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EUROPEAN POLICIES AND INITIATIVES - TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY PLAN

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Introduction

In general terms, agriculture waste is defined as the totally of the residues left after the agricultural specific activities, such as crops cultivation and/or food processing. An effective farm management approach involves a higher awareness regarding the valorization potential of the residuals produced during the agricultural process. Thus, the obtained residues during the production processes are no longer considered waste, but categories of by-products, which can be exploited, developing innovation and production techniques. If a by-product is not marketable, it will probably have negative climate consequences. Adopting this type of strategies will improve not only the farmer wellbeing, and the local community welfare, by developing new products market, but it will also contribute to the natural resource conservation. Obtaining a balanced scale between the farmers revenues and the environment resource conservation represents the main objective often stipulated in the European directives (*The Green Deal, the new Circular Economy Plan, Zero Pollution Action Plan*). On the other hand, according to the others studies and publications, one of the main identified barriers between the farmer and applying the circular economy specific strategies is the lack of funds. This paper aims to summarize the suitable funding opportunities at European level, in order to facilitate the transition from the current agricultural business models to the circular model.

Materials and methods

In order to achieve the present article, several scientific methodologies were applied, without resuming at analysis and synthesis, simulations, system structural analysis, formal logical reasoning, historical research.

Results and conclusions

According to European Commission, a budget of 95.5 billion euro was allocated for 2021-2027 Horizon Europe programme (which represents an increased of 19.38% compared to Horizon 2020 budget). For Cluster 6 'Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment' the total budget reaches 9 billion euro, representing a share of 9.42% in the total Horizon Europe budget. Thus, through the results of the projects financed within Cluster 6, participants contribute to the United Nation Agenda 2030 (2015) and the European Green Deal (EC, december 2019) global objectives and targets, in close connection with *Farm to Fork Strategy* (EC, may 2020), the *EU Biodiversity Strategy* (EC, may 2020), the *EU Forest Strategy* for

2030 (EC, July 2021), the European Climate Pact (EC, December 2020), the EU Soil Strategy for 2030 (EC, November 2021), the Organic Action Plan (EC, April 2021) and the Long-term Vision for Rural Areas (EC, March 2024). In Figure 1 it can be observed the main lines of action financed within cluster 6 and the allocated grants for each category. Thus, it can be observed a highest level of budget allocated for facilitating the transition to a sustainable agriculture and agrifood chain (22.59%), but also to a sustainable bioeconomy and a clean environment (22.11%).

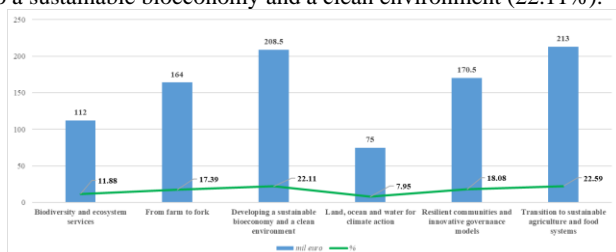


Figure 1. Allocated grants within Cluster 6 and topics, 2021-2027

Regarding the *The Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking* (CBE JU) open calls, a total budget of 213 mil. euro is allocated for *Innovation Actions* (IA, 165 mil. euro), *Research & Innovation Actions* (RIA, 38 mil. euro) and *Coordination and support actions* (CSA, 10 mil. euro). The call for proposals is still open, including for SME participation until 18th September 2024 (Figure 2).

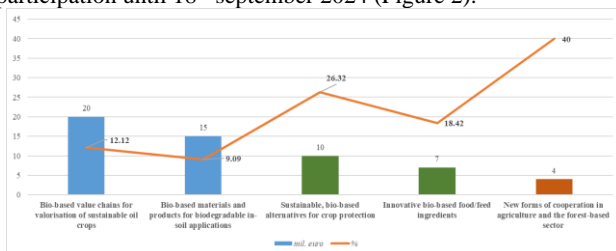


Figure 2. Allocated grants within CBE JU 2024 call for proposals, 2021-2027

The results obtained within querying the CBE JU database with the specific projects, completed or in progress, taking into account the agri-food waste origin waste, spot 7 projects focusing on *Crop protection and fertilisation*, 17 projects focusing on *Bio-based chemicals*, 21 projects focusing on *Food, feed and cosmetics*.

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