

Press release

Progress made by the partnership between Fermentalg and SUEZ to develop carbon sinks and CO₂ carbon capture technology

Two tests scheduled

Libourne – 25 April 2017 – Fermentalg, an industrial biotechnology company that specializes in the production of oils, proteins and pigments derived from microalgae, has announced that its partnership with the SUEZ Group has made major progress in its development of technology for CO₂ carbon capture using microalgae.

Harnessing the power of microalgae to improve air quality

Fermentalg and SUEZ decided to pool their respective expertise to leverage the natural properties of microalgae in order to capture the CO₂ present in the air in towns and on industrial sites with a view to using the carbon captured to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. This partnership has led to the development of carbon sinks.

Through the use of its extensive microalgae strain bank and its experience in the industrial exploitation of microalgae, Fermentalg worked to optimize methods for capturing CO₂ and transforming it into oxygen and biomass so that it can be used in towns and on industrial sites. SUEZ is working to integrate these systems into urban areas and create a comprehensive purification cycle. Therefore, in addition to the oxygen released into the atmosphere, the biomass produced by the microalgae activity can be extracted and used by the purification plant to produce green energy in the form of biogas or biomethane when it is reinjected into the natural gas network.

While continuing to improve the efficiency of the systems, the partnership is also studying the impact of the carbon sinks on other air pollutants.

The purification capacity of 100 trees in a single carbon sink

A carbon sink consists of a large cylinder filled with water containing microalgae. Microalgal photosynthesis is then triggered using a light source. The sink captures the CO₂, which then feeds the microalgae. These carbon sinks could be set up in highly polluted urban areas, where a single sink would have the same purification capacity as 100 trees, i.e., the removal of one ton of CO₂ from the atmosphere every year.

A whole series of carbon sinks could therefore have a positive, sustained long-term effect on the local air quality and help to minimize the impact of high pollution levels. The carbon sinks could also be used on industrial sites where high levels of CO₂ are emitted.

This partnership created the first carbon sink prototype, which was unveiled to the world at the COP21 conference in 2015.

Two tests are currently underway or scheduled:

- The first led to the creation of a unit to perform flue gas capture tests in January 2017.
- The second should also lead to the creation of a new unit in an urban area.

Philippe Lavielle, Chairman and CEO of Fermentalg said: *"We are delighted to be working with SUEZ on this ambitious project, which is vital to restoring our urban environments. With the gradual rise of megacities, 80% of the world's population will in the future be living in urban areas. It is therefore vital that we quickly identify solutions to avoid the significant negative impact of saturation on human health and on economic activity. Following on from the development of water purification solutions, which was one of the 20th century's major areas for research spending, air purification is set to become the next global challenge. I am very proud that this solution was developed through the creativity of a young and innovative company like Fermentalg, and of our ability to leverage the enormous energy potential of microalgae on an industrial scale and in partnership with a global leader like SUEZ."*

About Fermentalg

Based in Libourne (Gironde), Fermentalg is an industrial biotechnology company and a global leader in the production of oils, proteins and pigments derived from the fermentation of microalgae. Its primary markets are the food and feed markets. Fermentalg shares are listed on Euronext in Paris (FR0011271600 – FALG). For more information, visit the Fermentalg website at: www.fermentalg.com.

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