

PRESS RELEASE

Cyril Halter selected to lead ecoRobotix's operational expansion

03.03.2020 • Yverdon-les-Bains, Suisse • ecoRobotix SA, the Swiss-based leader in environmentally friendly weeding robots, has appointed Cyril Halter as its new COO. Halter is an experienced entrepreneur and will guide the company through the next phase of its operational expansion. ecoRobotix plans to use the proceeds of its third fund-raising round, scheduled for later this year, to launch the large-scale production of its robots and finance its growth strategy over the coming years.

Halter is a co-founder of the award-winning company senseFly and served as COO of Wingtra, doubling that firm's headcount in just two years. As the new COO of ecoRobotix, he brings proven capabilities in strategic planning, operational execution, business creation and business development for major companies.

Recently Halter worked on a project to renovate a farm in Gros-de-Vaud, which piqued his interest in the potential that "smart farming" technology holds to reduce the environmental impact of agricultural activities.

He is therefore excited about this opportunity at ecoRobotix to use his business skills to promote farming robotics. "After working for over ten years in the aviation industry, I'm looking forward to the new challenges I will face," says Halter. "This startup has made a name for itself among Switzerland's fast-growing businesses with solid international prospects. I also firmly believe in the company's values and enthusiastic, hard-working employees."

"Cyril is a seasoned entrepreneur and a steeled pilot capable of evaluating risks," says Aurélien G. Demaurex, ecoRobotix co-founder and CEO. "Like us at ecoRobotix, he believes in the potential of advanced technology to shrink the environmental footprint of commercial farming and to enable healthier, more sustainable ways of growing food. Cyril will steer our company through the transition from R&D and testing to the large-scale production of our robots."

A third fundraising round in 2020

ecoRobotix is a pioneering company that has developed a practical, affordable and ecologically sustainable weeding option for farmers. Its solar-powered robots operate independently and are equipped with sophisticated artificial intelligence and electronics systems. They spray targeted micro-doses of herbicides exactly on the weeds to be killed, thereby reducing the amount of chemicals used, the time needed for weeding and the costs for farmers.

The firm is planning a third fundraising round, targeting CHF 15 million, in the second quarter of this year. "We will use the proceeds to launch the large-scale production of our robots and obtain market approval in key countries – first in Europe, then in the rest of the world," says Demaurex. "The fresh capital will also help us develop new features for our robots. We are looking forward to working with Cyril as we enter this next phase of our growth strategy."

About Cyril Halter

Halter has extensive experience in business creation and development, acquiring solid operational and leadership skills at major firms throughout his career. In 2009 he co-founded senseFly, which has since become a market leader in professional drones. He more recently served as COO of Wingtra, a supplier of mapping drones, where he set up the company's manufacturing operations and oversaw the ramping up of production. Halter also led product development for the infrared vision business of Vectronix, a defense and aerospace firm.

Halter has a Master's in physics from EPFL and a degree in flight dynamics from Cranfield University in the UK. He is also an airplane and helicopter pilot and worked as a helicopter flight test engineer for the Swiss government. In 2012 he completed a program and graduated at the Empire Test Pilot School in the UK.

In recent years, Halter has shifted his focus to more down-to-earth values, carrying out a number of environment-related projects in the heart of the Vaud countryside.

About ecoRobotix

ecoRobotix supplies next-generation, autonomous weeding robots that reduce the environmental impact of farming while lowering costs for farmers. The company was founded in northern Vaud and obtained prefinancing from both the Foundation for Technological Innovation (FIT) and Innovaud. These funds enabled the company to develop an initial prototype in 2014 and launch an R&D project with the Swiss government.

ecoRobotix completed a CHF 3 million fundraising round in 2016 and another CHF 10.6 million round in 2018, using the proceeds to develop prototypes that were tested in various pilot projects across Europe. The company became a B Corp member in 2019 and recently joined the Scale Up Vaud program, which showcases 27 high-growth businesses in the Canton.

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