

EU Innovation Fund awards €13.3 million grant to C₁'s METHANOL.ONE first-of-a-kind green methanol plant

- **METHANOL.ONE project by cleantech company C₁ is selected from 358 applications in the EU Innovation Fund, Europe's largest funding program for net-zero technologies**
- **The plant at the Leuna Chemical Park will produce 20 tons of green methanol per day in a commercial setup and avoid 318,000 tons of CO₂-equivalent in its first ten years**
- **METHANOL.ONE will demonstrate the full potential of C₁'s technology and serve as a lighthouse for future licensing customers – enabling C₁'s existing project pipeline of >3,000 tons per day capacity**

Berlin/Leuna, October 20, 2026 – C₁ Green Chemicals AG has been selected by the European Commission for funding from the EU Innovation Fund. C₁ will use the €13.3 million grant to build and operate METHANOL.ONE, the world's first industrial-scale demonstration plant for homogeneously catalyzed methanol, at the Chemical Park in Leuna, Germany. The plant converts biomethane into green methanol for use as low carbon fuel and is scheduled to start production in 2029.

Competition was fierce: the Innovation Fund's 2025 call attracted 358 applications requesting a total of €17.5 billion – around six times the available budget. In the Pilots topic, which is reserved for breakthrough technologies for deep decarbonisation, the Commission selected only 16 out of 79 projects.

"Being selected in Europe's most competitive program for net-zero technologies confirms that our technology is ready for the next step", says Christian Vollmann, CEO of C₁. "With METHANOL.ONE, we will demonstrate homogeneous catalysis in commercial operation at industrial scale - the foundation for the next generation of methanol production."

Convincing on maturity, innovation and climate impact

Independent experts assessed applications against criteria including project maturity, degree of innovation and greenhouse gas reduction potential. METHANOL.ONE stood out on all three:

- **Project maturity:** C₁'s technology has already proven itself in operation. Recently the "Leuna100" pilot plant achieved more than 120 days continuous operation without any catalyst refresh. METHANOL.ONE will be the first commercial project to demonstrate the full potential of the technology at industrial scale.
- **Innovation:** Instead of the more than 100-year-old heterogeneous catalysis, C₁ uses the world's first three-dimensionally scalable homogeneous catalysis to produce methanol. The ultra-selective process achieves higher conversion efficiency at significantly lower pressure and temperature and is more flexible regarding feedstocks.

- **CO₂ savings:** METHANOL.ONE is expected to avoid around 318,000 tons of CO₂-equivalent over its first ten years of operation, equal to taking approximately 11,000 combustion engine passenger cars off the road.

From pilot to commercial scale – in the birthplace of methanol

With a capacity of 20 tons per day, METHANOL.ONE takes C₁'s technology from pilot scale to continuous commercial operation. The plant is designed to demonstrate the full potential of the C₁ process and to serve as a lighthouse for the future licensing of the technology: memoranda of understanding (MoUs) for plants with a total capacity of more than 3,000 tons of methanol per day are already in place, underscoring the demand.

Julius von der Ohe, Head of Business Development at C₁: *“Project developers and methanol producers alike are looking for a proven route to cost-competitive green methanol at scale. METHANOL.ONE is the lighthouse for deploying our technology globally.”*

The Leuna site continues a long tradition: BASF built the world's first methanol plant in Leuna in 1923. Today, over a century later, C₁ starts the next chapter—launching a new technology curve in methanol production. It will unlock major markets, including aviation, shipping, road transport and chemicals, representing a combined market potential of over €500 billion.

“The EU grant is a strong signal to investors and customers. It bridges the deep-tech funding gap and accelerates our path to market for bankable green methanol production.”, explains Haik Mehmke, CFO of C₁ Green Chemicals AG.

About Green Methanol

Green methanol is key to defossilizing several hard-to-abate industries. In shipping, green methanol is the most tangible carbon-neutral fuel alternative to oil. It can also be processed into sustainable aviation fuel and replace oil, gas and coal as a non-fossil carbon source in the production of carbon-based products like adhesives, plastics, paints, insulation and coatings.

About C₁

C₁ develops new, climate-friendly chemical production processes by rethinking chemical reactions from the atomic level all the way up to the production scale. The chemical processes are designed with the help of quantum chemical simulations and implemented in proprietary production technologies. In doing so, the Berlin-based company develops and scales exclusively on the basis of renewable raw materials and energy. From the first steps in the development of a production process, all processes are designed to enable a closed carbon cycle. In this way, C₁ supports industry on its way to net-zero.

For more information, visit: <https://www.carbon.one/>

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