LyondellBasell Industries N.V.
Form 10-K
February 21, 2019
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UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549
Form 10-K
(Mark One)
þ ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934
For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2018
OR
¨ TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934
For the transition period from to
Commission file number: 001-34726
LyondellBasell Industries N.V.
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

The Netherlands	98-0646235
(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)	(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

1221 McKinney St., Suite 300 Houston, Texas USA 77010	4th Floor, One Vine Street London W1J0AH The United Kingdom	Delftseplein 27E 3013 AA Rotterdam The Netherlands

(Address of principal executive offices) (Zip Code)
(713) 309-7200 +44 (0) 207 220 2600 +31 (0)10 275 5500
(Registrant's telephone numbers, including area codes)
Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

Title of Each Class	Name of Each Exchange On Which Registered
Ordinary Shares, €0.04 Par Value	New York Stock Exchange

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: None
Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act. þ Yes ¨ No
Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act. ¨ Yes þ No
Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. þ Yes ¨ No
Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically every Interactive Data File required to be submitted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). þ Yes ¨ No
Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of the registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K. þ
Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):
Large accelerated filer þ Accelerated filer ¨

Non-accelerated filer ¨ Smaller reporting company¨
Emerging growth company¨

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act. ¨

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Act). ¨ Yes þ No

The aggregate market value of common stock held by non-affiliates of the registrant on June 29, 2018, the last business day of the registrant's most recently completed second fiscal quarter, based on the closing price on that date of $109.85, was $35.0 billion. For purposes of this disclosure, in addition to the registrant's executive officers and members of its Board of Directors, the registrant has included Access Industries, LLC and its affiliates as "affiliates."

The registrant had 371,156,998 shares outstanding at February 19, 2019 (excluding 29,053,282 treasury shares).

Documents incorporated by reference:

Portions of the Notice of the 2019 Annual Meeting of Shareholders and 2019 Proxy Statement, in connection with the Company's 2019 Annual Meeting of Shareholders (in Part III), as indicated herein.

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CAUTIONARY STATEMENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE "SAFE HARBOR" PROVISIONS OF THE PRIVATE SECURITIES LITIGATION REFORM ACT OF 1995

This report includes "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Exchange Act"). You can identify our forward-looking statements by the words "anticipate," "estimate," "believe," "continue," "could," "intend," "may," "plan," "potential," "predict "will," "expect," "objective," "projection," "forecast," "goal," "guidance," "outlook," "effort," "target" and similar expressions We based forward-looking statements on our current expectations, estimates and projections of our business and the industries in which we operate. We caution you that these statements are not guarantees of future performance. They involve assumptions about future events that, while made in good faith, may prove to be incorrect, and involve risks and uncertainties we cannot predict. Our actual outcomes and results may differ materially from what we have expressed or forecast in the forward-looking statements. Any differences could result from a variety of factors, including the following:

- the cost of raw materials represents a substantial portion of our operating expenses, and energy costs generally follow price trends of crude oil, natural gas liquids and/or natural gas; price volatility can significantly affect our results of operations and we may be unable to pass raw material and energy cost increases on to our customers due to the significant competition that we face, the commodity nature of our products and the time required to implement pricing changes;
- our operations in the United States ("U.S.") have benefited from low-cost natural gas and natural gas liquids; decreased availability of these materials (for example, from their export or regulations impacting hydraulic fracturing in the U.S.) could reduce the current benefits we receive;
- if crude oil prices fall materially, or decrease relative to U.S. natural gas prices, we would see less benefit from low-cost natural gas and natural gas liquids and it could have a negative effect on our results of operations;
- industry production capacities and operating rates may lead to periods of oversupply and low profitability; for example, substantial capacity expansions are underway in the U.S. olefins industry;
- we may face unplanned operating interruptions (including leaks, explosions, fires, weather-related incidents, mechanical failures, unscheduled downtime, supplier disruptions, labor shortages, strikes, work stoppages or other labor difficulties, transportation interruptions, spills and releases and other environmental incidents) at any of our facilities, which would negatively impact our operating results; for example, because the Houston refinery is our only refining operation, we would not have the ability to increase production elsewhere to mitigate the impact of any outage at that facility;
- changes in general economic, business, political and regulatory conditions in the countries or regions in which we operate could increase our costs, restrict our operations and reduce our operating results;
- execution of our organic growth plans may be negatively affected by our ability to complete projects on time and on budget;
- our growth depends on the opportunities available to acquire new businesses and assets and our ability to integrate them into our existing operations;
- uncertainties associated with worldwide economies could create reductions in demand and pricing, as well as increased counterparty risks, which could reduce liquidity or cause financial losses resulting from counterparty default;
- the negative outcome of any legal, tax, and environmental proceedings or changes in laws or regulations regarding legal, tax and environmental matters may increase our costs, reduce demand for our products, or otherwise limit our ability to achieve savings under current regulations;
- any loss or non-renewal of favorable tax treatment under tax agreements or tax treaties, or changes in tax laws, regulations or treaties, may substantially increase our tax liabilities;
- we may be required to reduce production or idle certain facilities because of the cyclical and volatile nature of the supply-demand balance in the chemical and refining industries, which would negatively affect our operating results;

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- we rely on continuing technological innovation, and an inability to protect our technology, or others' technological developments, could negatively impact our competitive position;
- we have significant international operations, and fluctuations in exchange rates, valuations of currencies and our possible inability to access cash from operations in certain jurisdictions on a tax-efficient basis, if at all, could negatively affect our liquidity and our results of operations;
- we are subject to the risks of doing business at a global level, including wars, terrorist activities, political and economic instability and disruptions and changes in governmental policies, which could cause increased expenses, decreased demand or prices for our products and/or disruptions in operations, all of which could reduce our operating results;
- if we are unable to comply with the terms of our credit facilities, indebtedness and other financing arrangements, those obligations could be accelerated, which we may not be able to repay; and
- we may be unable to incur additional indebtedness or obtain financing on terms that we deem acceptable, including for refinancing of our current obligations; higher interest rates and costs of financing would increase our expenses.

Any of these factors, or a combination of these factors, could materially affect our future results of operations and the ultimate accuracy of the forward-looking statements. Our management cautions against putting undue reliance on forward-looking statements or projecting any future results based on such statements or present or prior earnings levels.

All subsequent written and oral forward-looking statements attributable to us or any person acting on our behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the cautionary statements contained or referred to in this section and any other cautionary statements that may accompany such forward-looking statements. Except as otherwise required by applicable law, we disclaim any duty to update any forward-looking statements. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the "Risk Factors" section of this report on page 18.

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PART I

Items 1 and 2. Business and Properties

OVERVIEW

LyondellBasell Industries N.V. is a global, independent chemical company and was incorporated under Dutch law on October 15, 2009. Unless otherwise indicated, the "Company," "we," "our," "us" and "LyondellBasell" are used in this report t refer to the businesses of LyondellBasell Industries N.V. and its consolidated subsidiaries. We are one of the world's top independent chemical companies based on revenues.

We participate globally across the petrochemical value chain and are an industry leader in many of our product lines. Our chemicals businesses consist primarily of large processing plants that convert large volumes of liquid and gaseous hydrocarbon feedstocks into plastic resins and other chemicals. Our chemical products tend to be basic building blocks for other chemicals and plastics, while our plastic products are used in large volumes as well as smaller specialty applications. Our customers use our plastics and chemicals to manufacture a wide range of products that people use in their everyday lives including food packaging, home furnishings, automotive components, paints and coatings. Our refining business consists of our Houston refinery, which processes crude oil into refined products such as gasoline, diesel and jet fuel. We also develop and license chemical and polyolefin process technologies and manufacture and sell polyolefin catalysts.

Our financial performance is influenced by the supply and demand for our products, the cost and availability of feedstocks, global and regional production capacity, our operational efficiency and our ability to control costs. We have a strong operational focus and, as a producer of large volume commodities, continuously strive to differentiate ourselves through safe, reliable and low-cost operations in all our businesses. We purchase large quantities of natural gas, electricity and steam which we use as energy to fuel our facilities. We also purchase large quantities of natural gas liquids and crude oil derivatives which we use as feedstocks. During recent years the relatively low cost of natural gas-derived raw materials in the U.S. versus the global cost of crude oil-derived raw materials has had a significant positive influence on the profitability of our North American operations. While new facilities and increased supply has reduced the North American feedstock advantage, improved product supply and demand fundamentals in several businesses, notably global polyolefins products, have partially offset the decline.

SEGMENTS

We manage our operations through six operating segments. Our reportable segments are:

- Olefins and Polyolefins—Americas ("O&P–Americas"). Our O&P–Americas segment produces and markets olefins and co-products, polyethylene and polypropylene.
- Olefins and Polyolefins–Europe, Asia, International ("O&P–EAI"). Our O&P–EAI segment produces and markets olefins and co-products, polyethylene and polypropylene.
- Intermediates and Derivatives ("I&D"). Our I&D segment produces and markets propylene oxide and its derivatives, oxyfuels and related products and intermediate chemicals, such as styrene monomer, acetyls, ethylene oxide and ethylene glycol.
- Advanced Polymer Solutions ("APS"). Our APS segment produces and markets compounding and solutions, such as polypropylene compounds, engineered plastics, masterbatches, engineered composites, colors and powders, and advanced polymers, which includes Catalloy and polybutene-1.
- Refining. Our Refining segment refines heavy, high-sulfur crude oil and other crude oils of varied types and sources available on the U.S. Gulf Coast into refined products including gasoline and distillates.
- Technology. Our Technology segment develops and licenses chemical and polyolefin process technologies and manufactures and sells polyolefin catalysts.

Financial information about our business segments and geographical areas can be found in Note 22, Segment and Related Information, to the Consolidated Financial Statements. Information about the locations where we produce our primary products

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can be found under “Description of Properties.” No single customer accounted for 10% or more of our total revenues in 2018, 2017 and 2016.

Olefins and Polyolefins Segments Generally

We are one of the leading worldwide producers of olefins and polyethylene (“PE”) and we are the world’s second largest producer of polypropylene (“PP”). We manage our olefin and polyolefin business in two reportable segments, O&P–Americas and O&P–EAI.

Olefins & Co-products—Ethylene is the most significant petrochemical in terms of worldwide production volume and is the key building block for PE and many other chemicals and plastics. Ethylene is produced by steam cracking hydrocarbons such as ethane, propane, butane and naphtha. This production results in co-products such as aromatics and other olefins, including propylene and butadiene. Ethylene and its co-products are fundamental to many parts of the economy, including the production of consumer products, packaging, housing and automotive components and other durable and nondurable goods.

Polyolefins—Polyolefins such as PE and PP are polymers derived from olefins including ethylene and propylene. Polyolefins are the most widely used thermoplastics in the world and are found in applications and products that enhance the everyday quality of life. Our products are used in consumer, automotive and industrial applications ranging from food and beverage packaging to housewares and construction materials.

Polyethylene—We produce high density polyethylene (“HDPE”), low density polyethylene (“LDPE”) and linear low density polyethylene. PE sales accounted for approximately 19%, 21% and 24% of our total revenues in 2018, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

Polypropylene—We produce PP homopolymers and copolymers. PP sales accounted for approximately 15% of our total revenues in 2018 and 17% in each of 2017 and 2016.

Olefins and Polyolefins–Americas Segment

Overview

Our O&P–Americas segment produces and markets olefins and co-products, polyethylene and polypropylene.

Sales & Marketing / Customers

Most of the ethylene we produce is consumed internally as a raw material in the production of PE and other derivatives, with the balance sold to third party customers, primarily under multi-year contracts. In 2017 and 2018, we added a total of 230 million pounds of ethylene capacity at our facilities in North America.

We use all the propylene we produce in the production of PP, propylene oxide and other derivatives of those products. As a result, we also purchase propylene from third parties. In addition to purchases of propylene, we purchase ethylene for resale, when necessary, to satisfy customer demand above our own production levels. Volumes of any of these products purchased for resale can vary significantly from period to period and are typically most significant during extended outages of our own production, such as during planned maintenance. However, purchased volumes have not historically had a significant impact on profits, except to the extent that they replace lower-cost production.

Most of the ethylene and propylene production from our Channelview, Corpus Christi and La Porte, Texas facilities is shipped via a pipeline system, which has connections to numerous U.S. Gulf Coast consumers. This pipeline extends from Corpus Christi to Mont Belvieu, Texas. In addition, exchange agreements with other ethylene and co-products producers allow access to customers who are not directly connected to this pipeline system. Some ethylene is shipped by railcar from our Clinton, Iowa facility to our Morris, Illinois facility and some is shipped directly to customers. Propylene from Clinton and Morris is generally shipped by marine vessel, barge, railcar or truck.

Our PP and PE production is typically sold through our sales organization to an extensive base of established customers and distributors servicing both the domestic and export markets either under annual contracts or on a spot basis. We have sales

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offices in various locations in North America and our polyolefins are primarily transported in North America by railcar or truck. Export sales are primarily to customers in Latin America, with sales to Asia expected to increase in the coming years as global supply and demand balances shift. We also consume PP in our PP compounds business, which is managed worldwide by our APS segment.

Joint Venture Relationships

We participate in a joint venture in Mexico, which provides us with capacity for approximately 640 million pounds of PP production. The capacity is based on our percentage ownership of the joint venture's total capacity. We do not hold a majority interest in or have operational control of this joint venture.

Raw Materials

Raw material cost is the largest component of the total cost to produce ethylene and its co-products. The primary raw materials used in our Americas olefin facilities are natural gas liquids ("NGLs") and heavy liquids. Heavy liquids include crude oil-based naphtha and other refined products, as well as condensate, a very light crude oil resulting from natural gas production. NGLs include ethane, propane and butane. The use of heavy liquid raw materials results in the production of significant volumes of co-products such as propylene, butadiene and benzene, as well as gasoline blending components, while the use of NGLs results in the production of a smaller volume of co-products.

Our ability to pass on raw material price increases to our customers is dependent on market-driven demand for olefins and polyolefins. Sales prices for products sold in the spot market are determined by market forces. Our contract prices are influenced by product supply and demand conditions, spot prices, indices published in industry publications and, in some instances, cost recovery formulas.

We can manufacture olefins by utilizing a variety of feedstocks, including heavy liquids and NGLs. Technological advances for extracting shale-based oil and gas have led to an increased supply of NGLs, providing a cost advantage over heavy liquids, particularly in the U.S. A plant's flexibility to consume a wide range of raw materials generally provides an advantage over plants that are restricted in their processing capabilities. Our Americas' facilities can process significant quantities of either heavy liquids or NGLs. We estimate that in the U.S. we can produce up to approximately 90% of our total ethylene output using NGLs. Changes in the raw material feedstock mix utilized in the production process will result in variances in production capacities among products. We believe our raw material flexibility in the U.S. is a key advantage in our production of ethylene and its co-products.

Industry Dynamics / Competition

With respect to olefins and polyolefins, competition is based on price and, to a lesser extent, on product quality, product delivery, reliability of supply, product performance and customer service. Profitability is affected not only by supply and demand for olefins and polyolefins, but also by raw material costs and price competition among producers, which may intensify due to, among other things, the addition of new capacity. In general, demand is a function of worldwide demographic and economic growth, including the regional dynamics that underlie global growth trends.

We compete in North America with other large marketers and producers, including global chemical companies, chemical divisions of large oil companies and regional marketers and producers.

Based on published capacity data, we believe as of December 31, 2018 we were:

- the second largest producer of ethylene in North America, with ethylene capacity of 12.0 billion pounds per year;
- the third largest producer of PE in North America with 6.4 billion pounds per year of capacity; and
- the largest producer of PP in North America, with 4.0 billion pounds, including our share of our Mexican joint venture capacity and approximately 620 million pounds of Catalloy capacity reported within our Advanced Polymer Solutions segment.

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Olefins and Polyolefins–Europe, Asia, International Segment

Overview

Our O&P–EAI segment produces and markets olefins and co-products, polyethylene and polypropylene.

Sales & Marketing / Customers

Our ethylene production is primarily consumed internally as a raw material in the production of polyolefins, and we purchase additional ethylene as needed to meet our production needs. Our propylene production is used as a raw material in the production of PP and propylene oxide and derivatives of those products, and we regularly purchase propylene from third parties because our internal needs exceed our internal production.

With respect to PP and PE, our production is typically sold through our sales organization to an extensive base of established customers under annual contracts or on a spot basis and is also sold through distributors. Our polyolefins are primarily transported in Europe by railcar or truck.

Our regional sales offices are in various locations, including The Netherlands, Hong Kong, China, India, Australia and the United Arab Emirates. We also operate through a worldwide network of local sales and representative offices in Europe, Asia and Africa. Our joint ventures described below typically manage their domestic sales and marketing efforts independently, and we typically operate as their agent/distributor for all or a portion of their exports.

Joint Venture Relationships

We participate in several manufacturing joint ventures in Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Poland, Australia and South Korea. We do not hold majority interests in any of these joint ventures, nor do we have operational control. These ventures provide us with additional production capacity of approximately 2.4 billion pounds of PP, approximately 1.4 billion pounds of olefins, and approximately 0.9 billion pounds of PE. These capacities are based on our percentage ownership interest in the joint ventures' total capacities. We realize profits or losses from these ventures as income or loss on the equity basis of accounting.

We generally license our polyolefin process technologies and supply catalysts to our joint ventures through our Technology segment. Some of our joint ventures are able to source cost advantaged raw materials from their local shareholders.

Raw Materials

Raw material cost is the largest component of the total cost for the production of olefins and co-products. Historically, the primary raw material used in our European olefin facilities was naphtha; however, in recent years we increased our use of advantaged NGLs. For our Saudi Arabian joint venture facilities, locally sourced and cost advantaged NGLs, including ethane, propane and butane are used. The principal raw materials used in the production of polyolefins are propylene and ethylene. In Europe, we have the capacity to produce approximately 50% of the propylene requirements for our European PP production and all of the ethylene requirements for our European PE production. Propylene and ethylene requirements that are not produced internally are generally acquired pursuant to long-term contracts with third party suppliers or via spot purchases. Some of our joint ventures receive propylene and ethylene from their local shareholders under long-term contracts.

Our ability to pass through the increased cost of raw materials to customers is dependent on global market demand for olefins and polyolefins. In general, the pricing for purchases and sales of most products is determined by global market forces, including the impacts of foreign exchange relative to the pricing of the underlying naphtha raw materials, most of which are priced in U.S. dollars. There can be a lag between naphtha raw material price changes and contract product price changes that will cause volatility in our product margins.

Industry Dynamics / Competition

With respect to olefins and polyolefins, competition is based on price, product quality, product delivery, reliability of supply, product performance and customer service. We compete with regional and multinational chemical companies and

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divisions of large oil companies. The petrochemical market in the European Union ("EU") has been affected by the price volatility of naphtha, the primary feedstock for olefins in the region, as well as fluctuating demand as a result of changing European and global economic conditions.

Based on published capacity data and including our proportionate share of our joint ventures, we believe as of December 31, 2018 we were:

- the fifth largest producer of ethylene in Europe with an ethylene capacity of 4.3 billion pounds per year;
- the largest producer of PP in Europe with 5.8 billion pounds per year of capacity, including our share of our joint venture in Poland and approximately 580 million pounds of Catalloy capacity reported within our Advanced Polymer Solutions segment; and
- the largest producer of PE in Europe with 4.8 billion pounds per year of capacity, including our share of our joint venture in Poland.

Intermediates and Derivatives Segment

Overview

Our I&D segment produces and markets propylene oxide ("PO") and its derivatives, oxyfuels and related products, and intermediate chemicals such as styrene monomer ("SM"), acetyls, and ethylene oxides and derivatives.

PO and Derivatives—We produce PO through two distinct technologies, one of which yields tertiary butyl alcohol ("TBA") as the co-product and the other of which yields SM as the co-product. The two technologies are mutually exclusive with dedicated assets for manufacturing either PO/TBA or PO/SM. PO is an intermediate commodity chemical and is a precursor of polyols, propylene glycol, propylene glycol ethers and butanediol. PO and derivatives are used in a variety of durable and consumable items with key applications such as polyurethanes used for insulation, automotive/furniture cushioning, coatings, surfactants, synthetic resins and several other household usages.

Oxyfuels and Related Products—We produce two distinct ether-based oxyfuels, methyl tertiary butyl ether ("MTBE") and ethyl tertiary butyl ether ("ETBE"). These oxyfuels are produced by converting the TBA co-product of PO into isobutylene and reacting with methanol or ethanol to produce either MTBE or ETBE. Both are used as high-octane gasoline components that help gasoline burn cleaner and reduce automobile emissions. Other TBA derivatives, which we refer to as "C4 chemicals," are largely used to make synthetic rubber and other gasoline additives.

Intermediate Chemicals—We produce other commodity chemicals that utilize ethylene as a key component feedstock, including SM, acetyls and ethylene oxide derivatives. SM is utilized in various applications such as plastics, expandable polystyrene for packaging, foam cups and containers, insulation products and durables and engineering resins. Our acetyls products comprise methanol, glacial acetic acid ("GAA") and vinyl acetate monomer ("VAM"). Natural gas (methane) is the feedstock for methanol, some of which is converted to GAA, and a portion of the GAA is reacted with ethylene to create VAM. VAM is an intermediate chemical used in fabric or wood treatments, pigments, coatings, films and adhesives. Ethylene oxide is an intermediate chemical that is used to produce ethylene glycol, glycol ethers and other derivatives. Ethylene oxide and its derivatives are used in the production of polyester, antifreeze fluids, solvents and other chemical products.

Sales & Marketing / Customers

We sell our PO and derivatives through multi-year sales and processing agreements as well as spot sales. Some of our contract sales agreements have cost plus pricing terms. PO and derivatives are transported by barge, marine vessel, pipeline, railcar and tank truck.

We sell our oxyfuels and related products under market and cost-based sales agreements and in the spot market. Oxyfuels are transported by barge, marine vessel and tank truck and are used as octane blending components worldwide outside of the United States due to their blending characteristics and emission benefits. C4 chemicals, such as high-purity isobutylene, are

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sold to producers of synthetic rubber and other chemical products primarily in the United States and Europe, and are transported by railcar, tank truck, pipeline and marine shipments.

Intermediate chemicals are shipped by barge, marine vessel, pipeline, railcar and tank truck. SM is sold globally into regions such as North America, Europe, Asia, and South America export markets through spot sales and commercial contracts. Within acetyls, methanol is consumed internally to make GAA, used as a feedstock for oxyfuels and related products, and also sold directly into the merchant commercial market. GAA is converted with ethylene to produce VAM which is sold worldwide under multi-year commercial contracts and on a spot basis.

Sales of our PO and derivatives, oxyfuels and related products, and intermediate chemicals are made by our marketing and sales personnel, and also through distributors and independent agents in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the Asia Pacific region.

Joint Venture Relationships

We have two PO joint ventures with Covestro AG, one in the U.S. and one in Europe. We operate four of the U.S. PO production facilities for the U.S. PO joint venture. Covestro's interest represents ownership of an in-kind portion of the PO production of 1.5 billion pounds per year. We take, in-kind, the remaining PO production and all co-product production. The parties' rights in the joint venture are based on off-take volumes related to actual production of PO as opposed to ownership percentages. Covestro also has the right to 50% of the PO and SM production of our European PO joint venture. Our proportional production capacity provided through this venture is approximately 340 million pounds of PO and approximately 750 million pounds of SM. We do not share marketing or product sales with Covestro under either of these PO joint ventures.

We also have a joint venture manufacturing relationship in China. This venture provides us with additional production capacity of approximately 115 million pounds of PO. This capacity is based on our operational share of the joint venture's total capacity.

Raw Materials

The cost of raw materials is the largest component of total production cost for PO, its co-products and its derivatives. Propylene, isobutane or mixed butane, ethylene, and benzene are the primary raw materials used in the production of PO and its co-products. The market prices of these raw materials historically have been related to the price of crude oil, NGLs and natural gas, as well as supply and demand for the raw materials.

In the U.S., we obtain a large portion of our propylene, benzene and ethylene raw materials needed for the production of PO and its co-products from our O&P–Americas segment and to a lesser extent from third parties. Raw materials for the non-U.S. production of PO and its co-products are obtained from our O&P–EAI segment and from third parties. We consume a significant portion of our internally-produced PO in the production of PO derivatives.

The raw material requirements not sourced internally are purchased at market-based prices from numerous suppliers in the U.S. and Europe with which we have established contractual relationships, as well as in the spot market.

For the production of oxyfuels, we purchase our ethanol feedstock requirements from third parties, and obtain our methanol from both internal production and external sources. Carbon monoxide and methanol are the primary raw materials required for the production of GAA. We purchase carbon monoxide pursuant to a long-term contract with pricing primarily based on the cost of production. The methanol required for our downstream production of acetyls is internally sourced from a partnership and from our methanol plant at Channelview, Texas. Natural gas is the primary raw material required for the production of methanol.

In addition to ethylene, acetic acid is a primary raw material for the production of VAM. We obtain all our requirements for acetic acid and ethylene from our internal production. Historically, we have used a large percentage of our acetic acid production to produce VAM.

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Industry Dynamics / Competition

With respect to product competition, the market is influenced and based on a variety of factors, including product quality, price, reliability of supply, technical support, customer service and potential substitute materials. Profitability is affected by the worldwide level of demand along with price competition, which may intensify due to, among other things, new industry capacity and industry outages. Demand growth could be impacted by further development of alternative bio-based methodologies. Our major worldwide competitors include other multinational chemical and refining companies as well as some regional marketers and producers.

Based on published capacity data, excluding our partners' shares of joint venture capacity, we believe as of December 31, 2018 we were:

- the second largest producer of PO worldwide; and
- the second largest producer of oxyfuels worldwide.

Advanced Polymer Solutions Segment

Overview

We formed the APS segment following our acquisition of A. Schulman Inc. in August 2018. Our APS segment produces and markets compounding and solutions, such as polypropylene compounds, engineered plastics, masterbatches, engineered composites, colors and powders; and advanced polymers, which includes Catalloy and polybutene-1 polyolefin resins.

Compounding and Solutions—Our polypropylene compounds are produced from blends of polyolefins and additives and largely focused on automotive applications. Engineered plastics and engineered composites add value for more specialized high-performance applications used across a variety of industries. Masterbatches are compounds that provide differentiated properties when combined with commodity plastics used in packaging, agriculture, and durable goods applications. Specialty powders are largely used to mold toys, industrial tanks, and sporting goods such as kayaks. Performance colors provide powdered, pelletized and liquid color concentrates for the plastics industry.

Advanced Polymers—Catalloy and polybutene-1 are unique polymers that can be used within the APS segment for downstream compounding or can be sold as raw materials to third parties. Catalloy is a line of differentiated propylene-based polymers that add value in packaging applications and construction materials such as the white membranes used in the commercial roofing market. Polybutene-1 is used in both specialty piping and packaging applications.

Sales & Marketing / Customers

Our products are sold through our global sales organization to a broad base of established customers and distributors under contract or on a spot basis. These products are transported to our customers primarily by either truck or bulk rail.

Joint Venture Relationships

We participate in several manufacturing joint ventures in Australia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, Thailand, Indonesia and Argentina. We do not hold majority interests in any of these joint ventures, nor do we have operational control. These ventures provide us with additional production capacity of approximately 170 million pounds of PP compounds, approximately 20 million pounds of engineered composites, approximately 35 million pounds of specialty powders and approximately 25 million pounds of masterbatch solutions. These capacities are based on our percentage ownership interest in the joint ventures' total capacities.

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Raw Materials

The principal materials used in the production of our compounding and solutions products are polypropylene, polyethylene, polystyrene, nylon and titanium dioxide. Raw materials required for the production of our compounding and solutions products are obtained from our wholly owned or joint venture facilities and from a number of major plastic resin producers or other suppliers at market-based prices.

The principal raw materials used in the production of advanced polymers are ethylene, propylene and butene-1. Ethylene and propylene requirements that are not produced internally and externally-supplied butene-1 are acquired through long-term contracts with third party suppliers or via spot purchases.

Our ability to pass through the increased cost of raw materials to customers is dependent on global market demand. In general, the pricing for purchases and sales of most products is determined by global market forces.

Industry Dynamics / Competition

With respect to product competition, the market is influenced and based on a variety of factors, including price, product quality, product delivery, reliability of supply, product performance and customer service. We compete with regional and multinational marketers and producers of plastic resins and compounds.

Based on published capacity data and including our proportionate share of our joint ventures, we believe as of December 31, 2018 we were the largest global producer of polypropylene compounds.

Refining Segment

Overview

The primary products of our Refining segment are refined products made from heavy, high-sulfur crude oil and other crude oils of varied types and sources available on the U.S. Gulf Coast. These refined products include gasoline and other distillates.

Sales & Marketing / Customers

The Houston refinery’s products are primarily sold in bulk to other refiners, marketers, distributors and wholesalers at market-related prices. Most of the Houston refinery’s products are sold under contracts with a term of one year or less or are sold in the spot market. The Houston refinery’s products generally are transported to customers via pipelines and terminals owned and operated by other parties. The sales of refined products accounted for approximately 21%, 18% and 16% of our total revenues in 2018, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

Raw Materials

Our Houston refinery, which is located on the Houston Ship Channel in Houston, Texas, has a heavy, high-sulfur crude oil processing capacity of approximately 268,000 barrels per day on a calendar day basis (normal operating basis), or approximately 292,000 barrels per day on a stream day basis (maximum achievable over a 24-hour period). The Houston refinery is a full conversion refinery designed to refine heavy, high-sulfur crude oil. This crude oil is more viscous and dense than traditional crude oil and contains higher concentrations of sulfur and heavy metals, making it more difficult to refine into gasoline and other high-value fuel products. While heavy, high-sulfur crude oil has historically been less costly to purchase than light, low-sulfur crude oil, in recent years the price difference has narrowed. U.S. production is predominantly light sweet crude and much of the heavy crude has generally been imported from Canada, Venezuela and other global producers, which has at times been subject to supply disruptions. We purchase the crude oil used as a raw material for the Houston refinery on the open market on a spot basis and under a number of supply agreements with regional producers, generally with terms varying from one to two years.

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Industry Dynamics / Competition

Our refining competitors are major integrated oil companies, refineries owned or controlled by foreign governments and independent domestic refiners. Based on published data, as of January 2018, there were 135 operable crude oil refineries in the U.S., and total U.S. refinery capacity was approximately 18.6 million barrels per day. During 2018, the Houston refinery processed an average of approximately 231,000 barrels per day of heavy crude oil.

Our refining operations compete for the purchases of crude oil based on price and quality. Supply disruptions could impact the availability and pricing. We compete in gasoline and distillate markets as a bulk supplier of fungible products satisfying industry and government specifications. Competition is based on price and location.

The markets for fuel products tend to be volatile as well as cyclical as a result of the changing global economy and changing crude oil and refined product prices. Crude oil prices are impacted by worldwide political events, the economics of exploration and production and refined products demand. Prices and demand for fuel products are influenced by seasonal and short-term factors such as weather and driving patterns, as well as by longer term issues such as the economy, energy conservation and alternative fuels. Industry fuel products supply is dependent on short-term industry operating capabilities and on long-term refining capacity.

A crack spread is a benchmark indication of refining margins based on the processing of a specific type of crude oil into an assumed selection of major refined products. The Houston refinery generally tracks the Maya 2-1-1 crack spread, which represents the difference between the current month Gulf Coast price of two barrels of Maya crude oil as set by Petróleos Mexicanos (“Pemex”) and one barrel each of U.S. Gulf Coast Reformulated Gasoline Blendstock for Oxygen Blending (“RBOB”) Gasoline and of U.S. Gulf Coast Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel (“ULSD”). While these benchmark refining spreads are generally indicative of the level of profitability at the Houston refinery and similarly configured refineries, there are many other factors specific to each refinery and the industry in general, such as the value of refinery by-products, which influence operating results. Refinery by-products are products other than gasoline and distillates that represent about one-third of the total product volume, and include coke, sulfur, and lighter materials such as NGLs and crude olefins streams. The cost of Renewable Identification Numbers (“RINs”), which are renewable fuel credits mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (the “EPA”), can also affect profitability.

Technology Segment

Overview

Our Technology segment develops and licenses chemical and polyolefin process technologies and manufactures and sells polyolefin catalysts. We market our process technologies and our polyolefin catalysts to external customers and also use them in our own manufacturing operations. Approximately 25% of our catalyst sales are intercompany.

Our polyolefin process licenses are structured to provide a standard core technology, with individual customer needs met by adding customized modules that provide the required capabilities to produce the defined production grade slate and plant capacity. In addition to the basic license agreement, a range of services can also be provided, including project assistance, training, assistance in starting up the plant, and ongoing technical support after start-up. We may also offer marketing and sales services. In addition, licensees may continue to purchase polyolefin catalysts that are consumed in the production process, generally under long-term catalyst supply agreements with us.

Research and Development

Our research and development (“R&D”) activities are designed to improve our existing products and processes, and discover and commercialize new materials, catalysts and processes. These activities focus on product and application development, process development, catalyst development and fundamental polyolefin-focused research.

In 2018, 2017 and 2016, our R&D expenditures were $115 million, $106 million, and $99 million, respectively. A portion of these expenses are related to technical support and customer service and are allocated to the other business segments. In 2018, 2017 and 2016, approximately 45% of all R&D costs were allocated to business segments other than Technology.

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GENERAL

Intellectual Property

We maintain an extensive patent portfolio and continue to file new patent applications in the U.S. and other countries. As of December 31, 2018, we owned approximately 5,770 patents and patent applications worldwide. Our patents and trade secrets cover our processes, products and catalysts and are significant to our competitive position, particularly with regard to PO, intermediate chemicals, petrochemicals, polymers and our process technologies. We own globally registered and unregistered trademarks including marks for “LyondellBasell,” “Lyondell,” “Basell” and “Equistar.” While we believe that our intellectual property provides competitive advantages, we do not regard our businesses as being materially dependent upon any single patent, trade secret or trademark. Some of our heritage production capacity operates under licenses from third parties.

Environmental

Most of our operations are affected by national, state, regional and local environmental laws. Matters pertaining to the environment are discussed in Part I, Item 1A. Risk Factors; Part I, Item 3. Legal Proceedings; Part II, Item 7. Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations; and Notes 2 and 19 to the Consolidated Financial Statements.

We have made, and intend to continue to make, the expenditures necessary for compliance with applicable laws and regulations relating to environmental, health and safety matters. We incurred capital expenditures of $212 million in 2018 for health, safety and environmental compliance purposes and improvement programs, and estimate such expenditures to be approximately $230 million in each of 2019 and 2020.

While capital expenditures or operating costs for environmental compliance, including compliance with potential legislation and potential regulation related to climate change, cannot be predicted with certainty, we do not believe they will have a material effect on our competitive position.

While there can be no assurance that physical risks to our facilities and supply chain due to climate change will not occur in the future, we do not believe these risks are material in the near term.

Employee Relations

As of December 31, 2018, we employed approximately 19,450 full-time and part-time employees around the world. Of this total, 8,900 were located in North America and another 8,100 were located in Europe. The remainder of our employees are in other global locations.

As of December 31, 2018, approximately 900 of our employees in North America were represented by labor unions. The vast majority of our employees in Europe and South America are subject to staff council or works council coverage or collective bargaining agreements.

In addition to our own employees, we use the services of contractors in the routine conduct of our businesses.

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EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF THE REGISTRANT

Our executive officers as of February 1, 2019 were as follows:

Name and Age	Significant Experience
Bhavesh V. (“Bob”) Patel, 52	Chief Executive Officer since January 2015 and member of the Board of Directors since June 2018.
	Executive Vice President, Olefins and Polyolefins–EAI and Technology from October 2013 to January 2015.
	Senior Vice President, Olefins and Polyolefins–EAI and Technology from November 2010 to October 2013.
	Senior Vice President, Olefins and Polyolefins–Americas from March 2010 to June 2011.
Thomas Aebischer, 57	Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer since January 2016.
	Chief Financial Officer of LafargeHolcim from July 2015 to December 2015.
	Chief Financial Officer of Holcim Ltd. from January 2011 to June 2015.
Paul Augustowski, 58	Senior Vice President, Olefins & Polyolefins–Americas since January 2016.
	Vice President, Polymer Sales–Americas from January 2015 to January 2016.
	Director, Polypropylene and Catalloy–Americas from November 2011 to January 2015.
Darleen Caron, 54	Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer since October 2017.
	Executive Vice President of Global Human Resources and Member of The Office of The President at SNC Lavalin Group, Inc. from December 2010 to December 2015.
Daniel Coombs, 62	Executive Vice President, Global Manufacturing, Projects and Refining since October 2018.
	Executive Vice President, Global Manufacturing, Projects, Refining and Technology from February 2017 to October 2018.
	Executive Vice President, Global Olefins and Polyolefins, and Technology from January 2016 to February 2017.
	Executive Vice President, Intermediates and Derivatives from May 2015 to January 2016.
	Senior Vice President of Manufacturing for Chevron Phillips Chemical from December 2013 to May 2015.
	Senior Vice President for Specialties, Aromatics and Styrenics for Chevron Phillips Chemical from December 2011 to November 2013.

	Vice President of Corporate Planning and Development for Chevron Phillips Chemical from September 2011 to November 2011.
Massimo Covezzi, 61	Senior Vice President, Research and Development since January 2008.

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Name and Age	Significant Experience
	Senior Vice President, Strategic Planning and Transactions since March 2017.
Stephen Doktycz, 57	Corporate Director and Executive Project Lead at The Dow Chemical Company from 2013 to March 2017.
	Global Director, Corporate and Strategic Development at The Dow Chemical Company from 2011 to 2013.
	Vice President, Health, Safety, Environment and Security since February 2017.
Dale Friedrichs, 55	Site Manager of various facilities from January 1995 to February 2017.
	Executive Vice President, Advanced Polymer Solutions & Global Supply Chain since July 2018.
	Senior Vice President, Global Intermediates & Derivatives and Global Supply Chain from February 2017 to July 2018.
James Guilfoyle, 48	Senior Vice President, Global Intermediates and Derivatives from June 2015 to February 2017.
	Vice President of Global Propylene Oxide and Co-Products from March 2015 to May 2015.
	Director of Polymer Sales Americas from January 2012 to February 2015.
	Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer since March 2015.
Jeffrey Kaplan, 50	Deputy General Counsel from December 2009 to March 2015.
	Senior Vice President, Olefins & Polyolefins, Europe, Asia and International since February 2017.
Richard Roudeix, 56	Senior Vice President, Olefins & Polyolefins, Europe from March 2015 to February 2017.
	Director, Olefins Europe from May 2009 to March 2015.

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Description of Properties

Our principal manufacturing facilities as of December 31, 2018 are set forth below, and are identified by the principal segment or segments using the facility. All of the facilities are wholly owned, except as otherwise noted.

Location	Segment
Americas	
Bayport (Pasadena), Texas	I&D
Bayport (Pasadena), Texas[1]	I&D
Bayport (Pasadena), Texas	O&P–Americas
Channelview, Texas[2]	O&P–Americas
Channelview, Texas[1][2]	I&D
Chocolate Bayou, Texas	O&P–Americas
Clinton, Iowa	O&P–Americas
Corpus Christi, Texas	O&P–Americas
Edison, New Jersey	O&P–Americas
Houston, Texas	Refining
La Porte, Texas[3]	O&P–Americas
La Porte, Texas[3][4]	I&D
Lake Charles, Louisiana	O&P–Americas
Matagorda, Texas	O&P–Americas
Morris, Illinois	O&P–Americas
Tuscola, Illinois	O&P–Americas
Victoria, Texas†	O&P–Americas
Europe	
Berre l'Etang, France	O&P–EAI
Botlek, Rotterdam, The Netherlands†	I&D
Brindisi, Italy	O&P–EAI
Carrington, UK†	O&P–EAI
Ferrara, Italy	O&P–EAI
	Technology
Fos-sur-Mer, France†	I&D
Frankfurt, Germany†	O&P–EAI
	Technology
Knapsack, Germany†	O&P–EAI
Kerpen, Germany	APS
Ludwigshafen, Germany†	Technology
Maasvlakte, The Netherlands[5]	I&D
Moerdijk, The Netherlands†	APS
Münchsmünster, Germany	O&P–EAI
Tarragona, Spain[6]	O&P–EAI
	APS
Wesseling, Germany	O&P–EAI

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Location	Segment
Asia Pacific	
Geelong, Australia†	O&P–EAI

† The facility is located on leased land.

(1) The Bayport PO/TBA plants and the Channelview PO/SM I plant are held by the U.S. PO joint venture between Covestro and Lyondell Chemical Company. These plants are located on land leased by the U.S. PO joint venture.

(2) Equistar Chemicals, LP operates a styrene maleic anhydride unit and a polybutadiene unit, which are owned by an unrelated party and are located within the Channelview facility on property leased from Equistar Chemicals, LP.

(3) The La Porte facilities are on contiguous property.

(4) The La Porte Methanol facility is owned by La Porte Methanol Company, a partnership owned 85% by us.

(5) The Maasvlakte plant is owned by the European PO joint venture and is located on land leased by the European PO joint venture.

(6) The Tarragona PP facility is located on leased land; the compounds facility is located on co-owned land.

Other Locations and Properties

We maintain executive offices in London, the United Kingdom; Rotterdam, The Netherlands; and Houston, Texas. We maintain research facilities in Lansing, Michigan; Channelview, Texas; Cincinnati, Ohio; Ferrara, Italy and Frankfurt, Germany. Our Asia Pacific headquarters are in Hong Kong. We also have technical support centers in Bayreuth, Germany; Geelong, Australia and Tarragona, Spain. We have various sales facilities worldwide.

Website Access to SEC Reports

Our Internet website address is http://www.lyb.com. Information contained on our Internet website is not part of this report on Form 10-K.

Our Annual Reports on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, Current Reports on Form 8-K and any amendments to these reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 are available on our website, free of charge, as soon as reasonably practicable after such reports are filed with, or furnished to, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Alternatively, you may access these reports at the SEC's website at http://www.sec.gov.

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Item 1A. Risk Factors.

You should carefully consider the following risk factors in addition to the other information included in this Annual Report on Form 10-K. Each of these risk factors could adversely affect our business, operating results and financial condition, as well as adversely affect the value of an investment in our common stock.

Our business, including our results of operations and reputation, could be adversely affected by safety or product liability issues.

Failure to appropriately manage safety, human health, product liability and environmental risks associated with our products, product life cycles and production processes could adversely impact employees, communities, stakeholders, our reputation and our results of operations. Public perception of the risks associated with our products and production processes could impact product acceptance and influence the regulatory environment in which we operate. While we have procedures and controls to manage safety risks, issues could be created by events outside of our control, including natural disasters, severe weather events and acts of sabotage.

Our operations are subject to risks inherent in chemical and refining businesses, and we could be subject to liabilities for which we are not fully insured or that are not otherwise mitigated.

We maintain property, business interruption, product, general liability, casualty and other types of insurance that we believe are appropriate for our business and operations as well as in line with industry practices. However, we are not fully insured against all potential hazards incident to our business, including losses resulting from natural disasters, wars or terrorist acts. Changes in insurance market conditions have caused, and may in the future cause, premiums and deductibles for certain insurance policies to increase substantially and, in some instances, for certain insurance to become unavailable or available only for reduced amounts of coverage. If we were to incur a significant liability for which we were not fully insured, we might not be able to finance the amount of the uninsured liability on terms acceptable to us or at all, and might be obligated to divert a significant portion of our cash flow from normal business operations.

Further, because a part of our business involves licensing polyolefin process technology, our licensees are exposed to similar risks involved in the manufacture and marketing of polyolefins. Hazardous incidents involving our licensees, if they do result or are perceived to result from use of our technologies, may harm our reputation, threaten our relationships with other licensees and/or lead to customer attrition and financial losses. Our policy of covering these risks through contractual limitations of liability and indemnities and through insurance may not always be effective. As a result, our financial condition and results of operation would be adversely affected, and other companies with competing technologies may have the opportunity to secure a competitive advantage.

A sustained decrease in the price of crude oil may adversely impact the results of our operations, primarily in North America.

Energy costs generally follow price trends of crude oil and natural gas. These price trends may be highly volatile and cyclical. In the past, raw material and energy costs have experienced significant fluctuations that adversely affected our business segments' results of operations. For example, we have benefited from the favorable ratio of U.S. crude oil prices to natural gas prices in recent years. If the price of crude oil remains lower relative to U.S. natural gas prices or if the demand for natural gas and NGLs increases, this may have a negative impact on our results of operations.

Costs and limitations on supply of raw materials and energy may result in increased operating expenses.

The costs of raw materials and energy represent a substantial portion of our operating expenses. Due to the significant competition we face and the commodity nature of many of our products we are not always able to pass on raw material and energy cost increases to our customers. When we do have the ability to pass on the cost increases, we are not always able to do so quickly enough to avoid adverse impacts on our results of operations.

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Cost increases for raw materials also may increase working capital needs, which could reduce our liquidity and cash flow. Even if we increase our sales prices to reflect rising raw material and energy costs, demand for products may decrease as customers reduce their consumption or use substitute products, which may have an adverse impact on our results of operations. In addition, producers in natural gas cost-advantaged regions, such as the Middle East and North America, benefit from the lower prices of natural gas and NGLs. Competition from producers in these regions may cause us to reduce exports from Europe and elsewhere. Any such reductions may increase competition for product sales within Europe and other markets, which can result in lower margins in those regions.

For some of our raw materials and utilities there are a limited number of suppliers and, in some cases, the supplies are specific to the particular geographic region in which a facility is located. It is also common in the chemical and refining industries for a facility to have a sole, dedicated source for its utilities, such as steam, electricity and gas. Having a sole or limited number of suppliers may limit our negotiating power, particularly in the case of rising raw material costs. Any new supply agreements we enter into may not have terms as favorable as those contained in our current supply agreements.

Additionally, there is growing concern over the reliability of water sources, including around the Texas Gulf Coast where several of our facilities are located. The decreased availability or less favorable pricing for water as a result of population growth, drought or regulation could negatively impact our operations.

If our raw material or utility supplies were disrupted, our businesses may incur increased costs to procure alternative supplies or incur excessive downtime, which would have a direct negative impact on plant operations. Disruptions of supplies may occur as a result of transportation issues resulting from natural disasters, water levels, and interruptions in marine water routes, among other causes, that can affect the operations of vessels, barges, rails, trucks and pipeline traffic. These risks are particularly prevalent in the U.S. Gulf Coast area. Additionally, increasing exports of NGLs and crude oil from the U.S. or greater restrictions on hydraulic fracturing could restrict the availability of our raw materials, thereby increasing our costs.

With increased volatility in raw material costs, our suppliers could impose more onerous terms on us, resulting in shorter payment cycles and increasing our working capital requirements.

Our ability to source raw materials may be adversely affected by political instability, civil disturbances or other governmental actions.

We obtain a portion of our principal raw materials from sources in the Middle East and Central and South America that may be less politically stable than other areas in which we conduct business, such as Europe or the U.S. Political instability, civil disturbances and actions by governments in these areas are more likely to substantially increase the price and decrease the supply of raw materials necessary for our operations, which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations.

Increased incidents of civil unrest, including terrorist attacks and demonstrations that have been marked by violence, have occurred in a number of countries in the Middle East and South America. Some political regimes in these countries are threatened or have changed as a result of such unrest. Political instability and civil unrest could continue to spread in the region and involve other areas. Such unrest, if it continues to spread or grow in intensity, could lead to civil wars, regional conflicts or regime changes resulting in governments that are hostile to countries in which we conduct substantial business, such as in Europe, the U.S., or their respective trading partners.

Economic disruptions and downturns in general, and particularly continued global economic uncertainty or economic turmoil in emerging markets, could have a material adverse effect on our business, prospects, operating results, financial condition and cash flows.

Our results of operations can be materially affected by adverse conditions in the financial markets and depressed economic conditions generally. Economic downturns in the businesses and geographic areas in which we sell our products could substantially reduce demand for our products and result in decreased sales volumes and increased credit risk. Recessionary environments adversely affect our business because demand for our products is reduced, particularly from our customers in industrial markets generally and the automotive and housing industries specifically, and may result in higher costs of capital. A significant portion of our revenues and earnings are derived from our business in Europe, including southern

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Europe. In addition, most of our European transactions and assets, including cash reserves and receivables, are denominated in euros.

We also derive significant revenues from our business in emerging markets, particularly the emerging markets in Asia and South America. Any broad-based downturn in these emerging markets, or in a key market such as China, could require us to reduce export volumes into these markets and could also require us to divert product sales to less profitable markets. Any of these conditions could ultimately harm our overall business, prospects, operating results, financial condition and cash flows.

The cyclicality and volatility of the industries in which we participate may cause significant fluctuations in our operating results.

Our business operations are subject to the cyclical and volatile nature of the supply-demand balance in the chemical and refining industries. Our future operating results are expected to continue to be affected by this cyclicality and volatility. The chemical and refining industries historically have experienced alternating periods of capacity shortages, causing prices and profit margins to increase, followed by periods of excess capacity, resulting in oversupply, declining capacity utilization rates and declining prices and profit margins.

In addition to changes in the supply and demand for products, changes in energy prices and other worldwide economic conditions can cause volatility. These factors result in significant fluctuations in profits and cash flow from period to period and over business cycles.

New capacity additions in Asia, the Middle East and North America may lead to periods of oversupply and lower profitability. A sizable number of expansions have recently started up in North America. The timing and extent of any changes to currently prevailing market conditions are uncertain and supply and demand may be unbalanced at any time. As a consequence, we are unable to accurately predict the extent or duration of future industry cycles or their effect on our business, financial condition or results of operations.

We sell products in highly competitive global markets and face significant price pressures.

We sell our products in highly competitive global markets. Due to the commodity nature of many of our products, competition in these markets is based primarily on price and, to a lesser extent, on product performance, product quality, product deliverability, reliability of supply and customer service. Often, we are not able to protect our market position for these products by product differentiation and may not be able to pass on cost increases to our customers due to the significant competition in our business.

In addition, we face increased competition from companies that may have greater financial resources and different cost structures or strategic goals than us. These include large integrated oil companies (some of which also have chemical businesses), government-owned businesses, and companies that receive subsidies or other government incentives to produce certain products in a specified geographic region. Continuing competition from these companies, especially in our olefin and refining businesses, could limit our ability to increase product sales prices in response to raw material and other cost increases, or could cause us to reduce product sales prices to compete effectively, which would reduce our profitability. Competitors with different cost structures or strategic goals than we have may be able to invest significant capital into their businesses, including expenditures for research and development. In addition, specialty products we produce may become commoditized over time. Increased competition could result in lower prices or lower sales volumes, which would have a negative impact on our results of operations.

Interruptions of operations at our facilities may result in liabilities or lower operating results.

We own and operate large-scale facilities. Our operating results are dependent on the continued operation of our various production facilities and the ability to complete construction and maintenance projects on schedule. Interruptions at our facilities may materially reduce the productivity and profitability of a particular manufacturing facility, or our business as a whole, during and after the period of such operational difficulties. In the past, we had to shut down plants on the U.S. Gulf Coast, including the temporary shutdown of a portion of our Houston refinery, as a result of hurricanes striking the Texas coast. In addition, because the Houston refinery is our only refining operation, an outage at the refinery could have a particularly

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negative impact on our operating results. Unlike our chemical and polymer production facilities, which may have sufficient excess capacity to mitigate the negative impact of lost production at other facilities, we do not have the ability to increase refining production elsewhere.

Although we take precautions to enhance the safety of our operations and minimize the risk of disruptions, our operations are subject to hazards inherent in chemical manufacturing and refining and the related storage and transportation of raw materials, products and wastes. These potential hazards include:

- pipeline leaks and ruptures;
- explosions;
- fires;
- severe weather and natural disasters;
- mechanical failure;
- unscheduled downtimes;
- supplier disruptions;
- labor shortages or other labor difficulties;
- transportation interruptions;
- remediation complications;
- increased restrictions on, or the unavailability of, water for use at our manufacturing sites or for the transport of our products or raw materials;
- chemical and oil spills;
- discharges or releases of toxic or hazardous substances or gases;
- shipment of incorrect or off-specification product to customers;
- storage tank leaks;
- other environmental risks; and
- terrorist acts.

Some of these hazards may cause severe damage to or destruction of property and equipment or personal injury and loss of life and may result in suspension of operations or the shutdown of affected facilities.

Large capital projects can take many years to complete, and market conditions could deteriorate significantly between the project approval date and the project startup date, negatively impacting project returns. If we are unable to complete capital projects at their expected costs and in a timely manner, or if the market conditions assumed in our project economics deteriorate, our business, financial condition, results of operations and cash flows could be materially and adversely affected.

Delays or cost increases related to capital spending programs involving engineering, procurement and construction of facilities could materially adversely affect our ability to achieve forecasted internal rates of return and operating results. Delays in making required changes or upgrades to our facilities could subject us to fines or penalties as well as affect our ability to supply certain products we produce. Such delays or cost increases may arise as a result of unpredictable factors, many of which are beyond our control, including:

- denial of or delay in receiving requisite regulatory approvals and/or permits; unplanned increases in the cost of construction materials or labor;
- disruptions in transportation of components or construction materials;

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- adverse weather conditions, natural disasters or other events (such as equipment malfunctions, explosions, fires or spills) affecting our facilities, or those of vendors or suppliers;
- shortages of sufficiently skilled labor, or labor disagreements resulting in unplanned work stoppages; and
- nonperformance by, or disputes with, vendors, suppliers, contractors or subcontractors.

Any one or more of these factors could have a significant impact on our ongoing capital projects. If we were unable to make up the delays associated with such factors or to recover the related costs, or if market conditions change, it could materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations and cash flows.

Increased IT security threats and more sophisticated and targeted computer crime could pose a risk to our systems, networks, products, facilities and services.

Increased global information security threats and more sophisticated, targeted computer crime pose a risk to the confidentiality, availability and integrity of our data, operations and infrastructure. While we attempt to mitigate these risks by employing a number of measures, including security measures, employee training, comprehensive monitoring of our networks and systems, and maintenance of backup and protective systems, our employees, systems, networks, products, facilities and services remain potentially vulnerable to sophisticated espionage or cyber-assault. Depending on their nature and scope, such threats could potentially lead to the compromise of confidential information, improper use of our systems and networks, manipulation and destruction of data, defective products, production downtimes and operational disruptions, which in turn could adversely affect our reputation, competitiveness and results of operations.

We operate internationally and are subject to exchange rate fluctuations, exchange controls, political risks and other risks relating to international operations.

We operate internationally and are subject to the risks of doing business on a global level. These risks include fluctuations in currency exchange rates, economic instability and disruptions, restrictions on the transfer of funds and the imposition of trade restrictions or duties and tariffs. Additional risks from our multinational business include transportation delays and interruptions, war, terrorist activities, epidemics, pandemics, political instability, import and export controls, changes in governmental policies, labor unrest and current and changing regulatory environments.

We generate revenues from export sales and operations that may be denominated in currencies other than the relevant functional currency. Exchange rates between these currencies and functional currencies in recent years have fluctuated significantly and may do so in the future. It is possible that fluctuations in exchange rates will result in reduced operating results. Additionally, we operate with the objective of having our worldwide cash available in the locations where it is needed, including the United Kingdom for our parent company’s significant cash obligations as a result of dividend and interest payments. It is possible that we may not always be able to provide cash to other jurisdictions when needed or that such transfers of cash could be subject to additional taxes, including withholding taxes.

Our operating results could be negatively affected by the global laws, rules and regulations, as well as political environments, in the jurisdictions in which we operate. There could be reduced demand for our products, decreases in the prices at which we can sell our products and disruptions of production or other operations. Trade protection measures such as quotas, duties, tariffs, safeguard measures or anti-dumping duties imposed in the countries in which we operate could negatively impact our business. Additionally, there may be substantial capital and other costs to comply with regulations and/or increased security costs or insurance premiums, any of which could reduce our operating results.

We obtain a portion of our principal raw materials from international sources that are subject to these same risks. Our compliance with applicable customs, currency exchange control regulations, transfer pricing regulations or any other laws or regulations to which we may be subject could be challenged. Furthermore, these laws may be modified, the result of which may be to prevent or limit subsidiaries from transferring cash to us.

Furthermore, we are subject to certain existing, and may be subject to possible future, laws that limit or may limit our activities while some of our competitors may not be subject to such laws, which may adversely affect our competitiveness.

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Changes in tax laws and regulations could affect our tax rate and our results of operations.

We are a tax resident in the United Kingdom and are subject to the United Kingdom corporate income tax system. LyondellBasell Industries N.V. has little or no taxable income of its own because, as a holding company, it does not conduct any operations. Through our subsidiaries, we have substantial operations world-wide. Taxes are primarily paid on the earnings generated in various jurisdictions, including the U.S., The Netherlands, Germany, France and Italy.

In 2017, the U.S. enacted "H.R.1," also known as the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act" (the "Tax Act") materially impacting our Consolidated Financial Statements by, among other things, decreasing the tax rate, and significantly affecting future periods. To determine the full effects of the tax law for 2018, we are awaiting the finalization of several proposed U.S. Treasury regulations under the Tax Act that were issued during 2018, as well as additional regulations to be proposed and finalized pursuant to the U.S. Treasury's expanded regulatory authority under the Tax Act. It is also possible that technical correction legislation concerning the Tax Act could retroactively affect tax liabilities for 2018. We will continue to analyze the Tax Act to determine the full effects of the new law as additional regulations are proposed and finalized.

Interest income earned by certain of our European subsidiaries through intercompany financings is either untaxed or taxed at rates substantially lower than the U.S. statutory rate. Tax regulations proposed in 2018 may affect tax deductible interest in the U.S. in future periods; however, we do not believe they will have a material impact as proposed. In addition, in 2016 the U.S. Treasury issued final Section 385 debt-equity regulations that impact our internal financings beginning in 2017. Pursuant to a 2017 Executive Order, the Treasury Department reviewed these regulations and determined that they should be retained, subject to further review following the enactment of U.S. tax reform. We are awaiting the U.S. Treasury's review of the existing Section 385 debt-equity regulations which could impact our internal financings in future years as well as any final regulations impacting interest deductions under the Tax Act. In addition, there has been an increased attention, both in the U.S. and globally, to the tax practices of multinational companies, including the European Union's state aid investigations, proposals by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development with respect to base erosion and profit shifting, and European Union tax directives. Such attention may result in further legislative changes that could adversely affect our tax rate. Other than the Tax Act, management does not believe that recent changes in income tax laws will have a material impact on our Consolidated Financial Statements, although new or proposed changes to tax laws could affect our tax liabilities in the future.

Many of our businesses depend on our intellectual property. Our future success will depend in part on our ability to protect our intellectual property rights, and our inability to do so could reduce our ability to maintain our competitiveness and margins.

We have a significant worldwide patent portfolio of issued and pending patents. These patents and patent applications, together with proprietary technical know-how, are significant to our competitive position, particularly with regard to PO, intermediate chemicals, polyolefins, licensing and catalysts. We rely on the patent, copyright and trade secret laws of the countries in which we operate to protect our investment in research and development, manufacturing and marketing. However, we may be unable to prevent third parties from using our intellectual property without authorization. Proceedings to protect these rights could be costly, and we may not prevail.

The failure of our patents or confidentiality agreements to protect our processes, apparatuses, technology, trade secrets or proprietary know-how could result in significantly lower revenues, reduced profit margins and cash flows and/or loss of market share. We also may be subject to claims that our technology, patents or other intellectual property infringes on a third party's intellectual property rights. Unfavorable resolution of these claims could result in restrictions on our ability to deliver the related service or in a settlement that could be material to us.

Shared control or lack of control of joint ventures may delay decisions or actions regarding our joint ventures.

A portion of our operations are conducted through joint ventures, where control may be exercised by or shared with unaffiliated third parties. We cannot control the actions of our joint venture partners, including any nonperformance, default or bankruptcy of joint venture partners. The joint ventures that we do not control may also lack financial reporting systems to provide adequate and timely information for our reporting purposes.

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Our joint venture partners may have different interests or goals than we do and may take actions contrary to our requests, policies or objectives. Differences in views among the joint venture participants also may result in delayed decisions or in failures to agree on major matters, potentially adversely affecting the business and operations of the joint ventures and in turn our business and operations. We may develop a dispute with any of our partners over decisions affecting the venture that may result in litigation, arbitration or some other form of dispute resolution. If a joint venture participant acts contrary to our interest, it could harm our brand, business, results of operations and financial condition.

We cannot predict with certainty the extent of future costs under environmental, health and safety and other laws and regulations, and cannot guarantee they will not be material.

We may face liability arising out of the normal course of business, including alleged personal injury or property damage due to exposure to chemicals or other hazardous substances at our current or former facilities or chemicals that we manufacture, handle or own. In addition, because our products are components of a variety of other end-use products, we, along with other members of the chemical industry, are subject to potential claims related to those end-use products. Any substantial increase in the success of these types of claims could negatively affect our operating results.

We are subject to extensive national, regional, state and local environmental laws, regulations, directives, rules and ordinances concerning:

- emissions to the air;
- discharges onto land or surface waters or into groundwater; and
- the generation, handling, storage, transportation, treatment, disposal and remediation of hazardous substances and waste materials.

Many of these laws and regulations provide for substantial fines and potential criminal sanctions for violations. Some of these laws and regulations are subject to varying and conflicting interpretations. In addition, some of these laws and regulations require us to meet specific financial responsibility requirements. Any substantial liability for environmental damage could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows.

Although we have compliance programs and other processes intended to ensure compliance with all such regulations, we are subject to the risk that our compliance with such regulations could be challenged. Non-compliance with certain of these regulations could result in the incurrence of additional costs, penalties or assessments that could be material.

Our industry is subject to extensive government regulation, and existing, or future regulations may restrict our operations, increase our costs of operations or require us to make additional capital expenditures.

Compliance with regulatory requirements could result in higher operating costs, such as regulatory requirements relating to emissions, the security of our facilities, and the transportation, export or registration of our products. We generally expect that regulatory controls worldwide will become increasingly more demanding, but cannot accurately predict future developments.

Increasingly strict environmental laws and inspection and enforcement policies, could affect the handling, manufacture, use, emission or disposal of products, other materials or hazardous and non-hazardous waste. Stricter environmental, safety and health laws, regulations and enforcement policies could result in increased operating costs or capital expenditures to comply with such laws and regulations. Additionally, we are required to have permits for our businesses and are subject to licensing regulations. These permits and licenses are subject to renewal, modification and in some circumstances, revocation. Further, the permits and licenses are often difficult, time consuming and costly to obtain and could contain conditions that limit our operations.

We may incur substantial costs to comply with climate change legislation and related regulatory initiatives.

There has been a broad range of proposed or promulgated state, national and international laws focusing on greenhouse gas (“GHG”) reduction. These proposed or promulgated laws apply or could apply in countries where we have interests or may

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have interests in the future. Laws and regulations in this field continue to evolve and, while they are likely to be increasingly widespread and stringent, at this stage it is not possible to accurately estimate either a timetable for implementation or our future compliance costs relating to implementation. Under the 2015 Paris Agreement, parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change agreed to undertake ambitious efforts to reduce GHG emissions and strengthen adaptation to the effects of climate change. While the U.S. notified the United Nations in August 2017 that it will be withdrawing from the Agreement, other countries in which we operate, including Germany, France, and the Netherlands, are preparing national climate acts and protection plans to implement their emission reduction commitments under the Agreement. These actions could result in increased cost of purchased energy and increased costs of compliance for impacted locations. Within the framework of the EU emissions trading scheme ("ETS"), we were allocated certain allowances of carbon dioxide for the affected plants of our European sites for the period from 2008 to 2012 ("ETS II period"). The ETS II period did not bring additional cost to us as the allowance allocation was sufficient to cover the actual emissions of the affected plants. We were able to build an allowance surplus during the ETS II period which has been banked to the scheme for the period from 2013 to 2020 ("ETS III period"). We expect to incur additional costs for the ETS III period, despite the allowance surplus accrued over the ETS II period, as allowance allocations have been reduced for the ETS III period and more of our plants are affected by the scheme. We maintain an active hedging strategy to cover these additional costs. We expect to incur additional costs in relation to future carbon or GHG emission trading schemes.

In the U.S., the EPA has promulgated federal GHG regulations under the Clean Air Act affecting certain sources. The EPA has issued mandatory GHG reporting requirements, requirements to obtain GHG permits for certain industrial plants and GHG performance standards for some facilities. Although the EPA recently proposed to repeal and replace certain GHG requirements, additional GHG regulation may be forthcoming at the U.S. federal or state level that could result in the creation of additional costs in the form of taxes or required acquisition or trading of emission allowances. Compliance with these or other changes in laws, regulations and obligations that create a GHG emissions trading scheme or GHG reduction policies generally could significantly increase our costs or reduce demand for products we produce. Additionally, compliance with these regulations may result in increased permitting necessary for the operation of our business or for any of our growth plans. Difficulties in obtaining such permits could have an adverse effect on our future growth. Therefore, any future potential regulations and legislation could result in increased compliance costs, additional operating restrictions or delays in implementing growth projects or other capital investments, and could have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations. In addition, climate changes, such as drought conditions or increased frequency and severity of hurricanes and floods, could have an adverse effect on our assets and operations.

We may be required to record material charges against our earnings due to any number of events that could cause impairments to our assets.

We may be required to reduce production or idle facilities for extended periods of time or exit certain businesses as a result of the cyclical nature of our industry. Specifically, oversupplies of or lack of demand for particular products or high raw material prices may cause us to reduce production. We may choose to reduce production at certain facilities because we have off-take arrangements at other facilities, which make any reductions or idling unavailable at those facilities. Any decision to permanently close facilities or exit a business likely would result in impairment and other charges to earnings.

Temporary outages at our facilities can last for several quarters and sometimes longer. These outages could cause us to incur significant costs, including the expenses of maintaining and restarting these facilities. In addition, even though we may reduce production at facilities, we may be required to continue to purchase or pay for utilities or raw materials under take-or-pay supply agreements.

Increased regulation or deselection of plastic could lead to a decrease in demand growth for some of our products.

In 2018, the European Union proposed rules to target the plastic products most often found on beaches and in seas. In addition, local and other governments have increasingly proposed or implemented bans on plastic items such as disposable bags and straws, as well as other food packaging. Additionally, plastics have recently faced increased public backlash and scrutiny. Increased regulation of, or prohibition on, the use of plastics could increase the costs incurred by our customers to use such products or otherwise limit the use of these products, and could lead to a

decrease in demand for PE, PP, and other products we make. Such a decrease in demand could adversely affect our business, operating results and financial condition.

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Our business is capital intensive and we rely on cash generated from operations and external financing to fund our growth and ongoing capital needs. Limitations on access to external financing could adversely affect our operating results.

We require significant capital to operate our current business and fund our growth strategy. Moreover, interest payments, dividends and the expansion of our business or other business opportunities may require significant amounts of capital. We believe that our cash from operations currently will be sufficient to meet these needs. However, if we need external financing, our access to credit markets and pricing of our capital is dependent upon maintaining sufficient credit ratings from credit rating agencies and the state of the capital markets generally. There can be no assurances that we would be able to incur indebtedness on terms we deem acceptable, and it is possible that the cost of any financings could increase significantly, thereby increasing our expenses and decreasing our net income. If we are unable to generate sufficient cash flow or raise adequate external financing, including as a result of significant disruptions in the global credit markets, we could be forced to restrict our operations and growth opportunities, which could adversely affect our operating results.

We may use our five-year, $2.5 billion revolving credit facility, which backs our commercial paper program, to meet our cash needs, to the extent available. As of December 31, 2018, we had no borrowings or letters of credit outstanding under the facility and $809 million, net of discount, outstanding under our commercial paper program, leaving an unused and available credit capacity of $1,688 million. We may also meet our cash needs by selling receivables under our $900 million U.S. accounts receivable facility. In the event of a default under our credit facility or any of our senior notes, we could be required to immediately repay all outstanding borrowings and make cash deposits as collateral for all obligations the facility supports, which we may not be able to do. Any default under any of our credit arrangements could cause a default under many of our other credit agreements and debt instruments. Without waivers from lenders party to those agreements, any such default could have a material adverse effect on our ability to continue to operate.

Legislation and regulatory initiatives could lead to a decrease in demand for our products.

New or revised governmental regulations and independent studies relating to the effect of our products on health, safety and the environment may affect demand for our products and the cost of producing our products. Initiatives by governments and private interest groups will potentially require increased toxicological testing and risk assessments of a wide variety of chemicals, including chemicals used or produced by us. For example, in the United States, the National Toxicology Program (“NTP”) is a federal interagency program that seeks to identify and select for study chemicals and other substances to evaluate potential human health hazards. In the European Union, the Regulation on Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (“REACH”) is regulation designed to identify the intrinsic properties of chemical substances, assess hazards and risks of the substances, and identify and implement the risk management measures to protect humans and the environment.

Assessments under NTP, REACH or similar programs or regulations in other jurisdictions may result in heightened concerns about the chemicals we use or produce and may result in additional requirements being placed on the production, handling, labeling or use of those chemicals. Such concerns and additional requirements could also increase the cost incurred by our customers to use our chemical products and otherwise limit the use of these products, which could lead to a decrease in demand for these products. Such a decrease in demand could have an adverse impact on our business and results of operations.

Adverse results of legal proceedings could materially adversely affect us.

We are subject to and may in the future be subject to a variety of legal proceedings and claims that arise out of the ordinary conduct of our business. Results of legal proceedings cannot be predicted with certainty. Irrespective of its merits, litigation may be both lengthy and disruptive to our operations and may cause significant expenditure and diversion of management attention. We may be faced with significant monetary damages or injunctive relief against us that could have an adverse impact on our business and results of operations should we fail to prevail in certain matters.

Significant changes in pension fund investment performance or assumptions relating to pension costs may adversely affect the valuation of pension obligations, the funded status of pension plans, and our pension cost.

Our pension cost is materially affected by the discount rates used to measure pension obligations, the level of plan assets available to fund those obligations at the measurement date and the expected long-term rates of return on plan assets.

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Significant changes in investment performance or a change in the portfolio mix of invested assets may result in corresponding increases and decreases in the value of plan assets, particularly equity securities, or in a change of the expected rate of return on plan assets. Any changes in key actuarial assumptions, such as the discount rate or mortality rate, would impact the valuation of pension obligations, affecting the reported funded status of our pension plans as well as the net periodic pension cost in the following fiscal years.

Nearly all of our current pension plans have projected benefit obligations that exceed the fair value of the plan assets. As of December 31, 2018, the aggregate deficit was $992 million. Any declines in the fair values of the pension plans' assets could require additional payments by us in order to maintain specified funding levels.

Our pension plans are subject to legislative and regulatory requirements of applicable jurisdictions, which could include, under certain circumstances, local governmental authority to terminate the plan.

Integration of acquisitions could disrupt our business and harm our financial condition and stock price.

We have and may continue to make acquisitions in order to enhance our business. Acquisitions involve numerous risks, including with respect to meeting our standards for compliance, problems combining the purchased operations, technologies or products, unanticipated costs and liabilities, diversion of management's attention from our core businesses, and potential loss of key employees.

There can be no assurance that we will be able to integrate successfully any businesses, products, technologies, or personnel that we might acquire. The integration of businesses that we may acquire is likely to be a complex, time-consuming, and expensive process and we may not realize the anticipated revenues, synergies, or other benefits associated with our acquisitions if we do not manage and operate the acquired business up to our expectations. If we are unable to efficiently operate as a combined organization utilizing common information and communication systems, operating procedures, financial controls, and human resources practices, our business, financial condition, and results of operations may be adversely affected.

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Item 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments.

None.

Item 3. Legal Proceedings.

Environmental Matters

From time to time we and our joint ventures receive notices or inquiries from government entities regarding alleged violations of environmental laws and regulations pertaining to, among other things, the disposal, emission and storage of chemical and petroleum substances, including hazardous wastes. Item 103 of the SEC's Regulation S-K requires disclosure of certain environmental matters when a governmental authority is a party to the proceedings and the proceedings involve potential monetary sanctions that we reasonably believe could exceed $100,000. The matters below are disclosed solely pursuant to that requirement.

In September 2013, the Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") Region V issued a Notice and Finding of Violation alleging violations at our Morris, Illinois facility related to flaring activity. The notice generally alleges failures to monitor steam usage and improper flare operations. Region V indicated at a December 2017 meeting that it intends to issue an administrative enforcement order in 2018. We reasonably believe that EPA Region V may assert a penalty demand in excess of $100,000. A Tolling Agreement was signed in November 2018.

In June 2014, EPA Region V issued a Notice and Finding of Violation alleging violations at our Tuscola, Illinois facility related to flaring activity. The notice generally alleges failure to conduct a valid performance test and improper flare operations. In June 2018, Region V issued a draft administrative consent order that requires the completion of certain activities. We are currently engaged in discussions with Region V regarding a proposed penalty. We reasonably believe that the penalty may exceed $100,000. A Tolling Agreement was signed in November 2018.

The EPA has been conducting an enforcement initiative regarding flare emissions at petrochemical plants. In July 2014, we received Clean Air Act section 114 information request regarding flares at four U.S. facilities. In response to the information we provided and subsequent discussions, the EPA and Department of Justice (the "DOJ") have indicated that they are seeking a consent decree that would require certain corrective measures. We reasonably believe that resolution of this matter will involve payment of a monetary sanction in excess of $100,000. We continue to work with the EPA and DOJ to resolve this matter.

In January 2018, Houston Refining, LP learned that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality had referred an environmental matter to the Texas Attorney General's office ("TAGO") for enforcement. The environmental matter referred to TAGO for enforcement stems from air emissions events sustained at the refinery. In June 2018, Houston Refining, LP and TAGO agreed to a settlement involving $680,000 in penalties, plus attorneys' fees and certain injunctive relief. To effectuate the settlement, the TAGO filed a complaint along with the proposed agreed final judgment in Travis County Court. The court entered the Agreed Final Judgment in October 2018 and the penalty has been paid in full.

In March 2018, the Morris facility learned that the Illinois EPA referred an environmental matter to the Illinois Attorney General's Office. The matters referred for enforcement relate to air emission events at the facility. In June 2018, the parties agreed to resolve the matter for a penalty of $125,000, and in August 2018, a consent order requiring the same was entered in Grundy County Court.

On March 21, 2018, the Cologne, Germany local court issued a regulatory fine notice of €1,800,000 arising from a pipeline leak in our Wesseling, Germany facility. We expect the Cologne prosecutor to issue a corresponding payment request, which will resolve the matter.

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Litigation and Other Matters

Information regarding our litigation and other legal proceedings can be found in Note 19, Commitments and Contingencies, to the Consolidated Financial Statements.

Item 4. Mine Safety Disclosures.

Not applicable.

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PART II

Item 5. Market for Registrant's Common Equity, Related Stockholder Matters and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities.

Market and Dividend Information

Our shares were listed on the New York Stock Exchange ("NYSE") on October 14, 2010 under the symbol "LYB." The payment of dividends or distributions in the future will be subject to the requirements of Dutch law and the discretion of our Board of Directors. The declaration of any future cash dividends and, if declared, the amount of any such dividends, will depend upon general business conditions, our financial condition, our earnings and cash flow, our capital requirements, financial covenants and other contractual restrictions on the payment of dividends or distributions.

There can be no assurance that any dividends or distributions will be declared or paid in the future.

Holders

As of February 19, 2019, there were approximately 5,600 record holders of our shares, including Cede & Co. as nominee of the Depository Trust Company.

United Kingdom Tax Considerations

In May 2013, we announced the planned migration of the tax domicile of LyondellBasell Industries N.V. from The Netherlands, where LyondellBasell Industries N.V. is incorporated, to the United Kingdom. On August 28, 2013, the Dutch and the United Kingdom competent authorities completed a mutual agreement procedure and issued a ruling that retroactively as of July 1, 2013 LyondellBasell Industries N.V. should be treated solely as a tax resident in the United Kingdom and is subject to the United Kingdom corporate income tax system.

As a result of its United Kingdom tax residency, dividend distributions by LyondellBasell Industries N.V. to its shareholders are not subject to withholding tax, as the United Kingdom currently does not levy a withholding tax on dividend distributions.

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Performance Graph

The performance graph and the information contained in this section is not “soliciting material,” is being furnished, not filed, with the SEC and is not to be incorporated by reference into any of our filings under the Securities Act or the Exchange Act whether made before or after the date hereof and irrespective of any general incorporation language contained in such filing.

The graph below shows the relative investment performance of LyondellBasell Industries N.V. shares, the S&P 500 Index and the S&P 500 Chemicals Index since December 31, 2013. The graph assumes that $100 was invested on December 31, 2013 and any dividends paid were reinvested at the date of payment. The graph is presented pursuant to SEC rules and is not meant to be an indication of our future performance.

	12/31/2013	12/31/2014	12/31/2015	12/31/2016	12/31/2017	12/31/2018
LyondellBasell Industries N.V.	$100.00	$101.83	$115.20	$118.38	$157.99	$123.97
S&P 500 Index	$100.00	$113.69	$115.26	$129.05	$157.22	$150.33
S&P 500 Chemicals Index	$100.00	$110.70	$106.07	$116.85	$148.01	$130.83

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Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities

2018 Period	Total Number of Shares Purchased	Average Price Paid per Share	Total Number of Shares Purchased as Part of Publicly Announced Plans or Programs	Maximum Number of Shares That May Yet Be Purchased Under the Plans or Programs
October 1—October 31	4,414,939	$ 94.34	4,414,939	49,755,015
November 1—November 30	4,498,765	$ 93.37	4,498,765	45,256,250
December 1—December 31	2,628,200	$ 83.69	2,628,200	42,628,050
Total	11,541,904	$ 91.54	11,541,904	42,628,050

On June 1, 2018, we announced a share repurchase program of up to 57,844,016 of our ordinary shares through December 1, 2019, which superseded any prior repurchase authorizations. The maximum number of shares that may yet be purchased is not necessarily an indication of the number of shares that will ultimately be purchased.

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Item 6. Selected Financial Data.

The following selected financial data was derived from our consolidated financial statements, which were prepared from our books and records. This data should be read in conjunction with the Consolidated Financial Statements and related notes thereto and "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations," below, which includes a discussion of factors that will enhance an understanding of this data.

	Year Ended December 31,				
In millions of dollars, except per share data	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Results of operations data:					
Sales and other operating revenues	$39,004	$34,484	$29,183	$32,735	$45,608
Operating income[a]	5,231	5,460	5,060	6,122	5,736
Interest expense[b]	(360)	(491)	(322)	(310)	(352)
Income from equity investments	289	321	367	339	257
Income from continuing operations[a][b][c]	4,698	4,895	3,847	4,479	4,172
Earnings per share from continuing operations:					
Basic	12.06	12.28	9.17	9.63	8.04
Diluted	12.03	12.28	9.15	9.60	8.00
Loss from discontinued operations, net of tax	(8)	(18)	(10)	(5)	(4)
Loss per share from discontinued operations:					
Basic	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Diluted	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Balance sheet data:					
Total assets	28,278	26,206	23,442	22,757	24,221
Short-term debt	885	68	594		