AkzoNobel and partners to explore use of waste as chemicals feedstock

14.11.2014 - AkzoNobel is part of a major Dutch partnership working with Canada's Enerkem to explore the use of waste streams as a feedstock for chemical production and the development of waste-to-chemicals facilities. The collaboration features a number of industry and semi-governmental partners looking to benefit from Enerkem's proprietary technology that converts waste into synthesis gas - a common starting material for products such as methanol and ammonia.

“Given the growing concerns over raw material and energy scarcity - the need to innovate and develop less traditional solutions is becoming ever more important,” said Werner Fuhrmann, AkzoNobel's Executive Committee member responsible for Specialty Chemicals. “To accelerate these innovations we are entering into strategic partnerships, all focused on replacing non-renewable raw materials, which could have major environmental benefits.”

Aimed at closing the loop by converting waste back into useful products, the initial partners are AkzoNobel, Enerkem, the investment and development agency for the Northern Netherlands (NOM), Groningen Seaports, Rotterdam Partners and InnovationQuarter. The partners plan to test various local waste streams, including residual municipal and agricultural waste.

The goal is to create a group of partners that all make a unique contribution - waste management companies to provide the waste feedstock and processing capacity, financial parties to arrange funding, end-use chemical companies to handle production and customer sales, and government to facilitate regional investment. Other interested parties are also welcome to join the collaboration.

Within the next two to three years, the partners are aiming to have a plant in Delfzijl or Rotterdam (or both) become the first in Europe to utilize the new technology.