

high-value products from agricultural residues through sustainable chains

Project number: 101081776

# **Deliverable D6.3**

Responsible Research and Innovation action plan

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R	Document, Report	
DEM	<b>DEM</b> Demonstrator, Pilot, Prototype	
DEC	DEC Websites, Patent Fillings, Videos, etc	
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# 1. Executive Summary

This report focuses on the definitions required to develop the "Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)" action plan of the AgriLoop project, which is a key objective of the project. Indeed, over the last decades RRI has been widely promoted in Europe, starting from the H2020 programme. In particular, RRI aims to decrease the distance between science and society by making the innovation process more open to the public, and to better anticipate the consequences of research. In this context, the AgriLoop partners are encouraged to make their research socially responsible and competitive by aligning research investment with social needs.

The main idea is to assess the social sustainability of the proposed concept, via specific indicators, e.g., the number of jobs created, the level of local employment, and the workers conditions. This objective can be attained through interviews, open dialogues, and focus groups, as well as quantitative surveys, which assure integrating the consumer perceptions throughout the stages of development, as well as to define a marketing strategy. Hence, the partners are committed to develop a new way of thinking connecting all aspects of R&I and society: public engagement, open access, gender equality, science education, ethics, and governance.

In order to develop the AgriLoop RRI action plan, the first activity has been the collection of data from all (both EU and CN) partners of the project through the preparation of a survey with ad hoc formulated questions.



### 2. Introduction

Dating back to 2012, the European Commission begun its own definitional effort to include the responsibility within the processes connected to research and innovation.

One of the guiding ideas was to look at the relationship between science and society from another perspective than what already presented within the "Science In Society" (SIS) work programme. The aim was to move from the concept of public awareness, which in fact aimed only at informing stakeholders, to that of Science With And For Society (SWAFS), recognizing society as not only interested in knowing or using the research results from science and innovation, but as a producer/co-creator itself of scientific results, capable of contributing to the scientific agenda. As a consequence, Horizon 2020 launched a Work Programme dedicated to SWAFS to support projects stressing the need for collaboration among all societal actors, in all phases of the research process and innovation, in order to better align the process itself and its impact with values, needs and expectations of the European society. To give shape to RRI as a research policy model to foster social needs and the involvement of society through inclusive and participatory tools and perspectives along all stages of the research process, six founding RRI pillars were identified, as follows:

- Public engagement, to involve society in research and innovation activities;
- **Gender equality**, to tackle gender issues both in researchers' careers and in research content;
- **Science education**, to increase formal and informal science education activities both in research institutions and in the broad society;
- Open access, to democratize access to knowledge and scientific results;
- Ethics, to include the ethical dimension in research and innovation processes;
- **Governance**, as a transversal pillar capable of integrating the other five in the definition of a governance model for science.

H2020 gave us the opportunity to reflect on this paradigm and to shift it from theory to practice by working on:

- RRI definitions and tools to ensure that science and innovation address social needs;
- RRI measurement and related indicators;
- RRI embedment within R&I actions, projects and policies;
- RRI pairing with other system fostering more participatory, inclusive, and equal societies such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations.

More in detail, thanks to several funded projects, European Research Funding and Performing Organisations (RFPOs) can rely on a robust knowledge base on RRI to measure (e.g. projects such as <u>MORRI</u> - Monitoring the Evolution and Benefits Of Responsible Research and Innovation, <u>Super MORRI</u>), embed (e.g. projects such as <u>HubIT - Technology with and for Society</u>, <u>New Horrison</u>) and train (<u>FIT4RRI - Fostering Improved Training Tools For Responsible Research & Innovation</u>, Foster Open Science) on it.



Within the Horizon Europe programme, AgriLoop will build on this knowledge to find its own way towards RRI.

# 3. AgriLoop for RRI

Within the project, a dedicated task (Task 6.5: Responsible Research and Innovation, RRI) fosters the RRI embedment both at project and institutional levels.

More in detail, the aim of the task is to assess and ensure RRI embedding as a defining feature of the AgriLoop project at the EU and CN levels by proactively raising awareness of RRI and its keys within the Consortium thus developing a Responsible Action Plan.

The present deliverable will define the indicators required to guide the Consortium towards the development of an RRI action plan in close relationship with the project management.

# 3.2. The Survey

In order to better match RRI with the specific AgriLoop needs, a survey has been developed (M6) to assess Consortium perception on:

- the most relevant RRI pillars both at institutional and project level;
- the most suitable indicators/dimensions to better define AgriLoop RRI approach;
- the alignment of AgriLoop actions with SDGs.

In terms of selected indicators, the survey has analysed the metric defined by MORRI (Monitoring the evolution and benefits Of Responsible Research and Innovation)<sup>1</sup>, which are well-established tangible. Metrics. As shown in the following table, for each RRI key, one indicator has been selected to assess the degree of responsibility of the AgriLoop partners.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Metrics and indicators of Responsible Research and Innovation\_Progress report D3.2\_Monitoring the Evolution and Benefits of Responsible Research and Innovation (MoRRI)

**Tab 1.** MORRI selected indicators (Note: Glass ceiling index gives a measure of difficulties for women in moving into highest positions)

No.	Indicator full name	Primary/ secondary data	Time series	Potential time series	Analytical level	Linkag e	Data collection method
GE1	Share of RPOs with gender equality plans	Primary data	No	Yes	Input, outcome	GOV	RPO-survey
GE2	Share of female researchers by sector	Secondary data	Yes	Yes	Input, output, outcome	-	-
GE3	Share of RFOs promoting gender content in research	Primary data	No	Yes	Input, output	GOV	RFO-survey
GE4	Dissimilarity index	Secondary data	Yes	Yes	Output	-	-
GE5	Share of RPOs with policies to promote gender in research content	Primary data	No	Yes	Input, outcome	-	RPO-survey
GE6	Glass ceiling index	Secondary data	Yes	Yes	Input, output, outcome	-	-
GE7	Gender wage gap	Secondary data	Yes	Yes	Output	-	-
GE8	Share of female heads of research performance organisations	Primary data	No	Yes	Input, outcome	-	RPO-survey
GE9	Share of gender-balanced recruitment committees at RPOs	Primary data	No	Yes	Input	GOV	RPO-survey
GE10	Number and share of female inventors and authors	Primary data	Yes	Yes	Input, output	-	Register data
SLSE1	Importance of societal aspects of science in science curricula for 15-18 year olds	Primary data	No	No	Input	-	Qualitative and desk- research
SLSE2	RRI-related training at RPOs	Primary data	No	Yes	Input	-	RPO-survey
SLSE3	Science communication culture	Secondary data	No	No	Output	PE	-
SLSE4	Citizen Science activities in RPOs	Primary data	No	Yes	Output	PE	RPO-survey
PE1	Models of public involvement in S&T decision making	Secondary data	No	Yes	Input	GOV	-
PE2	Policy-oriented engagement with science	Secondary data	Yes	Yes	Output	GOV	-
PE3	Citizen preferences for active participation in S&T decision making	Secondary data	Yes	Yes	Output	GOV, SLSE	-
PE4	Active information search about controversial technology	Secondary data	No	Yes	Output	SLSE	-
PE5	Public engagement performance mechanisms at the level of research institutions	Primary data	No	Yes	Input	SLSE	RPO-survey
PE6 PE7	Dedicated resources for public engagement  Embedment of public engagement activities in the funding structure of key public research funding agencies	Primary data Primary data	No No	Yes Yes	Input Input	GOV	RPO-survey RFO-survey
PE8	Public engagement elements as evaluative criteria in research proposal evaluations	Primary data	No	Yes	Input	GOV	RFO-survey
PE9	R&I democratization index	Primary data	No	Yes	Input	GOV	SiS actor survey
PE10	National infrastructure for involvement of citizens and societal actors in research and innovation	Primary data	No	Yes	Input	GOV	SiS actor survey
E1	Ethics at the level of universities	Primary data	No	Yes	Input, output, context	GOV, PE	RPO-survey
E2	National Ethics Committees Index (NEC index)	Secondary data	Yes	Yes	Depends on tailoring	GOV, SLSE, PE	-
E3	Research Funding Organisations Index	Primary data	Yes	Yes	Depends on tailoring	GOV, PE	RFO-survey
OA1	Open Access Literature (OAL)	Primary data	Yes	Yes	Output	-	Register data
OA2	Data publications and citations per country.	Primary data	Yes	Yes	Output	-	Register data
OA3	Social media outreach/take up of Open Access Literature and open research data	Primary data	Yes	Yes	Outcome	PE	Register data
OA4	Public perception of Open Access – PPOA	Secondary data	No	Yes	Output, context	GOV, PE	-
OA5	Funder Mandates	Secondary data	No	No	Output, context	GOV	-
OA6	RPO support structures for researchers as regards incentives and barriers for data sharing	Primary data	No	Yes	Input	GOV	RPO-survey
GOV1	Composite indicator of RRI governance	Secondary data	No	Yes	Input	GOV	-
GOV2	Existence of formal governance structures for RRI within research funding and performing organisations	Primary data	No	Yes	Input	-	RPO-survey, RFO-survey
GOV3	Share of research funding and performing organisations promoting RRI	Primary data	No	Yes	Input	-	RPO-survey, RFO-survey

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More in detail, the following indicators (one per category) have been selected:

- **GE5**: Share of RPOs (Research funding and Performing Organizations) with policies to promote gender in research content;
- SLSE4: Citizen science activities in RPOs;
- PE6: Dedicated resources for public engagement;
- E1: Ethics at the level of universities:
- OA3: Take up of Open Access literature and open research data;
- GOV2: Existence of formal governance structures for RRI within RFPOs.

The rationale beyond this choice is linked with the selection of indicators based on primary data, thus measurable at organizational level, not in a time series and therefore particularly suitable for a survey and a comparison between organizations.

In particular, the 6 selected indicators, considered particularly relevant for the AgriLoop project, have been assessed through the following questions:

- **GE5:** Does your organization have specific policies to promote gender in research content?
- SLSE4: Does your organization performs citizen science activities?
- PE6: Does your organization have dedicated resources for public engagement?
- **E1:** Are there in your organization specific bodies/committees for ethical assessment/clearance?
- **OA3:** Does your organization provide a repository for open access publications and/or open research data?
- GOV2: Does your organization have a reference person/office to promote RRI?

MORRI indicators seem very suitable to evaluate organisations. However, in order to better define the dimensions of AgriLoop responsibility, the indicators developed within the HubIT - Technology with and for Society EUproject will represent the reference point (see **Figure 1** below) to assess RRI priorities within the AgriLoop project.



# Key measurable success indicators

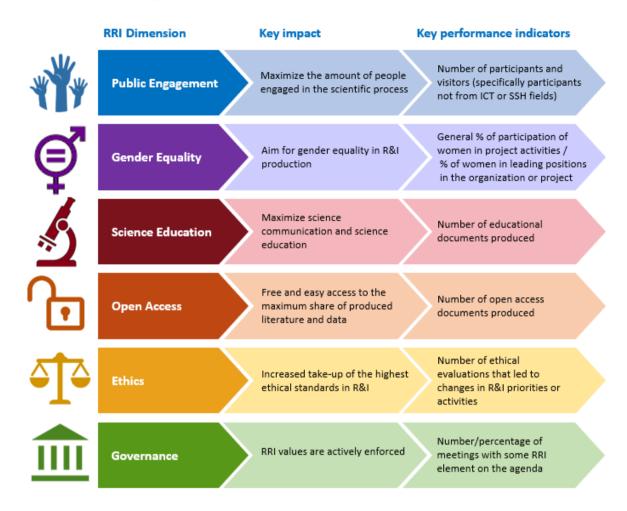


Figure 1. The HubIT indicators

In particular, the HubIT indicators have been employed to start defining the dimension of analysis and related measurements that should represent AgriLoop specific peculiar approach towards RRI.

To start with data collection for the development of the AgriLoop RRI action plan, a survey was organized with the same content but with different links for the European and Chinese partners.

The link for the European partners was:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1z4VoCIYGnsn4gKhiclwxsHWjfjkW5wUj01sgCKLAYV Y/edit?ts=64b614c4

The link for the Chinese partners was:

https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/1345fe08-84f9-ef0a-1a90-47767adbfb1f



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#### 3.2. Results

This section summarizes the main outcomes of the survey for both EU and CN partners. The following description has been performed by separately elaborating the data resulting from the two surveys.

## Main outcomes from the European partners

Concerning the European partners, 18 out of 22 partners participated in the survey, with one person from each organization filling out all the 18 questions of the survey.

Figure 2 shows a summary chart of the main questions, based on MORRI indicators, made to the European partners, with reference to their policy concerning each of the RRI pillars and, more specifically, regarding the promotion of gender in research, the scientific activities and citizen involvement, the presence of specific committees for ethical evaluation, the publications and open research data and the presence of a prepost office for the promotion of RRI.

In particular, the response was very positive for five of the six RRI pillars, especially about the gender promotion policy in research content and community involvement in research activities, equal to 55.6 % for both. Furthermore, 61.1 % responded positively regarding the presence of ethics committees. Whereas the presence of a dedicated person or office for RRI promotion is present in only 16.7 % of the surveyed partners, and about 39% of the partners do not know about that.

More in detail, RRI at the University of Montpellier is promoted by the 'DIPA', a major interface service between the university and the institutional and socio-economic world, aimed at supporting research activities, laboratories, and researchers through the creation of a communication platform between them and national and international partners. At the University of Ghent (Ugent), RRI is embedded in the Framework for Good Research Practices. At Sapienza University of Rome, for instance, the RRI is partially embed in the offices devoted to outreach and impact, even though an office entirely devoted to RRI is still missing.

All information about the abovementioned examples can be found at these links:

https://www.umontpellier.fr/en/universite/presidence/directions-et-services-communs/direction-delinnovation-et-des-partenariats

https://www.ugent.be/en/research/framework

https://www.uniroma1.it/en/pagina/office-outreach-activities



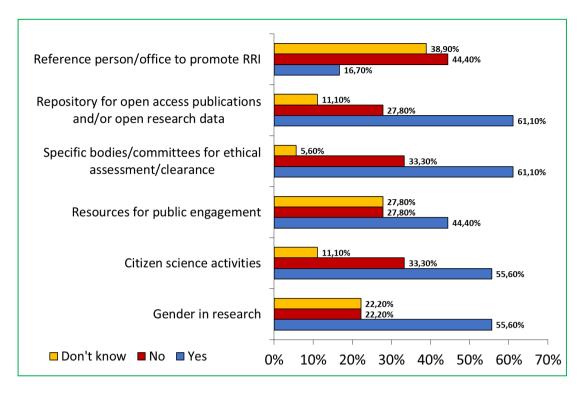


Figure 2. Summary of the main survey outcomes from the European partners

Moving from the institutional policies to the project, the first level of analysis was intended to point out the most relevant RRI pillars for the project.

In this context, regarding the question "Which are the most relevant RRI keys for AgriLoop project", considering that each partner had to give a preference on a maximum of 3 out of 5 keys, the open access key received a higher number of preferences (15) with a percentage equal to 83.3 %, while ethics and governance were less preferred by the partners, with 5 (27.8 %) and 4 (22.2%) choices, respectively. The results are reported in **Figure 3**.

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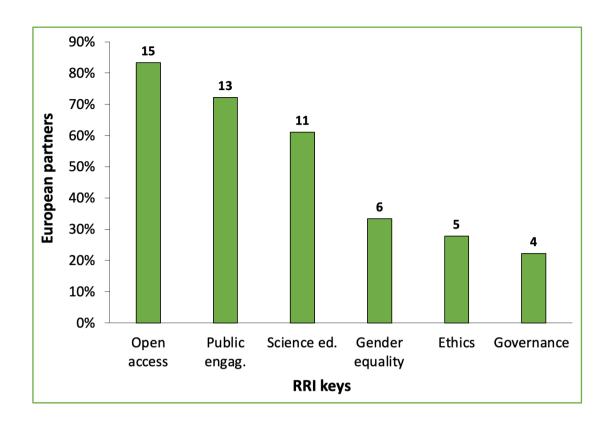


Figure 3. Most relevant RRI keys for the AgriLoop project for European partners

Dealing more specifically with potentially responsible indicators, as those suggested by the HubIT project, we asked the European partners to define the suitability of the 5 proposed indicators listed below in a scale from 1 (not suitable at all) to 5 (extremely suitable). Obtained data are reported in figures from 4 to 8:

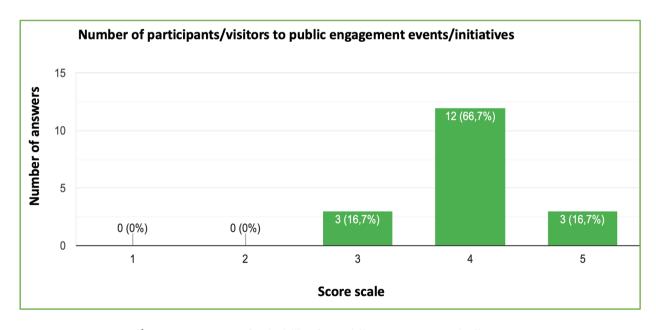


Figure 4. Degree of suitability for public engagement indicator





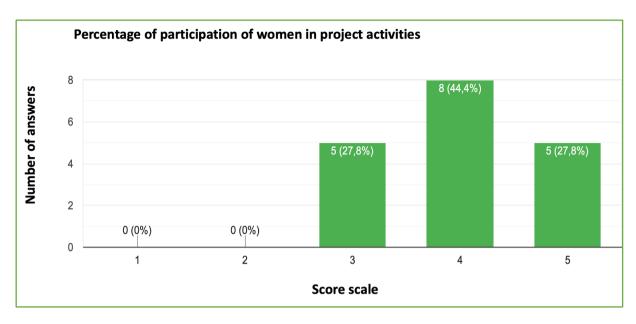


Figure 5. Degree of suitability for gender indicator

In the case of gender indicator (**Figure 5**), one partner suggested to ask also for the role of the female researchers involved in the activities.

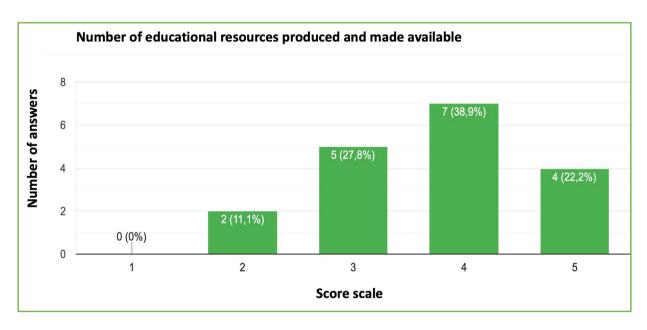


Figure 6. Degree of suitability for science education indicator

For the "science education" indicator (**Figure 6**), one partner suggested to monitor the number of readers/users of resources rather than simply the number of resources available. Another partner suggested to focus more on the quality than on the number of resources.





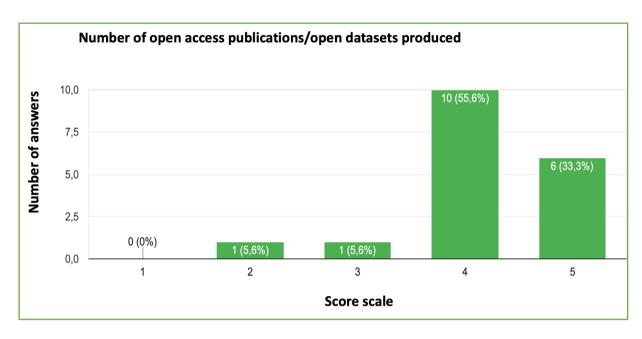


Figure 7. Degree of suitability for open access indicator

Also, for the "open access" indicator (**Figure 7**) one partner suggested to monitor the number of readers/users consulting publications and datasets rather than the number of publications and open dataset produced.

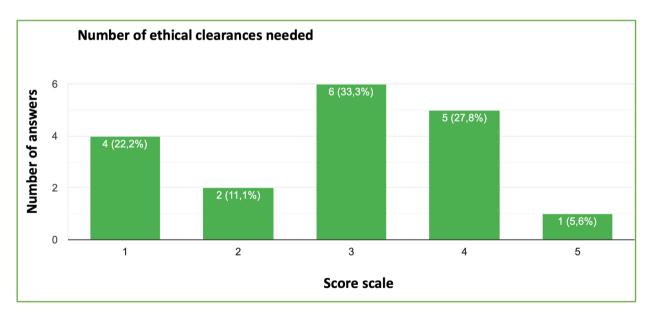


Figure 8. Degree of suitability for ethics indicator

Concerning the "suitability for ethics" indicator (**Figure 8**), some partners, as it seems difficult compared to other fields such as medicine to find where ethical concerns relies, suggested to develop ethical guidelines and to assess the percentage of clearances approved to respect with those submitted in a certain period.





Since the AgriLoop project aims to stimulate a global circular bio-based society contributing to the development of the SDGs, the latter have been considered in the survey. In particular, in the last question of the survey 16 SDGs were reported, by asking the project partners to choose which ones can be considered the most relevant SDGs for the project, with a maximum number of three choices.

As reported in **Figure 9**, the results indicate that the goal #12 "Responsible consumption and production" has a higher relevance for partners (72.2% with 13 positive answers) followed by goals #13 (Climate action), #15 (Life and land), and #9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) which collected a percentage in the answers up to 50.0%, 38.9%, and 44.4 %, respectively.

On the other hand, goal #10 (Reduced inequalities) and goal #16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) received no preference from the European partners

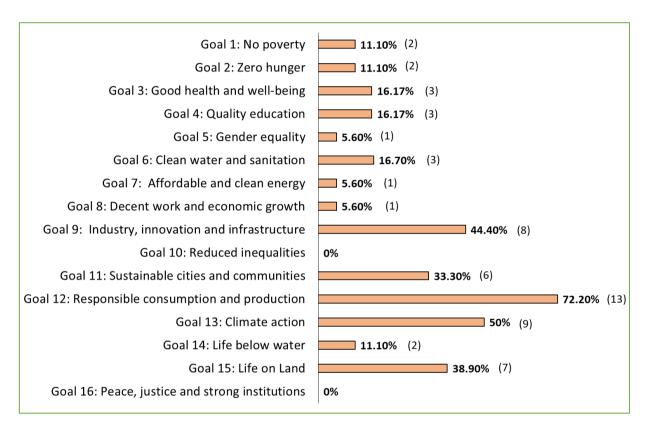


Figure 9. Most relevant SDGs for the AgriLoop project for European partners

Some of the responses from the partners justifying their choice of SDGs are reported below:

"AgriLoop is about innovation in the agricultural sector and related industries (Goal 9). Finding ways to upcycle food wastes and byproducts, we can more effectively use our resources, making our lives less unsustainable (Goal 11). If materials and products can be created from waste, we can decrease consumption of other products (Goal 12)"

"AgriLoop creates new green and sustainable processes that could possibly substitute actual petrol-based analogous processes (Goal 9 and 11). These may have a positive impact on environment by reducing the release of  $CO_2$  (Goal 13) and the amount of

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disposed perishable waste (Goal 12) producing in the long term a better life on land (Goal 15)".

"AgriLoop intends to increase the competitiveness of bio-based industrial value chains following the acquisition of new knowledge and expertise (thus innovation) on agriresidues refineries, thus clearly focusing on SDGs #9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), #12 (Responsible consumption and production), and #15 (Life and land). The innovation potential of AgriLoop consortium will be boosted by a cluster of many Industrial partners."

### Main outcomes from the Chinese partners

The same survey was sent to the Chinese partners and the related main outcomes are described below.

In particular, 11 out of 15 partners participated to the survey and multiple answers were provided by each partner (e.g., 9 by IFST-CAA, 5 by BIOMA-CAAS, 4 by SDIC, etc.), for a total of 25 answers (missing SJCOF, SYBT, SCRG and BJAMS answers).

With reference to the policy about the promotion of gender in research, the scientific activities and citizen involvement, the presence of specific committees for ethical evaluation, the publications and open research data and the presence of a pre-post office for the promotion of RRI, the results of the survey are reported in Figure 10.

In particular, the response was very positive for three of the six categories, especially about the presence of ethics committees, of resources for public engagement and regarding the citizen science activities, equal to 73.1%. Furthermore, almost 54% responded positively regarding the gender in research. Whereas the presence of a dedicated person or office for RRI promotion is present for only 30.8% of the surveyed partners, and about 61.5% of partners are not aware of that.



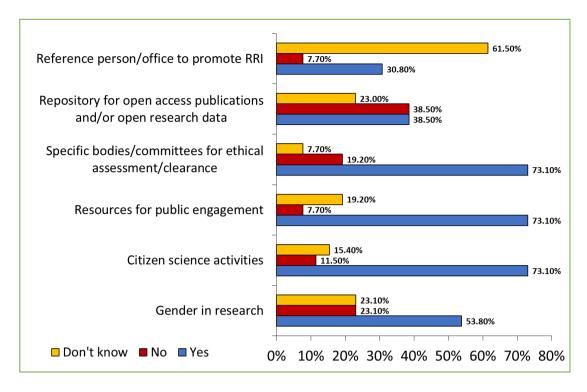


Figure 10. Summary of the main survey outcomes from the Chinese partners

Regarding the most relevant RRI keys for the AgriLoop project, each Chinese partner had to give a preference for a maximum of three keys, and the results are reported in Figure 11. The "science education" key received a higher number of preferences (21), with a percentage equal to 80.8 %, followed by "public engagement" and "gender equality" which account for a preference number equal to 18 (i.e., 69%) and 12 (46%), respectively.

While as for the European partners, also for the Chinese ones "ethics and governance" were less preferred, with 3 (12 %) and 7 (27%) choices, respectively.

Considering these data, it is evident a great difference between the European and Chinese partners on the relevance given to the "open access" key, which for the Chinese partners accounts for 38.5% (10 votes) while for the Europeans it is 83.3% (15 votes).



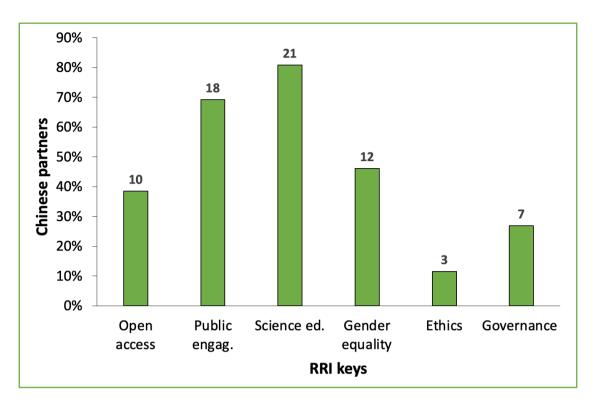


Figure 11. Most relevant RRI keys for the AgriLoop project for Chinese partners

**Figure 12** shows the main results concerning the choice made by the Chinese partners on the question related to the most relevant SDGs for the AgriLoop project. According to the data collected from the survey, the goal #3 "Good health and well-being" hold a significant relevance for the Chinese partners (57.7% for a number of 15 answers) followed by goals #13 (Climate action), #7 (Affordable and clean energy), and #11 (Sustainable cities and communities) which account for 42.0%, 34.6% and 30.8 % of all answers, respectively.

Compared to the preferences provided by the European partners, the distribution of Chinese choices is more heterogeneous. Furthermore, goals #10 (Reduced inequalities) and #16 (Pease, justice and strong institutions), which received no preference in the European survey, reached 8.0 % (2 votes) and 15.4% (4 votes) in the Chinese survey.

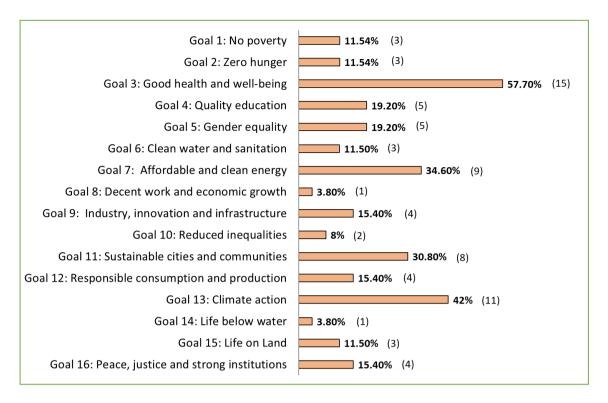


Figure 12. Most relevant SDGs for the AgriLoop project for Chinese partners

Some of the responses collected from the Chinese partners justifying their choice related to the most relevant SDGs for the AgriLoop project are reported below:

"Clean and renewable energy, and health are primary concerns for all people over the world."

"By aligning with these SDGs, AgriLoop aims to contribute to the broader global agenda of sustainable development and create positive impacts in the agricultural sector and beyond."

"In my view, this project mainly focuses on the eco-efficient and sustainable conversion of agricultural residues into high added-value bio-products to boost the economic growth, reduce  $CO_2$  emissions and provide a sound pattern of agri-production and processing."

### 4. Conclusions

Task 6.5 of the AgriLoop project is dedicated to Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), which aims to assess and ensure RRI embedding as a defining feature of the project at the EU and CN level through the development of a Responsible Action Plan. To accomplish this objective, the first action consisted in the collection of data (though an ad hoc survey) from all the project partners by means of questions aimed at:

- monitoring the degree of responsibility of partners' organisations in each of the RRI
- assessing the suitability of a first set of indicators to better define the concrete actions to fully develop the RRI action plan.

Also, a specific question related to the relevance of SDGs for the project development was considered; indeed sustainability, in its broader sense, will also be taken into consideration in the action plan.

Overall, a great interest of the AgriLoop Consortium to RRI was evident by the high participation of the partners (18 out of 22 in Europe and 11 out of 15 in China) in the survey.

It is interesting to note that, comparing the results obtained from the European and Chinese surveys, some differences in the definition of RRI links to the project were noted. As an example, the relevance given to the "open access" key accounted respectively for 38.5% and 83.3% for the Chinese and the Europeans partners. Also, with reference to the question "Which are the most relevant SDGs for the AgriLoop project?", the goals #10 (Reduced inequalities) and #16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) received no preference in the European survey, but they resulted in 8.0 % and 15.4% of the overall votes, respectively, in the Chinese survey. For European partners, the goal #12 (Responsible consumption and production) was found the most relevant (72.2%) for the project, whereas for the Chinese partners the goal #3 "Good health and well-being" hold the main relevance (57.7%).

These differences are relevant in the decision of the main actions to be taken to develop the RRI action plan. To start with, the main actions will be:

- to involve partners in the design of concrete initiatives about RRI based on the most favorite RRI keys. For instance, as public engagement and science education were considered particularly relevant, both for Chinese and European partners, the Agriloop project could design strategies and initiatives to better embed these 2 RRI keys into its dissemination and communication plan;
- another interesting option could be to work on the less favorite dimensions such as Open Access and Ethics to develop guidelines and to present some supporting actions during project's meetings.



Finally, a specific action will consist in the implementation of indicators allowing to assess the measure of the selected ones and trying to define, in addition, some qualitative indicators taking into consideration also the most relevant SDGs pointed out in the survey.

