

AQUAPOLLUTANTS ROADSHOW: AMPLIFYING RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION AMONGST PARTNER COUNTRIES

The pollution of our water resources such as rivers, estuaries and coastal ecosystems by anthropogenic activities is one of the biggest concerns facing the world today. These pollutants, or contaminants of emerging concern (CECs), include chemicals like antibiotics, as well as microorganisms, such as antibiotic resistant bacteria and their antibiotic resistance genes, and are sourced from consumer products, urban areas, agriculture, animal husbandry farms, industry, and maritime activities. To address these challenges, 32 funding partner organisations from 26 countries and 3 Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs) on Water, Oceans and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) came together to develop and implement a joint transnational call for research and innovation projects on risks posed to human health and the environment by pollutants and pathogens present in the water resources.

The call was subsequently launched in February of 2020 and comprised of 3 thematic areas as follows:

- Theme 1: Measuring – the environmental behaviour of contaminants of emerging concern (CECs), pathogens, and antimicrobial-resistant bacteria in aquatic ecosystems;
- Theme 2: Evaluating – risk assessment and management of CECs, pathogens, and antimicrobial-resistant bacteria from aquatic ecosystems (inland, coastal and marine) to human health and environment; and
- Theme 3: Taking Actions – strategies to reduce CECs, pathogens and antimicrobial resistant bacteria in aquatic ecosystems (inland, coastal and marine).

As a result, 18 international consortium projects with 103 applicants/participants across the globe are currently being implemented to a tune of 24 million euros in response to the call. A majority of these projects are either completed or at the verge of being completed and have already produced novel, practical, strategic scientific results that can be used to address CEC challenges in water sector. Additionally, the results can be extrapolated and piloted in different parts of the world. Additionally, a TransNet project on cross cutting issues from the projects was initiated in order to capitalize on synergies between the 18 AquaticPollutants projects, offering a platform for knowledge exchange on specific topics, and offer the possibility for joint actions on these topics. The collaboration on these CCI in cross-project working groups provided added value for the 18 projects by supporting the exploitation, transfer and implementation of project results.

Aim of the Roadshow sessions

The aim of the Roadshows is to disseminate and valorise the results of some of the relevant and strategic projects. In this regard, some of the AquaPollutants projects will be showcased in two different roadshows in two different countries as the AquaPollutants project comes to an end. Therefore, each roadshow will showcase a few strategic projects based on the themes. One roadshow will be held in Sweden in August during the Stockholm World Water Week 2024 (SWWW), and the other will be held in South Africa in 2025 during the International Water Association (IWA) conference on Water Reuse and Reclamation. The roadshows will strengthen international cooperation, establish partnerships to facilitate uptake of the project results and where applicable, advocate for regional partnership to pilot and extend some of the projects in member countries.

Target Audience: Academia, Policy Makers, Civil society, NGOs, Businesses, Water Service, Institutions, Innovators, funders and investors, and programme owners.

Conveners: AquaticPollutants, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology / Project Management Agency Karlsruhe (KIT), Swedish Research Council (SRC), and Water Research Commission South Africa (WRC)

ROADSHOW 1: PROGRAMME

Country: Stockholm, Sweden

Time: 15:00 to 16:00

Date: 28 August 2024

Venue: Online (Virtual) <https://aquatic-pollutants.eu/Events/World+Water+Week/World+Water+Week+2024.html>

Online link: To be shared with speakers and participants 24hrs prior to the start of the session.

Programme Director: Dr Amelia Marutle (WRC)

15:00-15:05	Welcome	Dr Amelia Marutle (WRC)
15:05-15:15	Opening Address: International Project Cooperation - Importance of programmes such as Aquaticpollutants	Dr Mamohloding Tlhagale (WRC)
15:15-15:35	AquaticPollutants Thematic Project Partner presentations: An overview of how research in the AquaticPollutants call is addressing and solving African challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAIRWISE (5 min) • REWA (5 min) • SARA (5 min) • SERPIC (5 min) 	Facilitator: Dr Amelia Marutle (WRC) Professor Charles Masembe, Makerere University, Uganda Professor Bice Martincigh, University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa Professor Clemêncio Nhantumbo, Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique Dr Marelize Botes, Stellenbosch University, South Africa
15:35-15:50	Q & A with open discussion with African Project Partner Leads and Audience	Facilitator: Dr Nonhlanhla Kalebaila (WRC)
15:50-16:00	Closing Address: Are we making progress in addressing water challenges for sustainable development? A forward look.	Dr Simon Frank (KIT)