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1	Impact of mild alkali dosage on immobilized Exiguobacterium spp. mediated cost and energy
2	efficient sludge disintegration

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Abstract

Approaches to (extracellular polymeric substance) EPS removal were studied with major aim to enhance the biodegradability and sludge solubilization. In this study, a novel approach of entrapment of bacterial strain was carried out to achieve long term activity of protease secreting bacteria *Exiguobacterium sp.* A mild treatment of potassium hydroxide (KOH) was applied to remove EPS which was followed by entrapment under the biological pretreatment. The efficiency of *Exiguobacterium* was predicted through dissolvable organic and suspended solids (SS) reduction. The maximum dissolvable organic matter released was 2300 mg/L with the solubilization of 23% which was obtained for sludge without EPS (SWOE). For dissolvable organic release, SWOE showed higher final methane production of 232 mL/g COD at the production rate of 16.2 mL/g COD. d. The SWOE pretreatment was found to be cost effective and less energy intensive beneficial in terms of energy and cost (43.9 KWh and -8.2 USD) when compared to sludge with EPS (SWE) pretreatment (-177.6 KWh and -91.23USD).

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