

# Space for Big Ideas

## The New Knapsack Offers Perfect Conditions for Sustainable Production

*The chemical industry has been represented on Knapsack Hill near Cologne since 1906 – and has undergone some changes since then. Now another site is available to investors there, right next to the existing chemical park. Yncoris has been marketing the site since September – and is deliberately focusing on sustainability.*

The 13-hectare site offers investors attractive conditions for sustainable production under the name “The New Knapsack—Space for Big Ideas”. The area is centrally located in the Rhineland, the economic heartland of the European Union (EU). Nearly 150 million people live within a radius of 500 km. This represents 30% of all consumers and 45% of the purchasing power in the EU. More than 230 chemical companies with a total of about 65,000 employees have settled in the region around Cologne.

“Our location in the middle of an industrial network of processing companies from almost all value chains, R&D facilities and a high potential of skilled workers gives investors access

to one of the most important sales markets for the chemical industry”, explains Pierre Kramer, Head of Site Development at Chemiepark Knapsack. The Ruhr metropolitan region is also less than an hour’s drive away. In the future, several hundred jobs could be created on the site.

### Strong Interest from Domestic and Foreign Investors

Even though there have not yet been any opportunities for interested parties to actually view the site and have personal face-to-face talks on what the economic situation of the companies will be like in future due to the pandemic, the interest is great.

“Companies have used the last one and a half years to get to grips with the topics of ‘Green Deal’ and sustainability,” says Kramer. Many are strategically realigning themselves, developing technical concepts and now seeing an opportunity to reposition themselves in key technologies such as the use of CO<sub>2</sub> as a material or industrial biotechnology.

Yncoris is therefore already in initial talks with companies in the fields of CO<sub>2</sub> utilization, plastics recycling, hydrogen production and battery production. The market in the field of electromobility is also growing, not just in terms of the production of batteries, but also in terms of the disposal of energy sources and reuse of valuable recyclables. The topic of “green manufacturing” plays a major role here.

“Politicians, but also many companies, are increasingly focusing on

sustainable chemistry, where production processes use renewable energies,” says Kramer. “Smart solutions are also increasingly coming to the fore in recycling, for example allowing old plastics to be recycled into equally high-quality plastics.” Kramer’s experience is that projects tend



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*Pierre Kramer,  
Head of Site Development at  
Chemiepark Knapsack*

to be smaller and strongly technology-driven. The needs of traditional chemical companies are also covered.

Companies whose production deals with recycling and sustainability can benefit from interesting subsidies. The federal government is supporting structural change in the Rhenish mining area with up to €14 billion. “This funding is also available to companies that are on the verge of commercializing their idea. We assist these companies in selecting and apply for these funds, because the topic is confusing and complex,” Kramer knows. There are also CAPEX and OPEX subsidies from the EU for particularly sustainable production concepts.

### Unique Opportunities

The New Knapsack has superb road and rail links due to its connection to the chemical park. The chemical park’s own public container terminal acts as a satellite to the Cologne-Eifeltor multimodal freight transport center as well as to the major terminal at the Port of Cologne-Niehl, 20 km away. All important supplier companies can be found in the neighborhood. The chemical park has an exceptionally good energy situation—even though prices are currently rising everywhere: three different energy suppliers alone, including EEW Energy from Waste, with whom Yncoris operates an RDF plant, pro-



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duce electricity and process steam here. “This enables us to offer comparatively favorable prices, flexible sales volumes and particularly high availability,” says Kramer. “This security is important and even essential in some cases for companies in the process industry.” Users also benefit from an efficient media supply, including compressed air, nitrogen and water, waste disposal and the strong regional pipeline system for raw materials and intermediate products at Chemiepark Knapsack.

### Extensive Support

To enable investors to concentrate fully on production, the operator has also developed a “plug and play concept” in which customers can not only access the entire infrastructure but also services from the franchise department, engineering and maintenance. The chemical park management advises its customers on the topics of safety, logistics and energy supply as well as permit management. Most companies at the site also use the experience of the industrial service provider for maintenance and servicing tasks. Yncoris has been looking after many plants for years.

The chemical park operator offers start-ups support for the upcoming large-scale implementation of their process if they are aiming to commercialize their idea and have already provided proof of concept on a laboratory scale. “Many aspects do not play a part on a laboratory scale, but they do influence a plant operator’s economic success,” says Kramer.

Anyone wanting to bring a process to production maturity that falls under the Federal Immission Control Act, or the Major Accidents Ordinance can especially benefit here from the experience of the chemical park operators. Kramer continues: “Because the requirements are complex, even established operators of large-scale plants use the support from our permit management.”

### In Close Contact with Authorities and the Public

Planning for the new site has been underway since 2016. During the complex development plan procedure, the company was in close contact with the city of Hürth and its residents. The development plan takes comprehensive compensatory measures for

the site into account and incorporates the issues of nature conservation and landscape management as well as soil and groundwater. “We are proud of the traditionally good unneighborly relationship at the site, our dedicated employees, the high safety standards and the constructive cooperation with authorities and public institutions,”

says Kramer. “We want to keep it that way in the future. Which is why it was important for us to also take these aspects into account accordingly.” The intensive and open dialogue with authorities and the public has often had a positive effect on how long projects have taken in the past—a real economic advantage for investors.

#### Contact:

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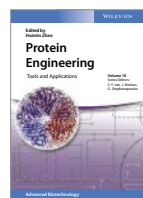
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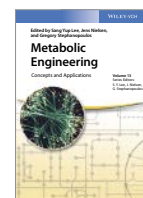
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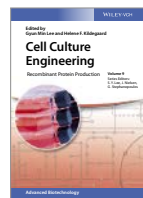
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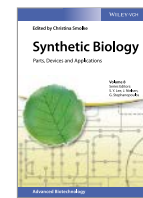
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