

Sumitomo Chemical Honored at Third Annual Green & Sustainable Chemistry Awards

Wins METI Prize for Development and Industrialization of Vapor Phase Beckmann Rearrangement Process

Tokyo, March 9, 2004 — Sumitomo Chemical Company, Limited today announced that it has been awarded the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Prize from the Green & Sustainable Chemistry Network (GSCN) in the third annual Green & Sustainable Chemistry Awards. The ceremony was held in Tokyo on March 8.

The GSCN was founded in March 2000 by academics, industry groups, and national research laboratories to advance the green-sustainable chemistry (*1) initiatives. In 2001, it set up the Green & Sustainable Chemistry Awards to commend the accomplishments of individuals, corporations, and other organizations that significantly contribute to the advancement of the initiatives in Japan. The METI Prize is given for achievements in industrial technologies.

Sumitomo Chemical's award was for developing and industrially implementing the vapor phase Beckmann rearrangement process. Used in the production of caprolactam, an ingredient in nylon-6, the "Beckmann rearrangement" is an innovative process that Sumitomo Chemical established and has been operating commercially. The new process has a higher yield than conventional processes and produces none of the ammonium sulfate that had previously been an unavoidable by-product to be further processed. As a result, the process has the distinctive advantage of reduced consumption of energy and raw materials. Sumitomo Chemical's achievement is highly recognized as making an important contribution to environmental and social sustainability, which is the primary goal of the green & sustainable chemistry initiatives.

A strong commitment to the environment, safety, and health is one of Sumitomo Chemical's important management principles. The company intends to capitalize on the technology and expertise it has accumulated to actively promote green & sustainable chemistry and reduce environmental risks.

About the green & sustainable chemistry movement

The green & sustainable chemistry initiatives represent global efforts within the chemistry industry to be socially responsible, with the goal of making society more environmentally sustainable and of maintaining the health and safety of people and the environment through the development of innovative chemical technologies.