

SYNTHETIC RUBBER COMMITTEE

Industry Profile

Malaysia is currently the world's ninth largest consumer of all rubber, following China, USA, Japan, and the fifth largest consumer of natural rubber behind China, the USA, and Japan. Malaysia is a global player in the export of high quality, competitively priced rubber and rubber products to the international market.

Consumption

Malaysia's Rubber Consumption by Type (Tonnes)

Year	Natural Rubber		Synthetic Rubber		Total Rubber (NR and SR)			Reclaimed and Compounded Rubber (tonnes)
	Tonnes	% of World	Tonnes	% of World	Tonnes	NR:SR	% of World	
						Ratio		
2000	363,715	4.99	55,608	0.51	419,323	86.7:13.3	2.3	n.a
2001	400,888	5.46	57,699	0.56	458,587	87.4:12.6	2.6	n.a
2002	407,884	5.35	63,150	0.59	471,034	86.6:13.4	2.6	n.a
2003	421,781	5.47	66,452	0.58	488,233	86.4:13.6	2.5	n.a
2004	402,769	4.88	84,236	0.73	487,005	82.7:17.3	2.5	11,316
2005	386,472	4.42	96,417	0.81	482,889	80.0:20.0	2.4	11,693
2006	383,324	4.11	112,385	0.9	495,709	77.1:22.9	2.3	23,125
2007	450,246	4.56	129,002	0.98	579,248	77.6:22.4	2.5	38,305
2008	468,894	4.82	134,297	1.07	603,191	77.1:22.9	3.6	43,205
2009	468,669	4.91	126,376	1.06	595,045	78.8:21.2	2.8	32,110
2010	457,919	4.29	185,077	1.34	642,996	71.2:28.8	2.6	31,768

[Source: Malaysia Department of Statistics, International Rubber Study Group]

Due to the large quantity of planted rubber trees in Malaysia, the consumption of synthetic rubber (which is a petrochemical-based extraction) lags behind the consumption of natural rubber. This phenomenon happens as there are fewer producers of synthetic rubber in Malaysia. However, the consumption of synthetic rubber is increasing year by year due to the research and developments done by the related organisation in promoting and enhancing the usefulness of synthetic rubber in the market.

Producers in the Market

Since the synthetic rubber market is small in Malaysia, there are only 2 major producers which are Synthomer and Revertex. Synthomer is a major producer of styrene-butadiene (SBR) and acrylonitrile-butadiene (nitrile) latex, with around 50 years of experience and a particular strength in specialty applications. Synthomer is also a global leader in nitrile latex for dipped gloves as well as in SBR latex for construction. Their main plant for nitrile latex, and the largest of its kind in the world, is located at Kluang, Malaysia.

Future Outlook

The synthetic rubber is excellent for certain purposes, but it is not yet as satisfactory as natural rubber for general purposes, such as tyres. Efforts have been made to improve efficiency, productivity, and new product development in the downstream activities to produce high value-added and high-technology rubber products such as for engineering, construction, and marine applications. R&D is also required to comply with stringent standards and regulations imposed by export markets, particularly in the EU.