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Gladstone biorefinery pilot plant gets the go-ahead

Gladstone Region Mayor Matt Burnett today welcomed news US company Mercurius will be proceeding with their Gladstone pilot plant biorefinery.

The pilot plant will be the trial site for jet fuel and diesel production from agricultural and forestry waste.

Present when Mercurius [announced the pilot biorefinery in Brisbane 2018](#), Councillor Burnett said the Gladstone Region was proud to be recognised as a bio-futures hub.

“We have met with Mercurius many times, encouraging them to expand their energy portfolio to our region,” Councillor Burnett said.

“During a trade mission to San Diego in 2017, Mercurius made it clear they recognised Queensland was committed to developing a bio-fuels industry.

“The Gladstone Region is committed to developing and innovating within the energy sectors, whether it be hydrogen, LNG, bio-fuels, coal, solar or other forms for renewables.

Cr Burnett said projects such as this highlight the region’s strategic advantages and provide an opportunity to attract future projects.

Mercurius has developed cutting-edge, patented biotechnology to produce cost-effective drop-in bio-fuels and bio-chemicals from non-food feedstocks like sugarcane waste – all without directly producing a CO2 by-product.

“I’d also like to thank the Queensland Government, as without their support this investment may not have come to fruition.”

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said the state government had been at the forefront of developing a bio-industry in Queensland.

“New industries mean new jobs and our focus is clearly on jobs. That’s why we’re supporting companies like Mercurius,” Ms Palaszczuk said.

Member for Gladstone Glenn Butcher said Mercurius chose Queensland to develop and commercialise its technology due to the state’s willingness to support innovative projects.

“Over the longer term, based on the performance of the pilot and demonstration plants, the company plans to establish up to five commercial scale biorefineries across regional Queensland,” Mr Butcher said.

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“This project is great news for Gladstone in terms of high-value local jobs and investment, and the state government looks forward to continuing working with Mercurius as they move this project closer to commercialisation.”

Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning Cameron Dick said Mercurius’ world-leading biotechnology will bring Queensland a step closer to achieving a \$1 billion biofutures industry by 2026.

“The planned biorefinery pilot represents a huge vote of confidence in the biofutures credentials of Queensland, particularly in the Gladstone region,” Minister Dick said.

The pilot plant is supported through the Queensland Government’s \$150 million [Jobs and Regional Growth Fund](#), which helps to facilitate private sector projects that create regional employment and economic growth opportunities.

Through the state’s [Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowships](#) program, QUT also secured \$300,000 over three years to fund research on Mercurius’ biotechnology at the pilot plant.

Mercurius Managing Director Michael Vevera said the company continues to see the strong potential of regional Queensland as a leading global biorefinery location.

“Queensland is an ideal destination to further develop our patented REACH biotechnology,” Mr Vevera said.

“This is due to the abundance of feedstocks, coupled with the Queensland Government’s continued commitment to build a strong biofutures industry.”

During its three-month operational period, the pilot biorefinery will provide work for around 30 people.

Once the pilot is successfully delivered, Mercurius then plans to build a larger demonstration plant, which would scale up production of biofuels and bio-chemicals.