Polybutylene Terephthalate

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Abstract

Polybutylene terephthalate (PBT) is a thermoplastic polyester engineering resin with a combination of high strength, lightweight, and superior electrical properties, making it an attractive replacement for metals in engineering applications. In 2021, over 1.4 million metric tons of PBT were produced globally, which represents a 60% increase from 2011 volumes. Production capacity of PBT is concentrated in Northeast Asia and Western Europe with more recent PBT investments in Mainland China. PBT can be produced by the polycondensation of 1,4-butanediol with dimethyl terephthalate (DMT) or purified terephthalic acid (PTA). Our earlier evaluation of PBT production was based on DMT. However, since supplies of DMT have fallen significantly in recent years, all new PBT production plants are based on PTA.

In this review, the industry status of PBT is updated. A techno-economic evaluation of PBT production by polycondensation of 1,4-butanediol and PTA is presented. Lastly, the iPEP Navigator tool is attached to the electronic version of this review. The iPEP Navigator interactive module provides an economic snapshot for PBT production process, allowing the user to select and compare the process in different units and regions of interest.
Contents

1 Introduction 5
2 Summary 6
3 Industry 8
4 Technology 11
5 PBT production process 13
   Process description 13
   Section 100—Esterification section 20
   Section 200—Polycondensation section 21
   Section 300—THF recovery and purification section 21
   Process discussion 21
   Plant design 21
   Esterification 22
   Catalyst 22
   Vacuum system 22
   THF Generation 22
   THF recovery and purification 23
   Additives 23
   Product properties 23
   Yield 24
   Material of construction 24
   Environmental 24
   Cost estimate 25
   Capital costs 25
   Production costs 29
Appendix A—Cited references 31
Appendix B—Patents 33
Appendix C—Process flow diagrams 36

Tables

Table 2.1 Capital investment estimate 7
Table 2.2 Estimated production economics 7
Table 3.1 PBT Supply/demand—2021 9
Table 3.2 Global top ten PBAT producers—2021 10
Table 5.1 PBT production from PTA—Design bases 14
Table 5.2 PBT production process—Major stream flows 15
Table 5.3 PBT production process—Major equipment 17
Table 5.4 PBT production process—Utilities summary 20
Table 5.5 Summary of major waste streams 24
Table 5.6 Carbon dioxide emission 24
Table 5.7 PBT production process—Total capital investment 27
Table 5.8 PBT production process—Capital investment by section 28
Table 5.9 PBT production process—Production costs 29
Figures

Figure 2.1 PBT production block flow diagram  6
Figure 3.1 Demands for PBT by applications—2021  8
Figure 4.1 Chemical structure of polybutylene terephthalate (PBT)  11
Figure 4.2 PBT reaction steps using DMT  11
Figure 4.3 PBT reaction steps using PTA  12
Figure 4.4 THF formation  12

Appendix C Figures

Figure 5.1 (Sheet 1 of 4) Production of polybutylene terephthalate (PBT)  37
Figure 5.1 (Sheet 2 of 4) Production of polybutylene terephthalate (PBT)  38
Figure 5.1 (Sheet 3 of 4) Production of polybutylene terephthalate (PBT)  39
Figure 5.1 (Sheet 4 of 4) Production of polybutylene terephthalate (PBT)  40