
Question 39: Please summarize the current status of slurry hydrocracking technology commercialization.

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Slurry hydrocracking technology has been commercialized in China (VCC) and Italy (EST) in the past two to three years. Both facilities have demonstrated expected performance, including conversion and selectivity. The reliability of slurry hydrocracking is still an open question as these units have only been in operation for a short time. Additional VCC commercial units are scheduled for startup in the next 12 months.

Slurry hydrocracking seems to be progressing as the best option for residue upgrading due to its high conversion level and ability to process very heavy feedstocks. Reliability is expected to improve quickly with growing operational experience and an increasing number of commercial units. Slurry hydrocracking technology can create a near bottomless refinery with the ability to convert most refinery residues into high quality transportation fuels. The low pitch production of slurry hydrocracking is an obvious environmental advantage in comparison to other residue upgrading technologies, such as delayed coking and ebullated bed. Source and cost of hydrogen must be carefully evaluated as all residue upgrading technologies consume significant quantities of hydrogen.

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