 saw South African Airways (SAA) perform Africa's first flight powered by Sustainable Aviation Fuel produced from Sunchem's nicotine-free tobacco plant Solaris. It was refined by World Energy Fuels in the USA, supplied by SkyNRG and supported by Boeing.

This momentous occasion demonstrated it is possible to use a locally produced feedstock to manufacture biojet fuel for commercial aviation that meets all necessary sustainability criteria required by the Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials (RSB) – an approach endorsed by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and NGOs globally as the strongest sustainability standard for biofuels.

Today we kick off Project Reya Fofa, the follow up to Project Solaris, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the project partners. The project will introduce Solaris-based biodiesel into the ground-handling operations at O.R Tambo International Airport. This will support a feasible scale-up of feedstock production and infrastructure such that a fully localised value chain for an Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) refinery may be achieved in the coming years, producing bio-jet fuel and green diesel. The next phase will be rolled out in a collaboration between Sunchem, Swissport, The Royal Bafokeng Nation (through implementing entity Moumo Integrated Development) and iLive and is endorsed by South African Airways (SAA).

Aviation currently contributes 2-2.5% to worldwide CO₂ emissions (the equivalent of Canada). Whilst compared to other industries this may not appear exorbitant, the fast growth in air traffic and the related increase in jet fuel consumption means that by 2050 global aviation could account for over 22% of all CO₂ emissions. As such, the reduction of aviation's emissions is a critical component of global climate mitigation action aimed at limiting warming to 1.5 °C.

SAA is fully committed to sustainable environmental transformation whilst supporting the creation of employment and new industries in South Africa, with the ultimate goal of blending 50% of its fuel with locally and environmentally sustainably produced biofuel. SAA is steadfast in working to becoming the most sustainable airline operating in, and to, Africa.

Beyond the climate and other environmental benefits of sustainable biofuel, a localized supply chain can have immense transformative power in terms of job creation, rural socio-economic development and macro-economic impacts such as a positive contribution to the Balance of Payments, minimized risk of foreign exchange exposure, tax revenues, and skills transfers.

The project partners are committed to achieving RSB certification for the project ensuring that it delivers on real social, environmental and climate benefits. RSB certification will demonstrate that locally produced biofuel can support food security, job creation, biodiversity and much more, and showcase the potential of the South African bioeconomy to the world.

Scaling the cultivation of feedstock to reach the desired level of production of biojet fuel requires a roadmap that is based on an organic increase in land under cultivation and outlines the related investment and policy support required to develop large-scale local biofuel supply chains

Sunchem is committed to bringing its Solaris crop to Africa to support the African energy transition. Furthermore, Sunchem was Africa's first RSB certified company therefore ensuring the highest standards in sustainable production. Sunchem actively engages throughout the value chain as the project integrator.

Given Swissport's goal to promote environmental responsibility in their services and encourage the development and application of environmentally conscious technologies, they have come alongside SAA to support the uptake of biodiesel from the Solaris project. It serves to put their environmental commitments into practice in South Africa whilst supporting SAA in beginning to transform their fuel supply at ORT to be more sustainable and localised.



The Royal Bafokeng Nation (RBN) through its agent Moumo Integrated Development (Moumo) seek to diversify their land away from the current reliance on mining activities. The aim is to create productive agricultural initiatives with a focus on job creation and economic upliftment for the Bafokeng Nation. Off the back of a successful Solaris pilot phase with Moumo, underutilized RBN land will be made available to grow Solaris for this project. The RBN community will not only be involved in the agricultural phase but will also participate in processing steps in the value chain. The goal is to replicate the project into other regions of the Royal Bafokeng Nation and the rest of the country.

Reya Fofa is Setswana for “We are flying” and demonstrates the vision of the project to be inclusive and transformative.

Delivering quality biofuels to the correct specification is integral to the project’s success. As such iLive has joined the consortium as the fuel production partner and will transform the Solaris oil into a biodiesel meeting SANS1935 (ASTM D6751), which will then be blended to the correct requirements for Swissport’s use.

The vision of Project Reya Fofa is truly a circular one – protein and fiber are other major co-products of the crop and as such, the project partners are also working to include these into the catering and textile requirements of the aviation sector. This is also in line with SAA’s commitment to transform all its supply chains to be more sustainable – as supported by their partnership with WWF.

Sunchem Quote: “We are very proud to have achieved this next milestone of commercialising the Solaris crop in South Africa and contributing to the development of localised sustainable fuel production” – Sergio Tommasini, Sunchem CEO

iLive Quote: “This is a tremendous project for the South African transport sector to partake in the global transformation for more sustainable fuels. We, as young local biodiesel producers, are pleased to be part of this future and helping it to be realised.” - Werner Euler, iLive Managing Director

High Resolution Images accompanying this release can be downloaded at this link:

<https://we.tl/t-ahbr1p4jGL>

Reya Fofa Project video can be found at this link:

https://youtu.be/5_hrIWXWAvA

For more Information:

Sunchem

Website: www.sunchem.nl

Contact: sam@sunchem.it

Swissport

Website: www.swissport.com

Contact: Richard.Hunt@swissport.com

South African Airways

Website: www.flysaa.com

Contact: tlalitlali@flysaa.com

Moumo Integrated Development

Website: www.moumo.co.za

Contact: diamond@moumo.co.za

iLive Sustainable Development

Website: www.iliveworld.co.za

Contact: werner.euler@iliveworld.co.za