



## Biorenewable Insights: Bio-Based Polyamides

**Bio-Based Polyamides is one in a series of reports published as part of NexantECA's 2021 Biorenewable Insights program.**

### Overview

Several key monomers for renewable, bio-based polyamides (PA) are already commercial and available on the market. However, the largest volume monomers (adipic acid, HMDA, and caprolactam) are the feedstocks to the largest volume polyamides (PA 6 and PA 6,6 better known as Nylon™ 6 and Nylon™ 6,6) and have remained solely petroleum-derived. Recent developments by Genomatica indicate that they are nearing commercialization of one or more of these key monomers required for large-scale polyamides supplementation with biofeedstocks.

The monomers for polyamides production are derived from bio-renewable resources such as castor oil, palm kernel oil, starch, sugar, and tallow.

The primary environmental benefits of using bio-renewable resources for the production of chemicals are:

- Reduce CO<sub>2</sub> and other GHG emissions related to climate change
- Reducing other pollutant emissions from the supply, processing, and use of petroleum, natural gas, coal, and petrochemicals
- If biodegradable products are produced (some types of polyamides are (e.g., PA 4)), the risks to animals, especially marine and riparian, but also terrestrial, of plastics litter hazards is reduced.
- If durable products are produced and are used indefinitely or buried in landfill, this serves to remove carbon from the atmosphere.

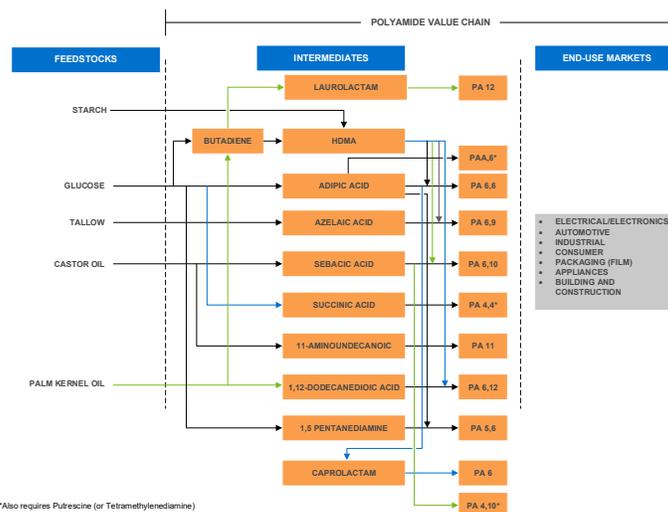
This report aims to answer the following strategic questions:

- What are the major existing technologies for bio-based PA production? Who are the key technology holders? What are some of the developing technologies?
- Are these existing and developing bio-based PA technologies competitive in terms of costs relative to fossil-based polymers?

### Technologies

This report covers biotechnologies for the production of the following PA intermediates:

- Adipic Acid
- Caprolactam
- Hexamethylene Diamine (HMDA)
- Azelaic Acid
- Sebacic Acid
- 1,5-pentamethylene diamine (1,5-PDA)
- 11-Aminoundecanoic Acid and PA 11 (Rislan™)
- Additionally, others, such as succinic acid, 1,12 dodecanedioic acid, other long chain diacids, and Lauro lactam are included.



### Process Economics

Estimates of overall competitiveness for various leading technologies are presented for four locations (US, Brazil, Western Europe, China). Regional pricing is set on a Q1 2021 basis.



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**Technology and Costs** comprises the Technoeconomics – Energy & Chemicals (TECH) program, the Biorenewable Insights program (BI), and the new Cost Curve Analysis. These programs provide comparative economics of different process routes and technologies in various geographic regions.

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