

July 10, 2025

Zeon begins construction of a bench-scale facility for highly efficient butadiene production from plant-based ethanol, aiming for operation in 2026 and commercialization in 2034

Zeon Corporation

Zeon Corporation (Zeon; head office: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; President and CEO: Tetsuya Toyoshima) has started construction of a bench-scale facility at its Tokuyama Plant (Shunan City, Yamaguchi Prefecture) to demonstrate technology for the highly efficient production of butadiene from ethanol derived from plant-based and other sustainable materials. The facility is scheduled to begin operating in 2026, after which Zeon will use the butadiene produced at the facility to make prototype polybutadiene rubber (butadiene rubber) and advance efforts toward the social implementation of the technology.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held at the site on July 10, 2025, with guests from Yamaguchi Prefecture and Shunan City and representatives from the construction contractor and other related companies, along with Zeon officials including Chairman Kimiaki Tanaka and Tokuyama Plant Manager Akira Honma. A total of 33 people attended the event to pray for safety on the construction site.

This project is one of two R&D themes proposed by Zeon and The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd. (Yokohama Rubber; Chairman and CEO: Masataka Yamaishi) to advance the social implementation of technology for the highly efficient production of butadiene and isoprene from plant-based and other sustainable materials in the 2030s. Under this initiative, Zeon will produce butadiene rubber using butadiene made at the bench-scale facility, and Yokohama Rubber will use that rubber to develop prototype tires and conduct driving tests, collecting data to support a large-scale demonstration.

The two companies intend to establish the necessary technology for social implementation by 2030 using a pilot plant serving as a continuous demonstration facility to support future commercialization, which is targeted for 2034.



Note: See related press release dated February 17, 2025:

[Zeon & Yokohama Rubber installing a bench facility for highly efficient production of butadiene from ethanol derived from plant-based materials](#)

This project is subsidized by the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO).

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