

MamaGrande in Argentina set to receive 5M USD in public/private funding to transform 150 ha of wastewater treatment ponds

Following their successful 4.7 ha pilot project in Totoras, Santa Fe province of Argentina, MamaGrande is now set to commence building a scale-up version of their wastewater-to-bioproduct pipeline.

In this project, which will start in the first quarter of 2015, 150 ha of wastewater treatment lagoons located in the Salta and Tucumán provinces of NW Argentina will be converted into a biomass generation farm using public/private funds.

This investment of 5M USD consists of 60% funding from the Argentine government, with the other 40% contributed by the water and sanitation companies Aguas del Norte and Sociedad de Aguas de Tucumán, the National University of Rosario, the INDEAR Institute (the research and development venture between Bioceres and the Argentine National Council for Scientific and Technical Research, CONICET), and Njambre (the parent business accelerator of MamaGrande).

The technology platform that MamaGrande will deploy in this commercial scale project will rely on duckweed, a floating aquatic plant widely distributed globally, that naturally grows rapidly on sewage and can accumulate 50% of its dry weight as starch while producing clean water. That starch can be fermented to lactic acid and polymerized into PLA, a renewable and biodegradable plastic. This pipeline produces PLA that doesn't compete with food crops for soil or other resources.

"In addition to creating 45 jobs, this project can provide a huge relief for the water crisis in the NW region of Argentina. Moreover, it will enable the demonstration that a sustainable future is possible, and that the aquatic micro-crop duckweed can be a fundamental part of that sustainability!" says Sebastián Lagorio, Bio-Business Specialist, R&D Director and cofounder of MamaGrande.

"Social enterprises are about balancing People, Planet & Profits in order to create a bright future for all. MamaGrande is a win-win-win beautiful example of how it can be done, and done right!" says Federico Seineldin, cofounder of MamaGrande and Njambre.

The construction phase for this pilot is currently projected to be complete by 2017. Commercial success of this pilot farm can herald in a novel sustainable biomass production platform that can be adapted in many locales in the world.



Partial view of one of the ideal 30 has, plug-flow, tropical wastewater treatment lagoons in Salta.



About MamaGrande: MamaGrande is a biotech social business created in 2011 to develop processes & operations to create a better, more sustainable future for everyone, specialized in water remediation coupled with renewable and biodegradable industrial products generation.

For further information, please contact Mr. Sebastián Cinquini, MamaGrande CEO: +549 3492 685444 or info@mamagrande.org.

Official resolution: Project #3, "Generación de productos de alto valor agregado a partir de biomasa acuática con alto contenido de almidón proveniente de lagunas de tratamientos de efluentes del NOA, Lemna Bio"

<http://www.agencia.mincyt.gob.ar/archivo/2005/fonarsec/res490-14-fits-2013-agroindustria-biorefinerías-adjudicados>

PR URL: http://mamagrande.org/pr/MamaGrande_PR_2014-11-20.pdf

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