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AFYREN strengthens management team with new hires

AFYREN, the flagship French biotech industry, designs and develops breakthrough innovation in green chemistry to promote a circular and low-carbon bioeconomy. The company is now preparing to build its first factory in the Grand-Est region.

AFYREN recently strengthened its team by hiring three new managers with a wealth of experience: Joachim Merziger, Ivana Champier and Caroline Pétigny, three senior executives to help the start-up reach the next level in its development.



Joachim Merziger, 52, appointed AFYREN's Chief Commercial Officer.

Joachim Merziger holds an engineering degree from RWTH Aachen University and has over twenty years of experience in the chemical industry.

This experience includes international management positions (commercial development, P&L management), mainly with Arkema group.

Between 1998 and 2005, Joachim handled several marketing and technical responsibilities for Elf Atochem in high-performance renewable polyamides for the automotive market.

With a background in several markets, including industrial and fine chemistry, cosmetics, human and animal nutrition, Joachim will be in charge of Business Development (Marketing and Sales). He will be responsible for commercializing the production of AFYREN NEOXY (Carling Saint-Avold).

"With over twenty-five years of experience in the chemical industry, including management and business development roles in an international environment, Joachim will help us accelerate our company's growth by structuring our entire sales team and through business development," says Nicolas Sordet, CEO of AFYREN.

“His customer centricity and capacity to listen will enable him to build strong, long-term business relationships by creating value with our partners, based on breakthrough technology.”



Ivana CHAMPIER, 44, appointed AFYREN NEOXY Project Director

A 1998 graduate of INSA Lyon, Ivana brings over twenty years of operational industrial experience in the management of major investment projects and purchasing.

She also has extensive experience in designing and implementing industrial strategies as a key element for company performance.

Ivana joined Solvay Group in 2002 as a project manager before joining Elkem Silicones Group in 2007, where she worked as an industrial projects manager and later as a purchasing manager for France.

In 2013, she was appointed Industrial Manager for Elkem Silicones Group, where she developed and implemented industrial strategy for the Elastomers and Core Intermediates Business Unit.

Her main responsibilities included deployment of industrial strategy, and managing investments and strategic development projects.

She has now been appointed AFYREN NEOXY Project Director and is in charge of the company's in charge of this industrial project in Carling, in the Grand Est region.

“Ivana brings strong industrial skills and experience to the leadership of this project, which will enable us to manage this project in the best possible conditions,” says Nicolas Sordet, CEO of AFYREN. “We are thrilled to have her join our team.”



Caroline Pétigny, 44, appointed CSR, Communications and Public Affairs Director at AFYREN.

Caroline Pétigny holds an engineering degree (ENSCMu) and PhD in organic chemistry (Université de Grenoble). She went on to earn a Master's degree in Sustainable Development at ESC La Rochelle.

She began her career as a researcher at the University of Nottingham (UK) and then in R&D in the pharmaceutical industry in France and Switzerland (with Sanofi-Aventis and then Polyphor).

In 2007, she joined BASF Group to lead the scientific relations for France. In 2013, BASF entrusted her with the task of designing and coordinating the group's CSR strategy for France. Over the past seven years, her responsibilities have included sustainable development issues as well as scientific public affairs, with a focus on nanotechnology and bioeconomy.

She has also chaired the CSR group of France Chimie and been a member of the board for the Association Chimie du Végétal and member of the Collège des Directeurs Développement Durable.

Caroline Pétigny has now joined AFYREN as the CSR, Communication and Public Affairs Director. **Nicolas SORDET, CEO of AFYREN, adds,** *“Her job involves supporting the company’s development by building a structured CSR vision in keeping with the company’s DNA and history, which we will be able to implement in our processes with clients and in our own practices.*

Caroline brings experience gained through her work with a large group to help us structure our CSR and communication policy. This is a key advantage. She will help us raise awareness among our partners and customers on the benefits we are creating through our processes.

“In addition to her strong desire to help us grow, her scientific skills add credibility and will be an asset in her new responsibilities.”

About AFYREN

AFYREN meets a growing need among businesses and industries to reduce the use of petroleum-based products in their production lines. It does this by producing biomolecules derived from non-food biomass, largely used in the sectors of cosmetics, flavours and fragrances, human and animal nutrition and fine chemicals. This production of renewable carbon, within a circular economy, is achieved through worldwide patented fermentation technology resulting from 10 years of research.

Founded in 2012 and directed by Nicolas Sordet and Jérémy Pessiot, AFYREN has 20 employees at its locations in Lyon, Clermont-Ferrand and its future factory in Carling. AFYREN won the 2030 Worldwide Innovation Challenge in the category “Plant protein and plant chemistry” and was named ambassador for French Tech – Green chemistry at COP21. AFYREN is supported in its development by the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and Grand-Est regions, and by Bpifrance, and the European Investment Bank.

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