



AFRY - an important actor when SCA Obbola in Sweden build their future mill

With the aim to address the issue with plastic waste in our oceans, the demand for renewable packaging increase. At the same time, a growing e-commerce and a growing population gives further boost to the transportation packaging segment. SCA is addressing this market need and in 2019 they decided to build a new kraftliner machine at its pulp and paper mill in Obbola, just outside Umeå in Sweden. The project, which goes under the name “Expansion Obbola”, will increase the capacity for renewable packaging materials from 450,000 to 725,000 annual tonnes (ADt). A central part of the project is the subproject MEG, where AFRY has been trusted to handle the implementation of the project.

“Expansion Obbola” is divided into five subprojects: Paper machine, Recycled Fiber, Recovery boiler, MEG, and infrastructure. AFRY will handle the execution of the subproject MEG, which is a Swedish acronym for pulp, energy, and auxiliary systems and has the aim to debottleneck the current process. In brief, the MEG subproject is composed of increased capacity for pulp washing, recovery boiler and supporting systems, a new refiner,

and a new biological effluent treatment plant. Also included are a large number of new pipe bridges and a new sprinkling system.

“We are naturally proud to be a part of one of SCA’s largest investments”, says Peter Kaarle, Project leader at AFRY for subproject MEG.

Multiple disciplines involved

AFRY’s responsibilities in MEG include project management, working environment, expediting, construction management, 3D scanning and engineering of process, piping, mechanical, electric and lightning.

“Expansion Obbola” is an investment of 7.5 billion SEK for SCA and a large part of that investment is dedicated to reducing environmental impact. As an example, the new lime kiln will use biofuels instead of fossil-based oil, which reduces the mills annual oil consumption by 8000 m3. As a result, the carbon dioxide emissions are reduced by around 20 000 tonnes per year.

Partner in earlier projects

AFRY was also involved when SCA invested in a new lime kiln at its Munksund mill outside Piteå in Sweden, seven years ago. Peter, who was also the project leader in the Munksund project, says:

“Some of our team members in Obbola also worked with the project at Munksund, which is valuable, and additionally we now have even more resources as a result of the one-year-old merger between ÅF and Pöyry”.

Local, regional and global resources creating synergies

Peter Kaarle explains that AFRY helps SCA with some tens of

technical disciplines with consultants not only from AFRY’s Swedish offices in Piteå, Umeå, and Örnsköldsvik, but also from other offices in Sweden and Finland.

“With the organization we have today we can handle complex projects in a completely new way. The size of our company does not only create a credibility for our clients, it also contributes to other synergies”, says Lisa Vedin, Business Unit Manager for Region Middle, Sweden in AFRY’s Process Industries Division. “AFRY’s subsidiary Efterklang supports SCA with noise issues and our environmental experts have supported them in studies and development of material for the permitting process,” Lisa continues.

Efterklang is part of the AFRY group and one of Europe’s largest and leading competence centres for advice, design and projects within acoustics, sound, and vibration.

Strategical efforts for future generations

“Our business is based on us contributing and developing our client’s business. This is the drive in all that we do. The process industry is facing some major challenges, with the global goal to mitigate climate change, to mention one. At AFRY this is a clear focus area and it is our obligation as a leading engineering and design company in the process industry. Therefore, it is very inspiring to be part of a project that is so important for the future as SCA’s investment in Obbola is”, says Lisa Vedin.

“We have collaborated with AFRY before and they have been part of the feasibility study for the Obbola rebuild. The project started in the Autumn of 2019 and it is progressing according to plan. When we finalize the project in 2023, we will have the most advanced kraftliner board-machine on the market



“The project is sustainable in more than one perspective”, says Per Strand, Production Manager at SCA’s mill in Obbola.



Peter Kaarle and Lisa Vedin are happy to contribute to SCA’s the new future facility in Obbola.

together with our access to high-quality northern wood-fibres – and an efficient and stable wood supply. This is sustainable in more than one perspective”, says Per Strand, Project Director for project Expansion Obbola and acting Production manager at SCA’s mill in Obbola in Sweden.

“The development is at a high pace now and we cannot wait. It is clear to us that SCA’s strategical efforts enables a future for generations to come. This is close to heart for us at AFRY”, Lisa Vedin concludes.