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Nitrogen removal and intentional nitrous oxide production from reject water in a coupled nitritation/nitrous denitritation system under real feed-stream conditions

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9 Abstract

10 A Coupled Aerobic-anoxic Nitrous Decomposition Operation (CANDO) was performed 11 over five months to investigate the performance and dynamics of nitrogen elimination and 12 nitrous oxide production from digester reject water under real feed-stream conditions. A 13 93% conversion of ammonium to nitrite could be maintained for adapted seed sludge in the 14 first stage (nitritation). The second stage (nitrous denitritation), inoculated with 15 conventional activated sludge, achieved a conversion of 70% of nitrite to nitrous oxide after 16 only 12 cycles of operation. The development of an alternative feeding strategy and the 17 addition of a coagulant (FeCl₃) facilitated stable operation and process intensification. 18 Under steady-state conditions, nitrite was reliably eliminated and different nitrous oxide 19 harvesting strategies were assessed. Applying continuous removal increased N₂O yields by 20 16% compared to the application of a dedicated stripping phase. These results demonstrate 21 the feasible application of the CANDO process for nitrogen removal and energy recovery 22 from ammonia rich wastewater. 23

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