



European H2020 Project: *NoAW - No AgroWaste*
INRA-Montpellier

Call for applications - Research contract 18 months

Circular economy, new business models and marketing strategies for valorising agro-waste and by-products

Context: Circular economy is a recent economic model that aims to reconcile economic growth with the preservation of the environment. It is based on the insight that our natural resources (energy, water, raw material) are limited and that with a population estimated to reach 9 billion people in 2050, the current linear ‘take-make-dispose’ model is no longer sustainable. Central to circular economy is the closed loop idea, aiming at enhancing the continuous flow of technical and biological materials in the value circle while keeping products, components and materials at their highest utility and value at all times and reducing waste to a minimum (Ellen MacArthur Foundation¹). In order to close biological material circles, an approach at a well-defined territorial systemic level is needed (Buclet 2014). Here, the dynamics of local actors and new activities for valorising agro-waste and by-products locally can support an economic territorial development. Hence, an understanding of the circular economy concept within the agricultural domain is necessarily linked to territorial development challenges. The driving force to make these new activities viable is economic in nature, and consists of a value creation by using efficiently and sustainably raw materials or turning waste into economic assets.

The NoAW project² (bringing together 32 partners whereof 16 research institutes and 16 enterprises) aims to develop new industrial technologies for valorising agricultural waste. These technological innovations need to be supported by new ‘market-driven’ approaches. This starts with insights into potential markets, an understanding of consumer perceptions towards new products issued from agro-waste, innovative strategic marketing approaches that focus on valorising various food and non-food products, and finally, new clusters of enterprises or entrepreneurial activities across sectors or within multiple interconnected chains. Only such an approach may allow an efficient valorisation of all bio-resources at a local level, and the creation of sustainable value chains within the agricultural domain that involves the transformation, distribution, commercialisation and consumption of final products.

¹ <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/>

² <http://noaw2020.eu/>

Objectives: The main task of the researcher is to perform in-depth case studies of (clusters) of agro-food enterprises with a circular economy approach and to collect qualitative and quantitative data, and then to analyse their business models and marketing strategies by integrating insights of consumers' behaviour and perceptions, of entrepreneurial activities of (clusters) of businesses and their interactions and potential to explore new ways of valorising various agro-waste and by-products within well-defined territories.

Requirements: The candidate needs a master in economics, business management or geography. Basic knowledge of new technologies for valorising agro-resources is a plus. Excellent language skills in French and English (spoken and written) are required as well as a willingness to travel (driving licence). The candidate needs to be able to work both autonomously as well as in team; she/he is asked to be pro-active and able to communicate with various stakeholders. She/he should also be able to collect and analyse data of various sources in a logic and efficient manner.

The start of the employment contract is in January 2018, with a duration of 18 months. The working place is the Joint Research Centre MOISA, Montpellier (France). Applications including a detailed CV and motivation letter have to be send until 30 November 2017 to:

Fatiha Fort (fatiha.fort@supagro.fr) and Mechthild Donner (mechthild.donner@inra.fr)