

01 August 2024

India | Equity Research | Q1FY25 results review

Clean Science & Technology

Speciality Chemicals

More capex plans unveiled

Clean Science's Q1FY25 EBITDA rose 24.3% YoY, while EBITDA margin, at 42.3%, increased 70bp QoQ despite rising HALS volumes, which has lower margins. Revenue rose 19% YoY, which was largely driven by volumes while prices are stable. The company introduced three more products in HALS; another product addition is expected in Aug'24, which will address the significant demand in HALS. With its entire product basket, company anticipates approvals and off-takes for HALS to accelerate in India and in international markets. Clean Science has announced capex of INR 1.5bn in the performance segment with another announcement anticipated in Sep'24, which will further aid revenue growth. We have kept our estimates unchanged but increased the target price to INR 1,545 (from INR 1,350), as we raise FY26E P/E multiple to 40x (from 35x). Maintain **HOLD**.

Volume-led revenue growth; prices stable

In Q1FY25, Clean Science revenue was up 19% YoY/down 1.5% QoQ to INR 2.2bn. Revenue growth was largely driven by volume while prices have been largely stable. Company is encouraged with volume recovery, and HALS' volumes have increased to 125te/month (from 80–90te/month in Q4FY24). CFCL (subsidiary) revenue stood at INR 67mn, which is largely from sales of HALS 770. HALS 701 is sold through its parent entity only.

Performance chemicals segment's revenue was up 22.6% YoY/+1.4% QoQ to INR 1.5bn, driven by volumes, and growth has come from all products. Pharmaceutical intermediates' revenue up 12.8% YoY/down 6.7% QoQ to INR 403mn had growth in both volumes and realisation. FMCG chemicals' revenue up 19% YoY/down 1.5% QoQ to INR 291mn was aided by volumes.

China geography's revenue rose 30.4% YoY (down 7.5% QoQ) to INR 515mn, it has started exporting HALS to China. India revenue grew 19% YoY to INR 829mn. Europe revenue was up 65% YoY/26.6% QoQ to INR 403mn on a low base, and HALS exports have started contributing. Americas revenue, at INR 269mn, declined 25% YoY/1.9% QoQ, as destocking impact continues.

Clean Science has commercialised three more products in HALS – HALS 622, HALS 944 and HALS 783 during July'24; and anticipates to introduce HALS 119 in Aug'24. Cumulatively the HALS series addresses significant demand within HALS range; and with the basket of products, the company expects approval and off-takes in HALS to accelerate both in India and international markets.

Financial Summary

Y/E March (INR mn)	FY23A	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E
Net Revenue	9,358	7,915	10,801	14,314
EBITDA	4,021	3,321	4,267	5,617
EBITDA Margin (%)	43.0	42.0	39.5	39.2
Net Profit	2,952	2,441	3,048	4,097
EPS (INR)	27.8	23.0	28.7	38.6
EPS % Chg YoY	29.2	(17.3)	24.9	34.4
P/E (x)	56.2	68.0	54.4	40.5
EV/EBITDA (x)	40.4	49.0	38.1	28.8
RoCE (%)	30.7	19.3	21.7	25.2
RoE (%)	33.2	22.1	23.5	26.9

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Market Data

166bn
1,982mn
CLEAN IN
CLEA BO
1,690 /1,243
21.0
3.3

Price Performance (%)	3m	6m	12m
Absolute	18.3	5.7	20.1
Relative to Sensex	8.4	(8.6)	(3.1)

Previous Reports

16-05-2024: <u>Q4FY24 results review</u> 05-02-2024: <u>Q3FY24 results review</u>



EBITDA margin up 70bp QoQ to 42.3%

Clean Science's gross profit margin declined 30bps QoQ to 65.4%, gross profit increased 27% YoY/dipped 2% QoQ to INR 1.5bn. Other expenses were up 40.6% YoY, on increase in capacity utilisation, and commissioning of new facilities; but it dipped 6.3% QoQ as the previous quarter had saw CSR expenses. Employee expenses were up 11% YoY to INR 130mn. EBITDA was up 24.3% YoY to INR 947mn. Net profit increased 11.8% YoY to INR 659mn, which was restricted from higher depreciation cost of 46% YoY to INR 158mn and lower other income (down 26% YoY). Company believes margins may see some moderation as it ramps up its HALS and pharmaceuticals intermediates businesses, where margins are relatively lower.

Update on HALS progress

- Clean Science received an encouraging response to its HALS-770 and 701 series from domestic buyers and exports buyers. HALS' volume has increased to 125te/month from 80-90te/month in Q4FY24. The company expects to gradually increase HALS' volumes to 200te/month by Mar'25. It expects to reach 50% utilisation in FY26 (4-4.5kte). It has commissioned HALS capacity of 10.5ktpa at CFCL with optimal utilisation at 80% and anticipate average realisation at USD 7-8/kg. This implies peak revenue from HALS in Clean Fino-Chem (CFCL) at ~INR 5bn.
- CFCL has been producing only HALS 770, and recently commissioned three more
 products; and is expected to add another product soon. HALS 701 is manufactured
 at Clean Science, and capacity utilisation has reached 70%; and may require to be
 added at CFCL also. Clean Science will have total six products out of nine products
 in the HALS series. These six products are bulk of demand; the remaining products
 have niche application. Realisation of HALS-770 and HALS-701 is USD 5 while
 HALS-944 is USD 9-10.
- Clean Science aspires to have 70–75% market share in HALS in India; however, it
 would need its entire basket of products commissioned to accelerate market share
 win. These products are bought in combinations, and customers prefer buying a
 range of HALS products compared to only two currently.

Update on capex plans

- Clean Science has already started work on its pharmaceutical intermediate facility; the total outlay is anticipated at INR 300mn with potential revenue of INR 1bn. The company estimates plant commissioning by Q3FY25.
- The company has announced another capex of INR 1.5bn in the performance segment with peak revenue potential of INR 3.5bn. It will add capacity, which will be 15% of global demand. The product finds application as a stabiliser, and an agro input. It is already produced in India by a few players; however, Company has the advantage of a differentiated process, which should make it commercially better.
- Clean Science plans to announce another capex of INR 1–1.5bn by Sep'24, which
 has application in water treatment. Again, this product is already being produced
 in India.
- The company will evaluate capacity requirement in existing products by Dec'24.

Key risks

Upside: 1) Higher-than-expected sales from HALS; and 2) better-than-expected margins. **Downside:** 1) Slower-than-expected acceptance of HALS in international markets; and 2) higher-than-expected discounting in HALS, which can hurt margins.



Exhibit 1: Clean Science consolidated financials

INR mn	Q1FY24	Q2FY24	Q3FY24	Q4FY24	Q1FY25	QoQ (%)	YoY (%)
Revenue	1,881	1,811	1,947	2,275	2,240	(1.5)	19.1
COGS	726	618	646	780	775	(0.7)	6.7
Gross profit	1,155	1,193	1,301	1,495	1,465	(2.0)	26.9
GPM (%)	61.4	65.9	66.8	65.7	65.4		
Employee cost	117	119	116	135	130	(3.7)	10.9
% of revenue	6.2	6.6	6.0	5.9	5.8		
Other expenses	277	326	319	415	389	(6.3)	40.6
% of revenue	14.7	18.0	16.4	18.3	17.4		
Total expenses	394	445	435	550	519	(5.7)	31.8
EBITDA	761	748	866	945	947	0.2	24.3
EBITDA (%)	40.5	41.3	44.5	41.5	42.3		
Depreciation	108	111	113	127	158	24.3	46.2
EBIT	653	637	753	818	789	(3.6)	20.7
Other income	134	60	78	141	99	(29.4)	(26.1)
Finance cost	0	3	1	6	1		
PBT	787	695	830	953	887	(6.9)	12.7
Tax	198	173	204	250	228	(9.0)	15.2
ETR (%)	25.1	24.9	24.6	26.3	25.7		
Exceptional item	-	-	-	-	-		
Net profit	590	522	626	703	659	(6.2)	11.8
Net profit (%)	31.3	28.8	32.2	30.9	29.4		
EPS (INR)	5.6	4.9	5.9	6.6	6.2		

Source: I-Sec research, Company data

Exhibit 2: Clean Science standalone financials

INR mn	1QFY24	2QFY24	3QFY24	4QFY24	1QFY25	QoQ (%)	YoY (%)
Revenue	1,881	1,811	1,947	2,255	2,173	(3.6)	15.5
COGS	726	618	646	764	730	(4.4)	0.5
Gross profit	1,155	1,193	1,301	1,491	1,443	(3.2)	24.9
GPM (%)	61.4	65.9	66.8	66.1	66.4		
Employee cost	115	115	117	118	118	(0.5)	2.7
% of revenue	6.1	6.3	6.0	5.3	5.4		
Other expenses	275	323	320	385	347	(9.8)	26.4
% of revenue	14.6	17.8	16.4	17.1	16.0		
Total expenses	389	437	437	503	465	(7.6)	19.4
EBITDA	765	756	864	987	978	(1.0)	27.7
EBITDA (%)	40.7	41.7	44.4	43.8	45.0		
Depreciation	107	110	112	110	111	0.9	4.1
EBIT	659	646	752	877	867	(1.2)	31.6
Other income	124	51	75	134	96	(28.1)	(22.0)
Finance cost	0	2	0	5	1		
PBT	782	694	827	1,006	962	(4.3)	23.0
Tax	197	175	203	258	241	(6.6)	22.4
ETR (%)	25.0	25.2	24.5	27.1	27.1		
Exceptional item	-	-	-	-	-		
Net profit	585	519	624	748	722	(3.6)	23.3
Net profit (%)	31.1	28.7	32.1	33.2	33.2		

Source: I-Sec research, Company data



Exhibit 3: Clean Science – consolidate minus standalone financials

INR mn	1QFY24	2QFY24	3QFY24	4QFY24	1QFY25	QoQ (%)	YoY (%)
Revenue				20	67	227.4	
COGS				16	45	174.9	
Gross profit				4	22	428.1	
GPM (%)				20.7	33.4		
Employee cost				16	12	(26.8)	
% of revenue				0.7	0.5		
Other expenses				30	42	37.4	
% of revenue				1.3	1.9		
Total expenses				47	54	14.9	
EBITDA				(42)	(31)		
EBITDA (%)				(207.4)	(46.6)		
Depreciation				17	47	176.2	
EBIT				(59)	(78)		
Other income				7	3	(55.4)	
Finance cost				0	0		
PBT				(53)	(75)	42.0	
Tax				(8)	(13)		
ETR (%)				(0.8)	(1.5)		
Exceptional item				-	-		
Net profit				(46)	(62)		
Net profit (%)				(222.4)	(93.0)		

Source: I-Sec research, Company data

Exhibit 4: Clean Science segmental performance

INR mn	Q1FY24	Q2FY24	Q3FY24	Q4FY24	Q1FY25	QoQ (%)	YoY (%)
Segment revenue							
Performance chemicals	1,260	1,213	1,305	1,524	1,546	1.4	22.6
Pharmaceutical intermediates	357	344	370	432	403	(6.7)	12.8
FMCG chemicals	245	272	216	296	291	(1.5)	19.1
Others	19	(19)	56	23	-		
Total	1,881	1,811	1,947	2,275	2,240	(1.5)	19.1
Mix (%)							
Performance chemicals	67.0	67.0	67.0	67.0	69.0		
Pharmaceutical intermediates	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0	18.0		
FMCG chemicals	13.0	15.0	11.1	13.0	13.0		
Others	1.0	(1.0)	2.9	1.0	-		

Source: I-Sec research, Company data

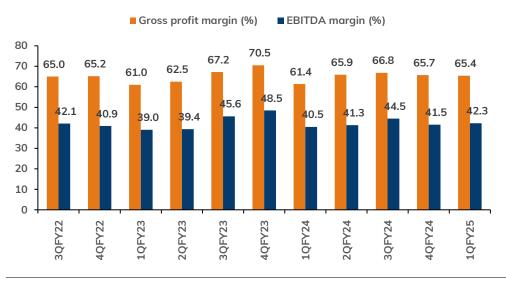
Exhibit 5: Clean Science geographical revenue breakdown

INR mn	Q1FY24	Q2FY24	Q3FY24	Q4FY24	Q1FY25	QoQ (%)	YoY (%)
India	696	633	701	819	829	1.2	19.1
Export	1,185	1,178	1,246	1,456	1,411	(3.1)	19.1
Americas	357	344	370	274	269	(1.9)	(24.8)
Europe	245	309	236	319	403	26.6	64.9
China	395	343	446	557	515	(7.5)	30.4
ROW	188	181	195	228	224	(1.5)	19.1
Mix (%)							
India	37.0	35.0	36.0	36.0	37.0		
Export	63.0	65.0	64.0	64.0	63.0		
Americas	19.0	19.0	19.0	12.0	12.0		
Europe	13.0	17.1	12.1	14.0	18.0		
China	21.0	19.0	22.9	24.5	23.0		
ROW	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0		

Source: I-Sec research, Company data

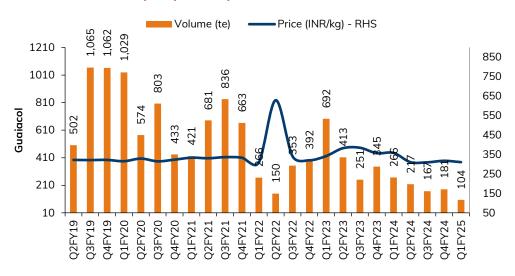


Exhibit 6: Gross profit and EBITDA margin trends



Source: I-Sec research, Company data

Exhibit 7: Guaiacol export prices dip 13.3% YoY



Source: I-Sec research, Company data; Note: Q1FY25 numbers includes data for only Apr & May'24



Exhibit 8: Phenol (raw material) prices dip 4.4% YoY



Source: I-Sec research, Company data; Note: Q1FY25 numbers includes data for only Apr & May'24

Exhibit 9: Acetic anhydride (raw material) prices fell 22.1% YoY



Source: I-Sec research, Company data; Note: Q1FY25 numbers includes data for only Apr & May'24

Exhibit 10: Shareholding pattern

%	Dec'23	Mar'24	Jun'24
Promoters	75.0	75.0	75.0
Institutional investors	11.1	10.9	10.7
MFs and others	4.6	4.2	3.6
Fls/Banks	0.0	0.0	0.0
Insurance	0.5	0.7	0.9
FIIs	5.8	5.9	6.2
Others	14.0	14.1	14.2

Exhibit 11: Price chart



Source: Bloomberg Source: Bloomberg



Financial Summary

Exhibit 12: Profit & Loss

(INR mn, year ending March)

	FY23A	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E
Net Sales	9,358	7,915	10,801	14,314
Operating Expenses	5,337	4,594	6,535	8,697
EBITDA	4,021	3,321	4,267	5,617
EBITDA Margin (%)	43.0	42.0	39.5	39.2
Depreciation & Amortization	361	459	546	613
EBİT	3,660	2,861	3,721	5,004
Interest expenditure	2	9	9	9
Other Non-operating Income	298	413	313	344
Recurring PBT	3,956	3,265	4,025	5,339
Profit / (Loss) from				
Associates	-	-	-	-
Less: Taxes	1,005	825	976	1,242
PAT	2,952	2,441	3,048	4,097
Less: Minority Interest	-	-	-	-
Extraordinaries (Net)	-	-	-	-
Net Income (Reported)	2,952	2,441	3,048	4,097
Net Income (Adjusted)	2,952	2,441	3,048	4,097

Source Company data, I-Sec research

Exhibit 13: Balance sheet

(INR mn, year ending March)

	FY23A	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E
Total Current Assets	3,027	3,572	5,570	8,023
of which cash & cash eqv.	125	105	980	1,934
Total Current Liabilities &	1,155	1,601	1,890	2,507
Provisions	1,155	1,001	1,690	2,307
Net Current Assets	1,873	1,971	3,680	5,516
Investments	3,531	3,394	2,894	2,894
Net Fixed Assets	4,433	6,568	7,249	7,986
ROU Assets	373	366	366	366
Capital Work-in-Progress	205	573	300	300
Total Intangible Assets	-	-	-	-
Other assets	125	26	29	32
Deferred Tax Assets	-	-	-	-
Total Assets	11,518	13,963	16,158	19,366
Liabilities				
Borrowings	1	-	-	-
Deferred Tax Liability	234	299	299	299
Provisions	6	8	9	10
Other Liabilities	23	23	-	-
Equity Share Capital	106	106	106	106
Reserves & Surplus	9,994	11,925	13,853	16,444
Total Net Worth	10,100	12,032	13,959	16,550
Minority Interest	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	11,518	13,963	16,158	19,366

Source Company data, I-Sec research

Exhibit 14: Quarterly trend

(INR mn, year ending March)

	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24
Net Sales	1,811	1,947	2,275	2,240
% growth (YOY)	(26.8)	(18.0)	4.9	19.1
EBITDA	748	866	945	947
Margin %	41.3	44.5	41.5	42.3
Other Income	60	78	141	99
Extraordinaries	0	0	0	0
Adjusted Net Profit	522	626	703	659

Source Company data, I-Sec research

Exhibit 15: Cashflow statement

(INR mn, year ending March)

	FY23A	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E
Operating Cashflow	3,222	2,666	3,290	4,375
Working Capital Changes	(428)	(295)	(871)	(900)
Capital Commitments	(1,834)	(2,323)	(1,227)	(1,350)
Free Cashflow	960	48	1,192	2,125
Other investing cashflow	(864)	464	813	344
Cashflow from Investing Activities	(864)	464	813	344
Issue of Share Capital	9	-	-	-
Interest Cost	(1)	(8)	(9)	(9)
Inc (Dec) in Borrowings	-	9	-	-
Dividend paid	(558)	(531)	(1,121)	(1,507)
Others	-	(2)	-	-
Cash flow from Financing Activities	(550)	(532)	(1,130)	(1,516)
Chg. in Cash & Bank balance	(454)	(19)	875	954
Closing cash & balance	124	104	981	1,935

Source Company data, I-Sec research

Exhibit 16: Key ratios

(Year ending March)

	FY23A	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E
Per Share Data (INR)				
Reported EPS	27.8	23.0	28.7	38.6
Adjusted EPS (Diluted)	27.8	23.0	28.7	38.6
Cash EPS	31.2	27.3	33.8	44.3
Dividend per share (DPS)	5.0	5.0	10.6	14.2
Book Value per share (BV)	95.1	113.2	131.4	155.8
Dividend Payout (%)	18.0	21.8	36.8	36.8
Growth (%)				
Net Sales	36.6	(15.4)	36.5	32.5
EBITDA	34.1	(17.4)	28.5	31.6
EPS (INR)	29.2	(17.3)	24.9	34.4
Valuation Ratios (x)				
P/E	56.2	68.0	54.4	40.5
P/CEPS	50.1	57.2	46.2	35.2
P/BV	16.4	13.8	11.9	10.0
EV / EBITDA	40.4	49.0	38.1	28.8
EV/SALES	17.4	20.6	15.0	11.3
Dividend Yield (%)	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.9
Operating Ratios				
Gross Profit Margins (%)	65.2	65.0	62.5	60.5
EBITDA Margins (%)	43.0	42.0	39.5	39.2
Effective Tax Rate (%)	25.4	25.3	24.3	23.3
Net Profit Margins (%)	31.5	30.8	28.2	28.6
NWC/Total Assets (%)	16.3	14.1	22.8	28.5
Net Debt / Equity (x)	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.3)
Net Debt / EBITDA (x)	(8.0)	(0.9)	(8.0)	(8.0)
Profitability Ratios				
RoCE (%)	30.7	19.3	21.7	25.2
RoE (%)	33.2	22.1	23.5	26.9
RoIC (%)	62.4	36.7	38.4	44.4
Fixed Asset Turnover (x)	1.7	1.0	1.2	1.3
Inventory Turnover Days	42.4	57.0	52.0	52.0
Receivables Days	57.0	75.5	75.5	75.5
Payables Days	31.4	50.0	40.0	40.0
Source Company data, I-Sec resea	ırch			



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