

PRESS RELEASE

Paris, April 30, 2008

1st Quarter 2008 Results

- Sales up + 3.9%, driven by growth in emerging countries
- Net current income per share up + 7.4%, despite a difficult environment (exchange rates, variable cost inflation)
- Integration of acquisitions made over the past 12 months

The Imerys Group announces its non-audited results for the 1st quarter of 2008. They will be commented on by CEO Gérard Buffière at the Ordinary and Extraordinary General Shareholders' Meeting to be held at 11:00a.m. on April 30, 2008 and webcast live on www.imerys.com.

CONSOLIDATED RESULTS (millions of euros)	1 st quarter 2008	1 st quarter 2007	% current change
Sales	881.8	849.1	+ 3.9%
Current operating income ⁽¹⁾	115.0	111.1	+ 3.6%
Net income from current operations, Group share ⁽²⁾	72.7	68.3	+ 6.4%
Net income, Group share	66.3	65.6	+ 1.1%
Net income from current operations per share ⁽²⁾	€1.16	€1.08	+ 7.4%

(1) Operating income before other operating revenue and expense.

(2) Group's share of net income before other operating revenue and expense, net.

Environment

In the 1st quarter of 2008, Imerys' markets showed contrasting trends but with slight overall growth, as the vitality of emerging countries more than offset the North American slowdown. The macroeconomic environment was again characterized by high inflation in some external cost factors, particularly energy and raw materials. In parallel, the US dollar depreciated further against the euro.

Highlights

The companies acquired since 2007 are contributing to the Group's business growth by increasing its presence on promising markets. The acquisition of Astron China, the leading Chinese producer of zircon products, was completed on February 5, 2008.

The transfer to Brazil of kaolin production capacities for paper coatings was completed and fixed cost savings are being achieved as expected. The economical optimization of the new industrial platform continues throughout the 2nd quarter. The upgrade of the Minerals for Filtration plant in Lompoc (California) is nearing completion with industrial start-up now planned for mid-year. The rollout of the brick plan in France, announced in June 2007, is progressing on schedule.



IMERYS
TRANSFORM TO PERFORM

Performance

Imerys improved its results in the 1st quarter of 2008.

- Sales rose + **3.9%** compared with the same period in 2007. The Group's organic growth remains firm at + **3.2% at comparable Group structure and exchange rates**. This is mainly due to the vitality of emerging economies, which now account for 21% of the Group's sales (compared with 17% in the 1st quarter of 2007);
- Current operating income increased + **3.6%**, i.e. + **6.1% at comparable Group structure and exchange rates**, thanks to price increase and improvement in the product mix, offsetting the rise in some variable costs, and to fixed cost savings resulting from the industrial plans launched in 2007;
- Net income from current operations grew + **6.4%**, i.e. + **7.4%** per share.

CEO Gérard Buffière commented, *"The 1st quarter is favorable for the Group. In an environment marked by factors such as high inflation in our variable costs and significant adverse currency fluctuations, we kept up our performance. Price rises for our products offset the impact of that inflation; our industrial plans delivered their first results and will have their full effect in the 2nd half; the acquisitions made since 2007 are gradually being integrated into our business portfolio, enabling us to benefit more from the vitality of emerging economies. In this period of great macroeconomic uncertainty, Imerys has the strengths and robustness needed to continue its development."*

Sales up + 3.9%, i.e. + 3.2% at comparable Group structure and exchange rates

First-quarter sales in 2008 totaled €881.8 million, a 3.9% increase from the same period in 2007. This rise takes into account:

- Changes in Group structure for + €43.5 million (+ 5.1%), which includes the positive contribution (+ €5.4 million) of the acquisitions made since 2007 and the impact of divestments (- 9.9 million);
- The adverse effect of exchange rates for - €37.9 million (- 4.4%), reflecting the dollar's further depreciation against the euro (- 14.3% compared with 1st quarter 2007).

At comparable Group structure and exchange rates, sales growth remained firm at + 3.2% compared with the 1st quarter of 2007. This increase results from an improved price/mix component (+ €30.8 million, i.e. + 3.6% vs. 1st quarter 2007). Sales volumes were virtually stable (- 0.4%) over the period as business softened in some sectors in March.

As regards geographic trends, sales rose sharply in emerging countries⁽¹⁾ (+ 26%) thanks to the contribution of the acquisitions made in 2007 and continued firm organic growth. At 21% of the Group's sales, emerging economies now account for a greater share than North America (18%, impacted by the significantly weaker US dollar). In Western Europe, the Group's sales improved slightly thanks to sound overall business in the region.

Sales evolved as follows by business group⁽²⁾.

(millions of euros)	1 st quarter 2008	1 st quarter 2007	Current change	Like-for-like ⁽³⁾
Sales (non audited) of which:	881.8	849.1	+ 3.9%	+ 3.2%
Minerals for Ceramics, Refractories, Abrasives & Foundry	288.1	253.6	+ 13.6%	+ 6.3%
Performance Minerals & Filtration	129.5	141.2	- 8.3%	- 1.9%
Pigments for Paper	199.9	204.6	- 2.3%	+ 3.9%
Materials & Monolithics	274.5	258.8	+ 6.1%	+ 3.0%
Holding Company & Eliminations	(10.2)	(9.1)	n.s.	n.s.

(3) At comparable Group structure and exchange rates.

⁽¹⁾ Africa, Asia-Pacific (exc. Japan/Australia), Central and Latin America (inc. Mexico), Eastern Europe, Middle East.

⁽²⁾ New organization set up on February 13, 2008.

⁽³⁾ At comparable Group structure and exchange rates.

Minerals for Ceramics, Refractories, Abrasives & Foundry *(32% of consolidated sales)*

Minerals for Refractories markets benefited from dynamic steel, aluminum and glass sectors in the vast majority of geographic zones. Sales were also driven by the gradual replacement of less available and more expensive Chinese raw materials by the Group's products. Fused Minerals markets, mainly driven by demand for industrial equipment, improved in both Europe and North America. The Ceramics market, however, was still affected by the crisis of the construction sector in North America. It also decreased in Europe because of a slowdown in new housing construction in some countries. Natural and synthetic graphite markets grew.

The acquisition of Astron China was completed on February 5, 2008 for a total amount of €115 million. With 5 zircon production plants in China, the company posted €110 million in sales for the financial year to June 30, 2007.

Sales, at €288.1 million for the 1st quarter of 2008, increased + 13.6% from the same period on 2007. This trend reflects:

- The substantial effect of changes in structure for + €31.4 million, i.e. + 12.4%, taking into account the contribution of the acquisitions⁽¹⁾ made since 2007, net of the divestment of products for ceramic craftsmen trading activities;
- Exchange rates impact (US dollar, British pound) of - €12.7 million, i.e. - 5.0%.

At comparable structure and exchange rates, therefore, sales grew + 6.3% over the period, thanks to improvement in the price/mix component and higher volumes.

Performance Minerals & Filtration *(14% of consolidated sales)*

During the 1st quarter of 2008, Performance Minerals markets (paint, plastic, adhesives, etc.) were stable in Europe with softer activity in March. The North American construction market continued to decline. Minerals for Filtration markets were stable overall.

In Performance Minerals, actions to adjust American production capacities to demand continue. Moreover, the industrial optimization plan for the Minerals for Filtration activity, particularly its Lompoc (California) plant will be completed in the 2nd quarter. The new facilities are being ramped up gradually and the full effect of the plan on operating performance is expected in the 3rd quarter.

Sales, at €129.5 million in the 1st quarter of 2008, fell - 8.3% compared with the 1st quarter of 2007. This decrease results from a foreign exchange impact of - €11.7 million (- 8.3%) and a + 1.9% Group structure effect⁽²⁾. At comparable structure and exchange rates, sales were slightly down (- 1.9%) over the quarter, with the improved price/mix component not completely offsetting the lower volumes recorded in North America.

Pigments for Paper *(23% of consolidated sales)*

The increase in global production of printing and writing paper is estimated at + 1.7% for the 1st quarter of 2008, on a par with trends in 2007. This growth is still driven by dynamic output in Asia-Pacific (+ 6.1%). North American and European markets showed a slight downturn.

The production transfer of kaolin for paper coatings between Great Britain and Brazil was completed during the 1st quarter of 2008, following the closure of British production in late 2007. The economic optimization of the new industrial platform continues in the 2nd quarter.

⁽¹⁾ Baotou (China, February 2007), UCM Group PLC (Great Britain, April 2007), Yilong and Xinlong (China, May 2007), ZAF (China, June 2007), Jumbo Mining (India, June 2007), Vatutinsky (Ukraine, July 2007), The Feldspar Corporation (United States, September 2007), Astron China (China, February 2008).

⁽²⁾ Perfiltra (Argentina, May 2007).

Sales, at €199.9 million in the 1st quarter of 2008, decreased - 2.3% from the same period in 2007. This drop results from the - €11.8 million impact of currency rates (- 5.8%). At comparable structure and exchange rates, sales rose + 3.9% over the period with positive trends in both the price/mix component and volumes.

Materials & Monolithics *(31% of consolidated sales)*

In Building Materials, single-family housing start-ups decreased slightly in France in the 1st quarter of 2008. Over the period, the roof tiles market was stable thanks to a firm renovation sector. Clay brick sales grew during the quarter as they continued to win market share from concrete blocks.

After an exceptional 2007, the Monolithic Refractories market was healthy in the 1st quarter of 2008 with firm business in Europe and brisk growth in emerging economies.

Rollout of the bricks plan is in progress, with capacity extensions in the Gironde-sur-Dropt and La Boissière du Doré (France) plants. External growth continues in 2008 with the acquisition on April 30 of Svenska Silikaverken A.B, a major Swedish producer of monolithic refractories. With two plants near Stockholm, SVAB recorded €13 million in sales in 2007. Furthermore, integration of ACE (India) is going to schedule.

At €274.5 million, the business group's **sales** rose + 6.1% in the 1st quarter of 2008 compared with the same period in 2007. This further growth includes the net effect of changes in structure for + €10.2 million (+ 3.9%), resulting from acquisitions⁽¹⁾ net of the divestment of clay roof tiles and bricks activities on the Iberian peninsula (August 2007). At comparable structure and exchange rates, sales increased + 3.0% from the 1st quarter of 2007, which was a high basis of comparison (up + 10.7% from 1st quarter 2006). This growth results from an improved price/mix component, which easily offset slightly lower volumes in Building Materials, due in particular to March having fewer business days in 2008 than in 2007.

OTHER INCOME STATEMENT ITEMS

+ 3.6% growth in current operating income, i.e. + 6.1% at comparable structure and exchange rates

Current operating income amounted to €115.0 million in the 1st quarter of 2008, up + 3.6% from the same period in 2007. This trend takes into account:

- Negative impact of exchange rates (- €7.2 million), mainly resulting from the depreciation of the US dollar against the euro;
- Net effect of changes in structure for +€4.3 million.

At comparable structure and exchange rates, current operating income therefore grew by + €6.8 million. The significant improvement in the price/mix component over the period offset the very high inflation in variable costs (mainly raw materials, logistics and energy). The first results of the restructuring programs carried out since 2006 were recorded during the period and fixed costs were well controlled overall. Volumes, however, had a slight negative effect.

The Group's operating margin was 13.0% (13.5% at comparable structure and exchange rates).

⁽¹⁾ B&B (South Africa, August 2007) and ACE (India, September 2007).

Net income from current operations: up + 6.4%

Net income from current operations totaled €72.7 million compared with €68.3 million in the 1st quarter of 2007. This trend takes the following items into account:

- Stable financial expense at - €15.9 million, with higher interest expense offset by gains on financial instruments;
- A tax charge of -€27.8 million (- €26.6 million in 1st quarter 2007), i.e. a stable taxation rate at 28.0%.

Net income from current operations per share rose + 7.4% to €1.16. The average weighted number of outstanding shares was down 0.9% to 62,811,142, compared with 63,413,447 in the 1st quarter of 2007, with the Group buying back 350,000 shares in January 2008, in particular.

Allowing for - €6.4 million in other operating income and expense, net, mainly with respect to the settlement of a dispute with one of the Group's suppliers, net income increased to €66.3 million, compared with €65.6 million in the 1st quarter of 2007.

Financial communication schedule

Thursday, July 31, 2008 1st half 2008 results

Tuesday, November 4, 2008 3rd quarter 2008 results

The world leader in adding value to minerals, Imerys is active in 47 countries through over 260 industrial and commercial sites. The Group achieved €3.4 billion in sales in 2007. Imerys mines and processes minerals from reserves with rare qualities in order to develop solutions that improve its customers' product performance and manufacturing efficiency. The Group's products have a great many applications in everyday life, including construction, personal care, paper, paint, plastic, ceramics, telecommunications and beverage filtration.

Analyst/Investor Relations:

Isabelle Biarnès – +33(0)1 49 55 63 91

Pascale Arnaud – +33(0)1 49 55 63 23

Press contacts:

Isabelle Biarnès – +33(0)1 49 55 63 91 /66 55

Matthieu Roquet-Montégon –
+33(0)6 16 92 80 65

1st quarter 2008 results (non-audited)

1. Consolidated sales breakdown

Change in consolidated sales	% current change	% structure effect	% change effect	% comparable change ⁽¹⁾
GROUP TOTAL	+ 3.9%	+ 5.1%	- 4.4%	+ 3.2%
Minerals for Ceramics, Refractories, Abrasives & Foundry	+ 13.6%	+ 12.4%	- 5.0%	+ 6.3%
Performance Minerals & Filtration	- 8.3%	+ 1.9%	- 8.3%	- 1.9%
Pigments for Paper	- 2.3%	- 0.4%	- 5.8%	+ 3.9%
Materials & Monolithics	+ 6.1%	+ 3.9%	- 0.9%	+ 3.0%

Quarterly change on comparable basis⁽¹⁾ 2008 vs. 2007	Q1 '08			
	+ 3.2%			
Reminder: 2007 vs. 2006	Q1 '07	Q2 '07	Q3 '07	Q4 '07
	+ 4.2%	+ 4.6%	+ 3.9%	+ 4.1%

Sales by business group	Q1 '08	Q1 '07
Minerals for Ceramics, Refractories, Abrasives & Foundry	32%	29%
Performance Minerals & Filtration	14%	16%
Pigments for Paper	23%	24%
Materials & Monolithics	31%	31%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Sales by geographic destination	Q1 '08	Q1 '07
Western Europe	56%	58%
- of which France	21%	21%
United States and Canada	18%	20%
Japan / Australia	5%	5%
Emerging countries	21%	17%
TOTAL	100%	100%

⁽¹⁾ Change at comparable Group structure and exchange rates.

2. Simplified income statement

(millions of euros)	Q1 '08	Q1 '07	Change
SALES	881.8	849.1	+ 3.9%
CURRENT OPERATING INCOME	115.0	111.1	+ 3.6%
Financial income (expense)	(15.9)	(15.9)	
Current tax	(27.8)	(26.6)	
Minority interests	(0.6)	(0.4)	
Share of income of affiliates	1.9	0.2	
NET INCOME FROM CURRENT OPERATIONS⁽²⁾	72.7	68.3	+ 6.4%
Other operating income and expense, net	(6.4)	(2.7)	
NET INCOME⁽²⁾	66.3	65.6	+ 1.1%

3. Sales by geography

(breakdown by the Group's historical distribution)

Sales by geographic destination	Q1 '08	Q1 '07
Europe	62%	62%
- of which France	21%	21%
North America	19%	22%
Other	19%	16%
TOTAL	100%	100%

⁽²⁾ Group share.