

Mexico's Etileno XXI polyethylene plant starts first output: Braskem-Idesa

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Braskem-Idesa has started producing polyethylene resins at its Etileno XXI complex in Veracruz state on Mexico's east coast, the company said in a statement late Wednesday.

"Braskem-Idesa's petrochemical complex has begun to produce polyethylene today, with the startup of one of its three production plants," it said.

The startup is the culmination of a project that was first conceived in 2008 and has a cost of \$5.2 billion. Braskem-Idesa is a joint venture between Brazil's Braskem (75%) and Mexico's Grupo Idesa (25%).

Etileno XXI polyethylene production is expected to begin with HDPE injection resin, the first resin produced, with blowmolding coming during the second set of startups. Low density PE production is expected to begin in the second half of April.

Ethane feeding of the cracker began on March 20 and the cracker started producing on-spec ethylene March 26, Braskem-Idesa spokeswoman Yeraseth Bello said.

Mexico's Pemex won the bid in 2010 to provide ethane feedstock on a 20- year contract for the complex.

Etileno XXI will focus on meeting Mexico's growing PE demand, with remaining output available for export, including to the US and South America.

Etileno XXI will be anchored by a 1 million mt/year ethylene capacity steam cracker and include 1 million mt/year of polyethylene capacity and will be the first new steam cracker built in North America in more than a decade.