

PRESS RELEASE

AmphiStar secures €6 million to launch eco-friendly and cost-effective biosurfactants derived from waste

Ghent, Belgium - [European Circular Bioeconomy Fund \(ECBF\)](#), [Qbic III](#) and [Flanders Future Tech Fund \(FFTF\)](#) have joined forces to provide a significant boost to Ghent-based start-up [AmphiStar](#). The funding round, led by ECBF, raised €6 million. This will allow AmphiStar to accelerate the industrialization of its biosurfactants range and strengthen its team. To manage this accelerated transition, Pierre-Franck Valentin joined the team as CEO. As AmphiStar gears up for full commercial deployment, the company is laying the groundwork for future expansion with plans for the construction of a 1.000 tonnes (100% active) per annum launch plant.

Waste derived biosurfactants to revolutionize sustainability in everyday products

Surfactants play a pivotal role as functional components in numerous products in our daily lives, ranging from shampoos to toothpastes, cosmetics, inks, paints, agrochemicals, food and feed and even construction materials. Over 20 million tonnes of surfactants are produced every year, of which the vast majority are relying heavily on unsustainable fossil- and/or palm oil feedstocks and are produced using harsh traditional chemical manufacturing processes.

AmphiStar is revolutionizing the surfactant market by introducing microbial biosurfactants produced from locally sourced waste- and side- streams from the agri-food industry, such as supermarket food waste. These innovative, circular biosurfactants do not compete with food production nor do they directly impact land use. Moreover, mild and safe biological processes similar to brewing beer are applied for their production. AmphiStar offers a comprehensive portfolio of biobased, biologically produced, and biocompatible glycolipids, such as sophorolipids, to brand owners of cleaning- and cosmetic products seeking genuinely sustainable, high-performing, and affordable alternatives. These biosurfactants come in various forms and purities, serving as perfect drop-in replacements for existing formulations while significantly reducing the carbon footprint of finished products. This is only the start as AmphiStars' biosurfactants have the potential to be used in many different markets and applications using surfactants as such revolutionizing an entire sector.

Investment accelerates market penetration of new biosurfactant generation and fuels Amphistar's expansion plans

The infusion of €6 million in new capital from ECBF, Qbic III and FFTF will empower Amphistar to kickstart commercial biosurfactant production in collaboration with external partners. The investment will also be used to enhance R&D efforts to further refine and optimize its biosurfactant platform, complete the regulatory and certification dossiers and engineer its own state-of-the-art production facility. Amphistar will raise more funding in 2025 for construction of the production facility and plans to hire 15 new employees within the year to bolster its expansion efforts.

AmphiStar, a pioneer in waste based biosurfactants

AmphiStar, established in 2021, is a spin off company from Ghent University and the Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant. The company builds on over 15 years of world class deep tech research and scaling expertise and has a strong IP base. The company is considered as one of the world references and pioneers in this field and is run by a strong team with a broad complementary skillset, including industrial and start-up experience, synthetic biology, process development, scale up, formulation and commercialization.

CEO with experience in surfactants and chemical industry

Last but not least, AmphiStar was able to attract an experienced business leader to strengthen the team. Pierre-Franck Valentin has 25+ years of business experience in the surfactants and chemicals' industries and will join the team as CEO. His experience and network will allow the company to speed up its market traction and fulfill its ambitions to become a world leader in the (bio)surfactant space.

Sophie Roelants, AmphiStar: "AmphiStar will revolutionize the surfactant market. We have developed a unique platform technology and are the only company in the (bio)surfactant space successfully combining a set of different key technologies: waste- and side stream technologies, synthetic biology, bioprocessing, purification and scaling expertise. With this capital injection and extended support of these prominent investors we will bring our unique waste based biosurfactant products to market and aim to make biosurfactants mainstream. We have had a first market introduction of one of our waste based biosurfactants with Ecover last year, showcasing the performance, safety and sustainability of our waste based sophorolipids. We are looking for more sustainable partnerships and are open to collaborate. We are also looking for enthusiastic new talent to strengthen our team."

Jowita Sewerska, Investment Director European Circular Bioeconomy Fund (ECBF): "There is a clear market need for a better biosurfactants' offer from the producers – in terms of performance, sustainability and price points. AmphiStar has great cards to play here and is now at an exciting point of accelerating the commercialization of its products."

Sofie Baeten, Managing Partner Qbic III: "As an early supporter of AmphiStar, we are thrilled to continue our shared mission of driving sustainable innovation. Leveraging over 15 years of cutting-edge research at Ghent University, AmphiStar's technology enables the cost-efficient and ecological production of biosurfactants from renewable feedstocks, advancing the transition to a circular economy. We proudly support their efforts to drive a greener, bio-based industry, and look forward to the impactful outcomes of our collaboration in shaping a sustainable future."

Vincent Hebbelynck, Business manager FFTF: "This round financing will enable to further develop the promising sustainable technology of AmphiStar, originating in Flemish universities and research organisations, towards broad market adoption. It hits the sweet spot of the investment focus of Flanders Future Tech Fund."

About AmphiStar

AmphiStar offers a portfolio of locally produced microbial biosurfactants to companies seeking to develop sustainable, performant & affordable products with surfactants as important performance ingredients. AmphiStars' surfactants are part of a platform technology and are not linked to fossil feedstocks, direct land use or deforestation and offer a sustainable alternative to companies in the home- and personal care sector, but also to other sectors applying surfactants such as the agro-, food- and feed sectors. The surfactant market is huge, with 20 million tonnes produced each year and many different varieties and properties, mainly produced from fossil- and palm feedstocks through classic chemistry. Diversity in surfactants is key for such a wide range of applications, yet still lacking for biosurfactants. AmphiStar offers a game changing technology using biobased (waste) feedstocks and biological and mild processing to produce a portfolio of sustainable biosurfactants. AmphiStar is the first company to produce and offer such broad biosurfactant diversity and to offer sophorolipid products to market which are 100% sourced from biobased waste- and side streams. www.AmphiStar.com

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European Circular Bioeconomy Fund (ECBF)

The European Circular Bioeconomy Fund (ECBF) is a private venture capital fund dedicated exclusively to the bioeconomy and circular economy. Launched by the European Commission, it invests in visionary European entrepreneurs driving the transition from a fossil-based to a bio-based economy. The ECBF aims to catalyse the transition to a sustainable future by investing in later-stage companies with high innovation potential, favourable returns and sustainable impact. Founded in 2020 and with a total of €300 million under management, ECBF is focused on deploying capital in attractive and impactful companies based in the EU-27 or 16 HORIZON 2020 associated countries.

Based in Luxembourg, the fund is managed by Hauck & Aufhäuser Funds Services S.A. as Alternative Investment Fund Manager (AIFM) and advised by the experienced investment team of ECBF Management GmbH based in Germany. www.ecbf.vc

About Qbic

Qbic is a sector-agnostic seed and early-stage venture capital fund, focusing on creating impact through the transformation of technological breakthroughs into sustainable business. The fund's goal is to support young innovative companies that valorize research from Qbic's knowledge partners. The fund typically participates in the first external investment round of a company and continues to support and invest in these companies throughout their growth. Across 3 funds, Qbic has close to € 200M in AUM. www.qbic.be.

About Flanders Future Tech Fund

The Flanders Future Tech Fund is an early-stage funding fund, managed by the Flemish investment company PMV, that aims to respond to the funding needs of early technology initiatives by SOCs, universities and Flemish spearhead clusters, as well as private parties. With its investments, the Flanders Future Tech Fund aims to focus on the valorisation of technology developed by Flemish companies, with a particular focus on the spearhead domains of Care and Welfare, Digital Transformation and Climate & Sustainability. The Flanders Future Tech Fund has a fund size of 75 million euros and can enter into financings of 0.5 to 5 million euros. www.pmv.eu/en/product/flanders-future-tech-fund/

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