

## EU funding for Metsä Fibre's long-term development projects

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Metsä Fibre plays an important role in three new development partnerships that have been successful in project evaluations and thus secured multiannual funding from the EU.

The concepts of relevance to Metsä Fibre in these partnerships include new technologies to produce lignin-based products and pulp-based textile fibres, as well as the utilisation of bark as a replacement for coal in the production of heat and electricity. The recently initiated long-term development projects aim to prove the commercial viability of these concepts.

“Operating within the EU’s research and development networks demand perseverance and world-class competencies. The EU funding now granted to us is a clear indication of the high quality of Metsä Fibre’s research and development activities and the new concepts. It also indicates their relevance in respect to finding solutions that help mitigating some of the greatest challenges facing society, such as population growth and resource scarcity,” says **Niklas von Weymarn**, Vice President, Research at Metsä Fibre.

The *LigniOx* project focuses on the utilisation of lignin in products with high added value. The project advances a technology developed by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, in which wood-based lignin is separated from the black liquor generated in pulp production. At the same time, it will be converted into so-called dispersants, i.e. additives that improve solutions and mixtures. One example of the potential end-products is a plasticiser, which improves the workability of concrete.

The *Biomotive* project aims to develop new environmentally friendly biomaterials to be used in car parts, for instance. Metsä Fibre’s role in Biomotive is to develop a new production method for pulp-based textile fibres. In addition to clothing, textile fibres are also used in technical textiles, such as the seats of vehicles.

The third project is *Bioefficiency*, which studies, among others, the significance of bark’s high ash content when it is used as fuel in large-scale combined heat and power boilers.

LigniOx and Biomotive are four-year projects operating under the Bio-Based Industries PPP instrument, while Bioefficiency is a three-year project operating under the European Union’s normal Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.

The projects aim to strengthen and diversify the future bioproduct portfolio and ecosystems of Metsä Group and Metsä Fibre, which is part of Metsä Group. The Bioproduct mill entity, started up in mid-August 2017 in Äänekoski, Finland, already now includes innovative production plants that produce bioproducts on an industrial scale. These plants produce product gas from bark, sulphuric acid from the mill’s waste gases, and biogas and biofuel pellets from the sludge of the wastewater treatment plant. Furthermore, a new biocomposite demonstration plant will start up at Metsä Fibre’s Rauma pulp mill later this autumn. The biogas and biocomposite plants are owned by Metsä Fibre’s partners, and they complement the industrial ecosystems at Äänekoski and Rauma.

### **For further information, please contact:**

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LigniOx: [cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/210284\\_en.html](https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/210284_en.html)

Biomotive: [cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/210578\\_en.html](https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/210578_en.html)

Bioefficiency: [bioefficiency.eu](https://bioefficiency.eu)

Bio-based Industries: [bbi-europe.eu](https://bbi-europe.eu)

Metsä Group's bioproduct mill: [bioproductmill.com](https://bioproductmill.com)

## **Metsä Fibre**

[www.metsafibre.com](https://www.metsafibre.com)

Metsä Fibre is a leading producer of bioproducts and bioenergy. The company's pulp brand is Botnia and the sawn timber brand is Metsä Nordic Timber. The company's bleached softwood and birch pulp grades have been developed for the production of high-quality paperboard, tissue and printing paper and speciality products. The main applications for spruce and pine sawn timber are products for construction and interior decoration as well as window and door joinery and raw material for packaging industry. Currently employing approximately 1 200 people, the company's sales totalled EUR 1.4 billion in 2016. Metsä Fibre is part of Metsä Group.