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INTERNATIONAL





# Colombo under commissioning

Spain-headed supplier of dry milling and pelleting lines Prodesa has revealed that it has successfully completed a number of milestone performance tests required for the completion of the Colombo Energy 500 000 tonne per annum wood pellet plant.

**COLOMBO ENERGY** is a wholly owned US subsidiary of Navigator Company SA, formerly known as the Portucel Soporcel Group. The US\$119.4 million greenfield pellet plant is located in Greenwood, South Carolina (SC).

Prodesa is one of three main EPC contractors for the Colombo Energy project with Bruks Rockwood supplying the wood yard, receiving, chipping and reclaim systems and TSI supplying the dryer island. Plant construction began in April 2015 and in September 2016 the first pellets came off the press. In November it achieved Sustainable Biomass Partnership (SBP) certification for its pellet production and transport by rail to the Port of Wilmington, North Carolina.

## Successful performance

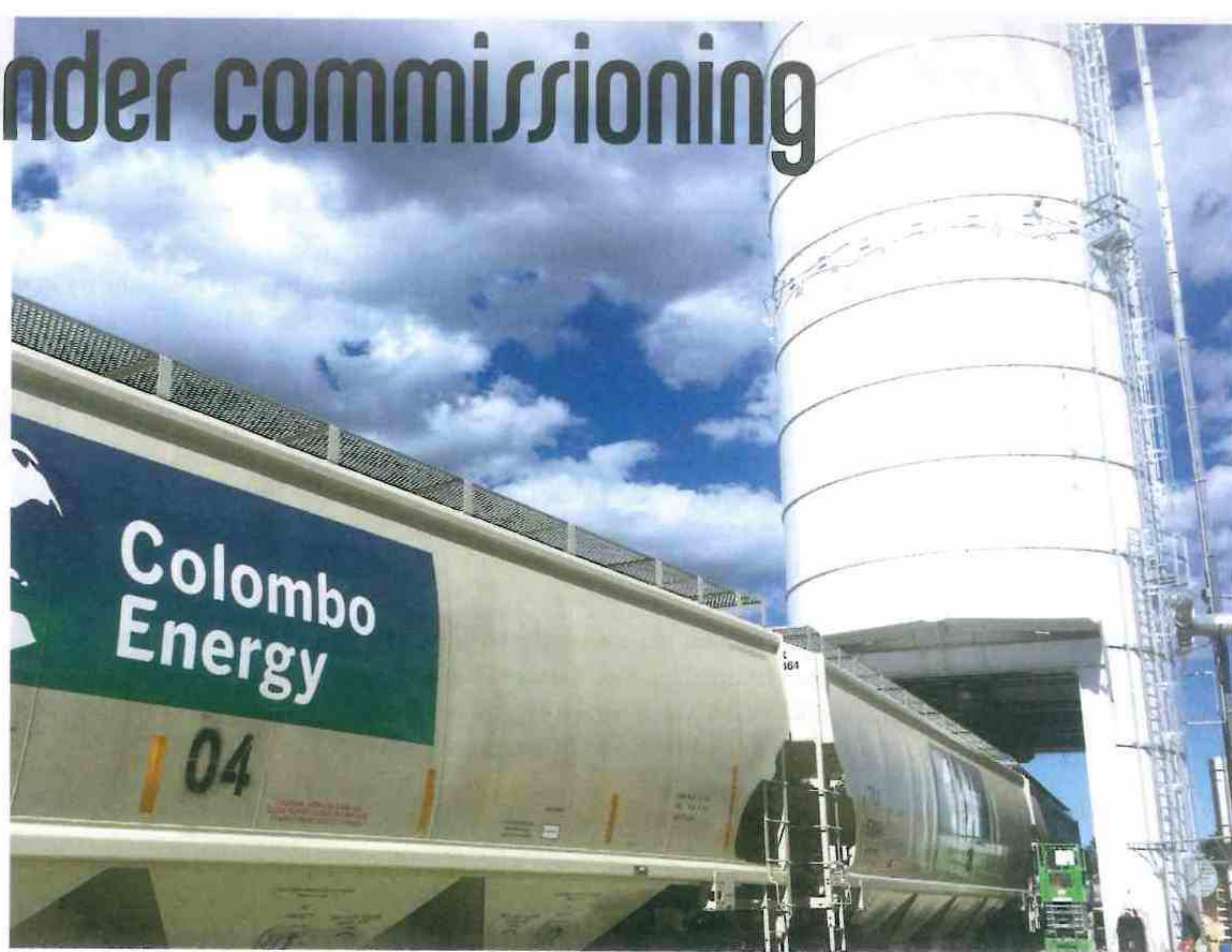
The first performance tests for the dry milling and pelleting lines were successfully completed. The purpose of the first performance test is to achieve 70 percent of nominal production capacity during 72 non-stop working hours. According to Jose Ignacio Pedrajas, CEO for Prodesa in North America, this test was not only passed successfully but with much better results, 95 percent was achieved.

For Prodesa it was a major undertaking being the first pellet plant project at this scale for the company but not the first involving Navigator.

– Back in 2007/2008 we supplied and installed pelleting equipment to a Portuguese pellet plant indirectly connected to Portucel. It is still operational. When Portucel began discussing the Greenwood project in 2012 we were invited in on these discussions and subsequently awarded the EPC, said Pedrajas.

## Experienced investor

– This project is by far the single largest wood pellet EPC contract that we have ever undertaken. We really pushed the boundaries on what we



(Above) Colombo Energy uses the Port of Wilmington, NC for its pellet export. Railcars bring the pellets to the port. (Left) For Prodesa the project with 15 Promill presses is the largest EPC undertaking for the company.

are able to achieve as a company. While it is important to us that all our projects are successful for the client and us, this project is critically so due to its sheer size, Pedrajas disclosed.

A key factor he said is that apart from being the investor, Navigator also undertook the project management of the build coordinating the EPC's. And though it is the first pellet plant for the group, it is a well-experienced industrial plant builder with a team dedicated for the purpose.

– Speaking for Prodesa I can say that from day one their professionalism and experience as project manager showed. Sure there have been bumps along the way but the attitude has always been problem solving oriented. As result the project has delivered on time and within the budget frame, said Jose Ignacio Pedrajas.

Colombo Energy is targeting both the industrial and residential markets in Europe and the US. It plans to obtain EN A1 Plus certification for the European residential market and Pellet Fuel Institute (PFI) certification for the US residential market.

Text: Alan Sherrard  
Photos: courtesy Prodesa  
PS3/5634/AS

