

Technology

Ex-Arsenal Star Flamini Takes CEO Role at Own Chemical Startup



Matthieu Flamini *Photographer: Chris Ratcliffe/Bloomberg*

By Ivan Levingston

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Mathieu Flamini, a former top European football player, is taking up the position of chief executive officer at the sustainable chemicals startup he co-founded.

Flamini, who spent nearly two decades playing midfield for top teams such as AC Milan and Arsenal FC, will take up the new role at GFBiochemicals, according to a statement Thursday.

Alongside the appointment, the company said it had raised 15 million euros (\$15.8 million) in a Series A funding round led by Sofinnova Partners with participation from Sparta Capital.

The new funding will be used to develop partnerships, invest in research, develop intellectual property, build a production facility and hiring, Flamini said in an interview.

“What we’re trying to achieve here is to tackle the chemical pollution,” Flamini said. “This investment is a first step of a major journey which will also move in the direction of developing key partnerships and agreements with large producers of household and industrial goods.”

GFBiochemicals, launched in 2008, provides companies with solvents derived from the levulinic molecule that the company says are a greener alternative to petrochemical-based products.

Regulators including the European Union have begun to focus on the role of chemical pollution, and Flamini said that regulatory pressure is accelerating change in the chemical industry. About 50 people work with GFBiochemicals, Flamini added.

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