



Interview with the project's partner



LET'S GET TO KNOW ENVIRAL BETTER!

Please, describe a short bio of your professional background. Where are you from and what did you study?

Team of experts from ENVIRAL is represented by **Petra Ondrejčková** and **Igor Pipiška** and their co-workers, additional technologist and laboratory members of the company. They will shortly describe themselves.



PETRA ONDREJČKOVÁ

I am research & development specialist at biofuel production facility ENVIRAL a.s. since 2016. I have graduated at Slovak University of Technology as Doctor of Philosophy of Biochemistry and Biotechnology. Topic of my work was microbial production of natural compounds by endophytic

microorganism isolated from pharmaceutical plants. I have expertise in biotechnological processes, transformation processes of the raw materials and waste materials into the products with high added value. Within my practise at ENVIRAL I have gained experience in solving internal research activities in the field of biofuels, side-stream valorisation of our production, renewable energy sources, bioeconomy, all of which is represented in project EXCornsEED. I cooperate in developing strategies and development in the field of renewable energy production, coordinating co-operation in the area of applied research with educational and research institutions, and implementing the results of applied research and bringing them into industrial practice. I really enjoy cooperation with other partners from different fields, markets and even different countries, because we share knowledge to reach same goal – improving now for better tommorow.



IGOR PIPÍŠKA

I have graduated from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in Bratislava, Slovakia. During my working experience I have continued as plant designer for the processing and production of high-quality magnesium in China. Then I took on the positions of technologist, first in the food and later in the cement industry where I have focused on optimizing processes. Prior to joining ENVIRAL, I worked as a technical and sales consultant for Central Europe and Balkan countries in the field of cement technology. Currently I am in charge of effective management of the tasks assigned to the field of biofuels, renewable energy sources and valorisation of by-products from the production. My main interest and tasks within the EXCornsEED project are to support the group of researchers and transform project activities in to real business cases within the frame of exploitation and to bring the results into future industrial practice.

Could you give us a hint what your organization is about and what is your connection with the research topics from the project?

ENVIRAL, a.s. is part of Envien Group, one of the largest and most significant groups of companies in the CEE region active in the production of biofuels, based in Slovakia. ENVIRAL is the first and leading, privately held company in the area of bioethanol production. It was established in 2004 and the commercial production of bioethanol was launched in July 2007. Current annual production capacity is over 175,000 m³ of bioethanol, which has been increasing every year thanks to continuous optimization of processes. By production of bioethanol our Company declares at least 70 % reduction of greenhouse gas emissions when compared with the fossil equivalent - gasoline.

The Company puts emphasis on quality and state-of-the-art technology and employs the brightest professionals, qualified in the field of chemical technology and biotechnology.

The main vision of ENVIRAL is a waste less production process and its sustainability throughout the whole production chain. Naturally, that is how the main EXCornsEED vision was crafted at ENVIRAL site and we are glad we found keen partners with great expertise to cooperate with. ENVIRAL put emphasis on creation of subsequent and complementary technologies and novel applications to process all by-products from current manufacturing procedures, containing a rich spectrum of biologically and also commercially interesting chemical components as well as to utilizing the emitted CO₂ stream to produce new more valuable products with higher added value.

Could you clarify what is the role of ENVIRAL in EXCornsEED project?

ENVIRAL has initiated EXCornsEED project as we see the urgency to uncover the whole potential of side-streams from our processes, which are currently valorized mainly as animal feed. ENVIRAL approached partners with its main goal such as to develop and validate an integrated process of highly sustainable technologies to be applied to its side-streams for the recovery of proteins and other bio-active compounds and characterization/preparation of these as ingredients for food, detergents, and cosmetics markets. ENVIRAL, a large industry partner, is already commercially producing streams that serve as a feedstock for EXCornsEED project and distribute it to partners for detailed characterization and technology optimization.

ENVIRAL is ready to validate at pilot scale the technologies and processes developed in the EXCornsEED project. This will be the major step to provide sustainable solution - an affordable green local non-GMO plant protein and bioactive products. This way we will help to make an impact and address the social and economic problem of expected protein shortage and dependence on imports outside EU.

ENVIRAL as large industry partner is involved in exploitation activities to help to reach the better exploitation of the project results. ENVIRAL also takes part in dissemination, which is carried out through participation on national and international conferences, intensive publication of dissemination activities on ENVIRAL web page and via our business network. Our key responsible project persons are also providing input and cooperate on writing of scientific articles.

Have you published any scientific publications in the frame of the EXCornsEED project? If yes, could you provide a list?

Until now, we have published several scientific papers in the leading international, peer-reviewed, open access journals in the frame of the EXCornsEED project, mainly with close cooperation with our project partners (CREA, CTA, ICECHIM, SAP, most of them have been already listed by CREA partners). In these papers we report results of the activities conducted on the chemical characterization of the side streams and also papers focused on sustainability potential assessment. Currently, few more articles with our project partners are being prepared.

Is ENVIRAL participating in others related EU-funded projects? Which ones?

Yes, ENVIRAL employs experts in its field who are being actively involved not only in national projects (in tight cooperation with universities and research centres) but also take part in several EU-funded projects with circular economy approach. We actively seek cooperation on international level aiming to reach sustainable innovative way to help to tackle the climate change, to create new cross-sector interconnections and provide competitive energy supply and security.

KEEP INFORMED

If you want to learn more about the EXCornsEED project or get in touch with one of the EXCornsEED partners, please visit the EXCornsEED website or follow the project on Twitter and LinkedIn.

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