

## **SETAC EUROPE 33<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL MEETING.**

### **“DATA-DRIVEN ENVIRONMENTAL DECISION-MAKING”**

The SETAC Europe 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting took place from April 30<sup>th</sup> to May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in Dublin, Ireland, marking the first hybrid conference with both in-person and online components.

This year's meeting achieved a record attendance, reaching the maximum capacity of the convention centre. A total of 2,379 presenters participated in the five-day event, delivering 554 platform presentations, presenting 1,747 posters, and hosting 78 virtual presentations. The meeting facilitated crucial discussions on various topics, including the EU Green Deal, the UNEP science-policy panel for chemicals and waste management, and the ongoing efforts to monitor, measure, and mitigate the impacts of microplastics, among others.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting was inaugurated on Sunday with several training Courses and Seminars. To foster social connections, a meeting guide gathering was organized to facilitate interactions between young scientists' first-time attendees and experienced SETAC members. After that, the Opening and Award Ceremony took place, followed by a warm welcome from the organizers. The opening session continued with a plenary lecture by Pamela Byrne, a renowned food safety authority in Ireland, who delivered a plenary lecture titled "From Policy to Regulatory Decisions – Why Data Matters? – A Regulators Perspective." The day concluded with a Welcome reception, where an atmosphere of camaraderie and networking was created among participants.

On Monday 1<sup>st</sup>, the meeting started with 10 parallel presentation sessions on different topics including climate change, micro(nano) plastics occurrence and fate, antimicrobials in the environment, environmental risk assessment of UV filters, biomonitoring approaches, circularity systems, the fate of contaminants in the soil-plant continuum and a special session about effect modelling. At the same time, posters were exhibited up to the end of the day. After the coffee break, the second presentation session included interesting talks about POPs and emerging pollutants, LCA of recycling abiotic and biobased materials, exposure of ionic and ionisable organic chemicals and a special session entitled “Establishment of a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and prevent pollution”. The last part of the session was dedicated to short poster spotlights for PhD students. Lunch break took place both at the exhibition hall and in the form of a packed lunch with the option of a nice walking tour in Dublin, but other options were also available for those interested in learning more about specific topics, including a special Student Lunch about different career perspectives and the participation in different seminars. In the afternoon, it was the time for the last presentation session, topical discussions and the daily plenary, given by Peter Fantke from the Technical University of Denmark. The last part of the meeting was dedicated to poster corners.

On Tuesday morning, 10 new parallel sessions took place. There were remarkable platform presentations about 6-PPD quinone as a polymer additive of emerging concern, as well as the latest findings about polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAs). After the coffee break with the poster exhibition, new oral presentations about environmental fate and exposure to pesticides, the state-of-art of plastics in terrestrial environments and insect ecotoxicology were performed. In

addition, there were notable talks about wastewater analysis for assessing public health status that encompassed different perspectives. In the afternoon sessions, talks about old and new plastic additives and their implications for the environment and human health were remarkable, aside from those about climate change in Arctic and Antarctica and its effect on contaminants in the abiotic and biotic matter. Julio Fernández talked about the impact of alternative plasticizers through diet. Regarding the topical discussions, particular attention was drawn to "The Global Biodiversity Framework: How can we reconcile the chemical sector with a nature-positive future". This day was the SETAC Science Slam, where some of the conference attendees presented their work in a creative and informal way, highlighting the performance of "Daphnia Dating in Dublin: Sensing the Water" by Katie Reilly. After the conference ended, the Student Mixer took place in the Dining Hall of Trinity College.

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> of May started again with 10 parallel sessions with different hot topics including pharmaceuticals in the environment, micro and nano plastics, life cycle assessment and various sessions concerning ecotoxicology and risk assessment. There was a total of 141 platform presentations, 9 poster spotlight presentations and 447 posters exposed throughout the day. During the first morning session, there were remarkable platform presentations: "Innovations in analytical methods used for monitoring emerging contaminants in marine and freshwater aquatic environments", mainly led by Fiona Regan. The session entitled "Human and veterinary pharmaceuticals in the environment – risk, prioritisation and new insights", took place during the whole day, and enabled many presenters to share their research with interesting presentations such as "Sewage overflows and historical landfills affecting pharmaceutical pollution in Scottish rivers: spatiotemporal distribution and hazards" by John Wilkinson. In the afternoon, there was another interesting session concerning non-target screening advances. In parallel, another session covered the hot topic of tire wear and micro rubber particles, where both the impact of their presence and the need for environmental regulations and mitigations were discussed. The day was finalized with the daily plenary by Anja Gladbach, from Bayer AG who gave an interesting talk entitled: *5 years of experience in sharing industry safety studies: Where did we start, where are we now and what have we learnt? A reflection about Open Science, trust and the way ahead of us.*

The final SETAC 33<sup>rd</sup> day was Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> of May, which began with the now typical 10 simultaneous sessions addressing current issues of concern such as PFAS, nano plastics, and life cycle assessment among other hot topics. As a personal remark, there was a session called "HR-MS Analysis of Metabolites and transformation products of organic pollutants – What remains unknown" which was held by our colleagues Nicola Montemurro, Maria Vittoria Barbieri, Serge Chiron and Sandra Pérez and where two teammates presented a poster spotlight, Olga Gómez and Sandra Callejas. Moving forward, the Coffee break and the Poster break come out, and more than 400 posters were presented simultaneously. Thursday held four of our posters, Olga, Sandra, Maria Vittoria and Francesc presented their research with a successful day with loads of questions and contacts to share knowledge in the future. After the break, another 10 platform sessions were conducted, the "PMT/vPvM substances: Assessment, Management and Regulation" session chaired by Michael Neumann, Hans Peter Arp and Anna Lenquist, was plenty of interesting talks and was also very nicely conducted by the chairmen, giving an atmosphere of informality that was appreciated by the audience allowing smooth participation. Finally, the last lunch and poster break arrived with the following closing ceremony and awards, which consisted of a 20-minutes presentation where the best platform and poster award were provided.

In summary, the conference was exciting and had plenty of new knowledge to apply to our research. We would like to mention the high-quality platform sessions we lived, with loads of new research focused on the environment. We are grateful to attend such a huge conference and we encourage everyone involved in environmental research to assist to the next SETAC conference that will be held in Seville. This opportunity would not have been possible without the help of the SECyTA, their work is essential to expand national knowledge through the rest of the world, thank you for the collaboration in the name of the five researchers involved, Maria Vittoria, Sandra, Julio, Olga and Francesc.

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