

# **Global Methanol Market Outlook to 2027**

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## **Abstracts**

Methanol is a colorless, fairly volatile, flammable, and poisonous liquid and the simplest compound in the long series of organic compounds known as alcohols. Thousands of everyday products use methanol as an energy resource. Pure methanol is an important compound used in the chemical synthesis of a variety of products ranging from dyestuffs, perfumes, resins to pharmaceuticals. The methanol industry spans throughout the world, with over 90 methanol plants with a production capacity of more than 110 million metric tons. Every day almost 200,000 tons of methanol is used as either transportation fluid or chemical feedstock.

According to BlueQuark Research & Consulting, the global Methanol market is expected to witness a considerable growth rate during the forecast period. The major factors responsible for the growth of the global methanol market are the increasing usage of methanol as an alternative fuel in China, the constant growth of methanol/methanol derivatives in various end-user industries, positive government initiatives, and growing concerns of environmental issues.

Methanol (CH3OH) has a very high hydrogen to carbon ratio and a higher octane value than gasoline. Methanol requires less oxygen for combustion compared to gasoline, leading to less requirement of compression power and hence yielding less NOx or SOx per kilometer traveled. Moreover, methanol also generates lower carbon monoxide and benzene emissions relative to other fuels. Methanol is also a cost-friendly and safer alternative compared to conventional transportation fuels as it is cheaper to produce and has a lower risk of flammability. China leads the world in methanol usage as a fuel, with around 7% of the country's total transportation fuel being methanol. China has high levels of air pollution, which is responsible for a large number of premature deaths and many respiratory diseases. Revision of vehicle emission guidelines and switch to cleaner fuel alternatives such as methanol has significantly decreased pollution levels in China since it produces 44% less CO2 compared to diesel. Guizhou province in China



is a pioneer in utilizing methanol-fueled vehicles and has surpassed other regions of the country. Currently, there are more than 5,000 methanol-fueled taxis in Guizhou – a province that accounts for 75% of the total methanol vehicles in the country. Recently, the government has established 13 methanol filling stations in the province.

Methanol also works in combustion engines and is increasingly being deployed in motorsports. Since there is no requirement for expensive and heavy batteries, methanol offers a much cheaper alternative compared to electric trucks for long-haul transportation. The number of methanol-fueled vehicles reached more than one million in China in 2018. Figures are continuously rising due to constant support from the Chinese government in the form of subsidies and strategic planning. High emissions of sulfur due to the usage of conventional fuels are also increasing global warming, which is a growing concern for the entire world. To overcome this scenario, many environmental experts suggest carbon-neutral fuels (E-fuels that are a combination of carbon dioxide, water, and electricity) to produce methanol and dimethyl ether. To meet Chinese fuel demand and advance their domestic energy economy, methanol offers the ideal solution as it can be produced from a wide variety of available feedstocks, which includes coal, natural gas, and biomass. E-fuels store and transport liquid electricity to fuel electric vehicles, marine vessels, trains, drones and generate stationary, portable, and back-up power. E-fuels produced by carbon dioxide recycling would reduce CO2 emissions by 98% that solves the problem of global warming, and leading to a sustainable energy ecosystem.

China is the world's largest market for methanol. Many cities in China have adopted aggressive policies to increase the number of methanol-fueled vehicles on the road. Southwest China's Guizhou province has launched 10,000 methanol vehicles by the end of the year 2019, among which 7,000 are running in Guiyang. In 2018, the Methanol Economy initiative was launched by NITI Aayog in India with the aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by converting Indian coal reserves and municipal solid waste into methanol, moving away from import reliance at the same time creating new jobs by setting up Methanol Production Plants. Bureau of Indian Standards has notified 20% DME blending with LPG, and notification for M-15, M-85, M-100 blends have been issued by the Ministry of Road, Transport, and Highways.

The global methanol market is segmented on the basis of feedstock, derivatives, and end-uses. The derivative segment is further segmented as formaldehyde, acetic acid, gasoline, methylamines, methyl methacrylate (MMA), alternative fuel, methyl-to-olefins (MTO), and methyl tert butyl ether(MTBE). Around two million metric ton of



formaldehyde is consumed globally every year. Resins are the most consumed derivative of formaldehyde.

Formaldehyde is a primary derivative of methanol and a highly versatile chemical compound that is used to manufacture a large variety of useful commercial chemicals. Formaldehyde is considered one of the world's most important industrial chemicals due to its low cost, high purity, and a vast number of end uses in wood products, plastics, coatings, textiles, herbicides, and many more.

Formaldehyde is extensively produced on an industrial scale worldwide. Asia accounts for almost half of the global production and consumption, followed by Europe and North America. Formaldehyde is currently the focus of a number of evaluations and consultations regarding risk management and appropriate restrictions in the European Union. Formaldehyde fumes are carcinogenic when used in high concentrations. Germany has strict regulations on the concentration of formaldehyde used indoor, which has to lead to a decline in the production of formaldehyde in the country till 2015. However, data from 2016 till the end of 2018 shows stable growth in production, and the same is likely to continue over the forecast period. Under the Indian Methanol Economy program, five methanol plants based on high ash coal, five DME plants, and one natural gas-based methanol production plant with a total production of 20 MMT/ annum in a joint venture with Israel are planned to be set up in India. Thermax Ltd. has successfully developed a 5 KW methanol-based reformer on a Direct Methanol Fuel Cell (DMFC). This module is being tested to replace DG sets in mobile towers.

On the basis of geography, the global methanol market is segmented into North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific, South America, and Middle East & Africa. Asia-Pacific is expected to be the most prominent market region due to the continuous increase in air pollution in the region. India is a growing methanol market with ongoing favorable government initiatives such as Methanol Economy Plan by NITI Aayog. India is aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and converting coal reserves and municipal solid waste into methanol leading to independence from import while creating new jobs by setting up Methanol Production Plants.

In recent years, China has become the largest methanol producer globally, supported by continuous production and the improvement of the level of equipment construction. Considering the environment with more coal and less gas, domestic methanol production with coal accounts for about 70%, and this contribution is increasing with the increasing future coal head methanol production capacity. The new COVID-19 epidemic has caused a weak supply and demand for methanol. The downstream of methanol is



highly dependent on the epidemic situation. With the current controlled situation of the epidemic in the country, supply and demand for methanol are expected to improve gradually. In the recent years, the steady increase in the Chinese Methanol production capacity, with the industry technology upgrades and equipment level, owing to the continuous new downstream products and the warming market prices, there is a remarkable trend in the large-scale new installation with 1 and 1.08 million tons/grade projects at every turn.

China has the world's most significant number of vehicles, and the country leads in energy consumption. Energy security and air pollution are the driving forces for the Chinese government to develop methanol-fueled vehicles. This is the first policy that was endorsed by all the critical government agencies. In 2019, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the Ministry of Science and Technology, and other eight ministries in the country jointly issued the 'Guiding Opinions on the Application of Methanol Vehicles in Some Areas' to encourage auto manufacturers to raise methanol vehicle production, improve methanol fuel technologies, and develop new vehicles such as methanol commercial vehicles. In April 2019, Geely automobiles, a local automotive company, launched the world's first pure methanol heavy truck, which runs on M100 clean methanol fuel and easily meets China's VI emission standard.

China has a continually growing construction industry with the most significant new construction market in the world. Chinese cities have a tremendous rise in home and office remodeling rates. The massive flow of government investments in China is expected to help in expanding its existing infrastructure and in building new projects. In 2016, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development allocated USD 124.4 billion for the renovation of housing in the country. The Chinese government is driving people towards urbanization by renovating shanty town residences, which are positively impacting the market of formaldehyde in the country.

Over the last two decades, the Chinese formaldehyde industry has experienced unprecedented growth, with the country producing and consuming one-third of the world's formaldehyde. More than 65% of the Chinese formaldehyde output is used to produce resins that are mainly used in wood products. Increased demand for methanol in the domestic market has been fueled by methanol gasoline blending and dimethyl ether production, which combined account for 33% of the Chinese methanol demand, and it is expected to grow at more than 30% rate in the next few years. To meet the growing methanol demands of the country, China imported 7.66 million metric tons of methanol from January to September in 2019. Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela, Malaysia, and Indonesia were the top exporters to China in 2019. Most sellers prefer to



export methanol to the more lucrative Chinese market, where import volumes are 8 million mt/year compared to other countries in Southeast Asia.

Some of the key players in the market are Methanex Corporation, BASF SE, Atlantic Methanol Production Company LLC, Methanol Holding Trinidad Limited, and Zagros Petrochemical Company, among others.

In January 2020, the Atlantic Methanol Production Company, which runs one of Africa's largest methanol plant on Bioko Island in Equatorial Guinea, has decided to support the ongoing Year of Investment initiative and invest in the expansion and diversification of the country's downstream sector. The company has decided to work with the Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons to create a methanol-to-gasoline and derivatives unit to further monetize domestic gas produced in Equatorial Guinea.

In May 2019, Chinese chemicals corporation Henan Shuncheng Group signed an agreement with Icelandic technology developer Carbon Recycling International - CRI hf., to design a plant-based on CRI's technology that will produce low carbon intensity methanol in China. The agreement was signed at CRI's headquarters with the ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Iceland in attendance. The total cost of the project is estimated at around USD 90 million.

Our Global Methanol Market report provides deep insight into the current and future state of the Methanol Market across various regions. Also, the study comprehensively analyzes the Methanol Market by segments based on Feedstock (Natural Gas/Oil, Coal, and Others), By Derivative (Formaldehyde, Acetic Acid, Gasoline, Methylamines, Methyl Methacrylate (MMA), Alternative Fuels, Methanol-to-Olefins (MTO), Methyl Tert Butyl Ether), by end-use (Paints & Coatings, Construction, Pharmaceuticals, Automotive, Packaging, and Others), and by Geography (Asia Pacific, North America, Europe, South America, and Middle-East and Africa). The report examines the market drivers and restraints, along with the impact of Covid-19 are influencing the market growth in detail. The study covers & includes emerging market trends, market developments, market opportunities, market size, market analysis, market dynamics, and challenges in the industry. This report also covers extensively researched competitive landscape sections with profiles of major companies, including their market share and projects.



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