

WALNUT, the European project that works on producing commercial and sustainable bio-based fertilisers

- **On the 7th of September 2021, CARTIF Technology Centre chaired the first meeting of the WALNUT project.**
- **14 partners from 8 different EU countries are joining their forces to address the current gap in nutrient cycles of different European wastewater treatment systems and their related environmental problems.**
- The environmental and socio-economic impacts of the fertilisers' value chains will be quantified through a life-cycle assessment

Valladolid. October 28th. WALNUT is a project funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. Its main aim is to promote a new circular strategy in the wastewater and brine treatment sector, preventing the pollution of large bodies of water while promoting the shift from non-renewable mineral fertilisers to bio-based fertilisers in the EU.

Modern industrial agriculture depends on continuous inputs of nutrients from non-renewable sources and current agricultural practices lead to an accumulation of nutrients that are used in a quantity exceeding the crops' need. Nutrients, such as nitrogen, phosphate and magnesium, and metals like cadmium and uranium, accumulate in the soil and endanger human health and environment.

WALNUT actions will collect data on nutrient imbalances, mapping the current situation of wastewater streams in Europe and their legal framework. The aim is to develop sustainable technological solutions for nutrient recovery, mitigating the risks linked to the discharge or treatment of the wastewater streams. WALNUT will provide 5 solutions tested at a relevant scale and 12 validated technologies for nutrient recovery to produce 4 bio-based fertilisers that are commercial, safe and sustainable.

"We are very proud to get started with the exciting challenge that the WALNUT project will bring" says Francisco Corona by CARTIF, coordinator of the project "We have more than four years ahead of us to add our contribution to circular economy through the nutrient recovery and wastewater treatment."

The environmental and socio-economic impacts of the fertilisers' value chains will be quantified through a life-cycle assessment.

WALNUT actions are going to build a bridge between science communities and policymakers, governance and regulators. The project will also foster the implementation of the European Fertiliser Regulation while providing recommendations for innovative policy frameworks and public-private agreements. At the same time, citizens and local communities will be actively engaged with the aim to close the information gap between producers and consumers on fertilisers' quality standards.

Notes for the editors:

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101000752. The project has started in September 2021 and will last for 54 months.

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