

PRESS RELEASE

Paris, February 23, 2011

Imerys makes binding offer and enters exclusive discussions with Rio Tinto for the acquisition of the Luzenac Talc Group

Imerys announces it has entered into exclusive negotiations with Rio Tinto and made a binding offer for the acquisition of 100% of the Luzenac Group, a leading supplier of talc, for an enterprise value of USD 340 million.

In line with its growth strategy, Imerys would enlarge its portfolio of activity with talc, a mineral for which the Group would become a significant player. This acquisition would allow Imerys to develop its activities, notably in polymers, paints, ceramics and paper.

With about 1,000 employees, Luzenac Group achieved gross sales of approximately USD 340 million in 2009, mainly in Europe and North America. With industrial operations in Europe (France, Italy, Spain, Austria, Belgium), North America (USA, Canada) and Asia (Australia, Japan), the Luzenac Group has high-quality reserves on these three continents. Imerys could extend this geographic presence leveraging its own worldwide footprint.

Execution of this acquisition remains subject to the completion of certain preliminary steps, in particular with respect to personnel representation bodies and to the approval by the relevant regulatory authorities. Its completion could become effective by midyear 2011.

The world leader in adding value to minerals, Imerys is active in 47 countries through more than 240 industrial and commercial sites. The Group achieved more than €3.3 billion in sales in 2010. Imerys develops solutions that improve its customers' product performance and manufacturing efficiency, thanks to minerals it mines and processes from reserves with rare qualities. The Group's products have a great many applications in everyday life, including construction, personal care, paper, paint, plastic, ceramics, telecommunications and beverage filtration. More comprehensive information about Imerys may be obtained from its website (www.imerys.com).

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