

Press release

Rouen, 23 March 2022

HAROPA PORT chooses sugar producer AKS for new industrial operations on the Grand-Couronne – Moulineaux site

HAROPA PORT has chosen the Dubai firm Al Khaleej Sugar (AKS) for the reoccupation of the former industrial site located in Grand-Couronne - Moulineaux. The goal of AKS is to set up one of the largest plants for the production of white sugar in Europe. This project further underpins the reindustrialisation dynamic in the region with support from central government, Rouen/Normandy Metropolis authority and Normandy Region.

In October 2020, HAROPA PORT issued a call for declarations of interest, followed in June 2021 by a call for projects with the aim of finding a new use for a **75-hectare site** located in **Grand-Couronne - Moulineaux**. This land, intended for industrial use and adjacent to TCMD, the container and sundry goods terminal, had been unoccupied since 2020 following the departure of the Renault Group.

Of the six contenders, the selection panel chose the project submitted by **AKS, a sugar producer based at the port of Jebel Ali in Dubai** (United Arab Emirates). **Al Khaleej Sugar (AKS)**, whose name means “Gulf Sugar”, was founded in 1992 to run the first sugar refinery based in the Persian Gulf. The mill belongs to the Emirati family group headed by Jamal Al Ghurair.

A project that contributes to the reindustrialisation of the Seine Axis

The AKS project involves the **construction of a plant to produce white sugar** from sugar beet. It will be one of the biggest facilities of its type currently operating on the European continent. Its location next to TCMD, the container and sundry goods terminal, will give it a major advantage in terms of **control of its logistical costs** for exports of sugar to the countries of the European Union and the Maghreb. **The multimodal platform** in Grand-Couronne - Moulineaux offers river, rail, sea and road connections.

The goals and international scope of the AKS project were crucial to its selection. This is in fact a project of agro-industrial type fully aligned with HAROPA PORT | Rouen’s historical sectors. The new AKS mill also matches HAROPA PORT’s desire to contribute to **Seine Axis reindustrialisation and regional development and to create a sustainable ecosystem comprising a biomass boiler system, a biomethanation plant and steam generation.**

The future sugar mill will produce between **650,000 and 850,000 tonnes a year** of white sugar. This represents between 7% and 9% of total imports into the geographical areas targeted by AKS. These are the **Maghreb, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom**. The planned investment is estimated at several hundreds of millions of euros. For HAROPA PORT, the new facility is likely to mean, once it is up and running, **export flows of between 30,000 and 37,000 TEU.**

A consensual sustainable development project for the region

The arrival of AKS would generate **300 direct and around a thousand indirect jobs**, thanks most notably to contracts signed with farmers to guarantee the availability of beet supplies. The construction of the production facility will in this way provide **new commercial outlets for agricultural production in Normandy**.

It is worth noting that the industrial process includes the construction of a biomass boiler burning wood waste to produce 30MW/h electrical power. This unit will operate year-round, and AKS will purchase the power from the selected supplier throughout the production season. Additionally, use will be made of the by-products from the sugar production process. A biomethanation plant will be set up to make biogas from beet waste. Dry beet pulp will be produced along with molasses for bioethanol production.

Discussions and studies will be getting under way in the coming weeks to firm up the details of the project. A presentation of the new facility has been scheduled by the product promoter for late June, early July 2022. The Grand-Couronne - Moulineaux platform was among the five "Turnkey Industrial Sites" in Normandy supported by central government as part of the "Economic Rebound Pack".

Normandy Region and **Rouen/Normandy Metropolis** have provided their support for the project, and the **Seine-Maritime Prefecture**, as it has for other structurally important projects for the local region, will assist the project promoter, who will need to obtain a number of permits before setting up on the site.

"The AKS project is aligned with our objectives for new industrial operations at the Seine Axis ports. The activity generated by the future sugar mill will lead to an extra 30,000 to 37,000 TEU heading for the Maghreb and the European Union. It is also a project that will create value-added for operators in the Rouen port community and offer new commercial outlets for agricultural production over an area as far as 150km from the city",

points out Stéphane Raison, CEO, Chair of HAROPA PORT Management Board

About HAROPA PORT

Since 1 June 2021, the ports of Le Havre, Rouen and Paris form the "major Seine Axis river and sea port authority". As the fifth largest north-European port, HAROPA PORT has connections to every continent based on an international maritime offering in the very first rank (calling at nearly 650 ports). It serves an extensive hinterland centred on the Seine Valley and the Paris region, together constituting France's biggest consumer catchment area. From Le Havre to Paris, the port complex can point 2.5m sq. m. of logistics warehousing currently in service and over 1m sq. m. of available warehousing space. Today in France, HAROPA PORT provides a transport and logistics system capable of proposing holistic and low-carbon, end-to-end service offerings. It generates annual maritime and river activity around 130m tonnes which represents approximately 160,000 jobs.

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