

Obtaining reclaimed water for industrial reuse from aquaculture sludge

Main results / outcomes

Aquaculture sludge has been demonstrated to be a valuable source of nutrients for agricultural applications (especially in N). Raw wastewater sludge can be separated with some technologies such as centrifugation or screw-press in two fractions (liquid and solid) for enhancing the nutrient content of the solid phase. The resulting liquid fraction can be treated for obtaining a useful reclaimed water which can help aquaculture industries to increase water savings. An ultrafiltration filtration (UF) coupled to a reverse osmosis (RO) system was shown to be effectively reduce the solid content (UF) and the nutrients content (RO) of the liquid fraction. The reclaimed water resulted in a high-quality water with low values regarding the turbidity (< 2 FNU), TSS (< 5 mg/L), COD (< 5 mg/L) or TP (< 1 mg/L). This fulfils the requirements established in the new Spanish Regulation (RD 1085/2024) for the water reuse in refrigeration processes and for the cleaning of surfaces without food contact.

Practical recommendations

A good flocculation during the separation phase helps to reduce the solid concentration in the liquid phase, enhancing the UF+RO effectiveness. We recommend using polymer-type flocculants to avoid damaging the membranes. Then, reducing the N-content of the liquid phase should be the target in the RO. By operating the RO to obtain a 50% of the permeate, a reduction of 80% of the incoming N could be achieved, resulting in a final concentration of less than 15 mg/L.



Figure 1. Pilot scale ultrafiltration module (in green) and reverse osmosis system (in purple).



Figure 2. Screw-press pilot system for the raw wastewater sludge separation.

About this abstract

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SEA2LAND project is a collaborative Innovation Action (IA) funded by the EU in the frame of the Horizon 2020 programme. The project aims to provide solutions to help overcome challenges related to food production, climate change and waste reuse. Based on the circular economy model, SEA2LAND promotes the production of large-scale fertilisers in the EU from own raw materials. This solution is expected to reduce the soil nutrient imbalance in Europe. The project is running from January 2021 to June 2025.

Website: www.sea2landproject.eu



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Obtención de agua reciclada para reutilización industrial a partir de lodos de acuicultura

Resultados principales

Se ha demostrado que los lodos de acuicultura son una fuente valiosa de nutrientes para aplicaciones agrícolas (especialmente en nitrógeno). Los lodos de aguas residuales sin tratar pueden separarse mediante algunas tecnologías, como la centrifugación o el prensado por tornillo, en dos fracciones (líquida y sólida) para mejorar el contenido de nutrientes de la fase sólida. La fracción líquida resultante puede tratarse para obtener agua reciclada útil, lo cual puede ayudar a las industrias acuícolas a aumentar el ahorro de agua. Un sistema de ultrafiltración (UF) acoplado a un sistema de ósmosis inversa (RO) ha demostrado ser eficaz para reducir el contenido de sólidos (UF) y el contenido de nutrientes (RO) de la fracción líquida. El agua reciclada obtenida fue de alta calidad, con valores bajos de turbidez (< 2 FNU), sólidos en suspensión totales (< 5 mg/L), demanda química de oxígeno (< 5 mg/L) o fósforo total (< 1 mg/L). Esto cumple con los requisitos establecidos en el nuevo Reglamento español (RD 1085/2024) para la reutilización del agua en procesos de refrigeración y en la limpieza de superficies sin contacto con alimentos.

Recomendaciones prácticas

Una buena floculación durante la fase de separación ayuda a reducir la concentración de sólidos en la fase líquida, mejorando la eficacia del sistema UF+RO. Recomendamos el uso de floculantes de tipo polimérico para evitar dañar las membranas. Posteriormente, la reducción del contenido de nitrógeno (N) en la fase líquida debe ser el objetivo del proceso de ósmosis inversa. Al operar el sistema de RO para obtener un 50% de permeado, se puede lograr una reducción del



Figura 1. Módulo de ultrafiltración a escala piloto (en verde) y sistema de ósmosis inversa (en morado).



Figura 2. Sistema piloto de prensado por tornillo para la separación de lodos de aguas residuales sin tratar.

Acerca de este resumen

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