

The Future of Water in the Changing World: Innovations in PFAS and micropollutants

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
19–20 NOVEMBER 2025, BERLIN

EMPEREST and APRIORA
co-financed by Interreg BSR
protect the clean Baltic Sea

Mariia Andreeva – Communications Coordinator

UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES SUSTAINABLE CITIES COMMISSION

Mariia Andreeva, M.A., has been working in the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission, hosted by the City of Turku, since 2016: she coordinates the communication, administration, and transfer activities in a series of transnational projects related to wastewater and stormwater management, and climate adaptation. Mariia has her educational background in the Baltic Sea Region Studies, and for the past 4 years she has been the communications coordinator of the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission Secretariat. She also leads the EMPEREST project communications.



CONFERENCE: Mariia Andreeva is one of the presenters of “The EMPEREST journey and key messages for policies and practice” on 19 November.

Matthias Barjenbruch – Head of the Department

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Matthias Barjenbruch has been working as a Head of the Department of Urban-Water Management at the Berlin University of Technology since 2006. He has also held the position of the director of TU-Berlin Campus El Gouna, Egypt between 2016-2022. Matthias Barjenbruch is the Vice-president and member of the board of the German association of water, wastewater and waste (DWA) and the President of the DWA Section North-East. His fields of expertise include advanced wastewater treatment and water reuse, water-energy nexus, and stormwater management and treatment.

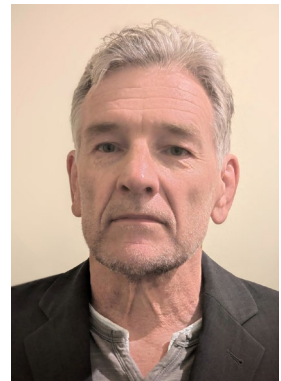


CONFERENCE: Matthias Barjenbruch moderates the first day of the conference on the EU policy, PFAS monitoring, and advanced wastewater treatment.

Klaus Daginnus – Chemist

FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Dr. Klaus Daginnus has been working as a chemist in the Federal Ministry for the Environment in Bonn, Department W I 3 – Water Protection, Protection of Surface Water and Groundwater; Water Ecology and Water Resources since October 2022. Before that, he worked a.o. at the Joint Research Center of the European Commission in Ispra and Seville, and at the Hamburg Environmental Agency.

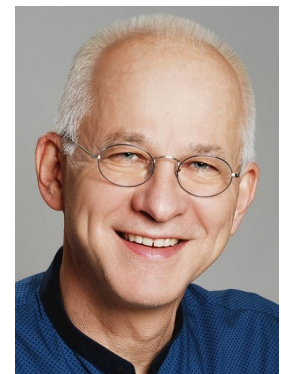


CONFERENCE: Klaus Daginnus delivers a presentation “Considerations of the Federal Government regarding the urban wastewater treatment directive and other EU water regulations for the reduction of micropollutants in wastewater” and is a speaker in the panel “How will we make the new EU policy into reality” on 19 November.

Adolf Eisenträger – Head of German Center for Micropollutants

GERMAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Adolf Eisenträger is the Head of German Center for Micropollutants at the German Environment Agency. He also holds professorship at the Aachen University of Technology (since 2008).



CONFERENCE: Adolf Eisenträger delivers a keynote presentation “New challenges and policies for a sustainable water management regarding micropollutants” on 19 November.

Heidrun Fammler – Managing Director

BALTIC ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM GERMANY

Heidrun Fammler, M.Sc., is the Managing Director of the Baltic Environmental Forum Germany. She focuses on the strategic development of environmental policy, with a strong emphasis on chemicals management, circular economy, and sustainability. With over 35 years of experience in environmental protection, her work is grounded in interdisciplinary collaboration and intercultural communication, aiming to foster more environmentally friendly behaviour and effective policy implementation. She brings extensive expertise in EU funding programs, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability communication, and continues to lead international projects that contribute to a more sustainable and healthier environment.



CONFERENCE: Heidrun Fammler delivers a presentation “Public procurement as an instrument to reduce hazardous substances’ use” on 20 November.

Louise Floman – Policy Area Hazards Coordinator

SWEDISH AGENCY FOR MARINE AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Louise Floman, M.Pol.Sci., works at the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management, and she is the Lead Coordinator for the Policy Area 'Hazards' of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. In her current work as Policy Area Coordinator, she uses her sound experience in European cooperation and has turned her focus onto the Baltic Sea marine environment. The aim is to promote cooperation in the Baltic Sea region, bringing together projects and striving to lift the discussion beyond projects. The policies she works with target hazardous substances in products as well as pollution in the environment.



CONFERENCE: Louise Floman delivers a presentation “Connecting downstream actions to remove micropollutants from wastewater with upstream measures to prevent their entering of the water cycle: HAZGONE platform” on 20 November.

Birgit Fritz-Taute – Head of Department

BERLIN SENATE DEPARTMENT FOR MOBILITY, TRANSPORT, CLIMATE PROTECTION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Dr. Birgit Fritz-Taute has been since 2021 the Head of the Integrative Environmental Protection Department at the Senate Department for Mobility, Transport, Climate Protection and the Environment. She has been responsible for water management, water law, and geology there since 2007. She studied geology at the Free University of Berlin with a focus on mathematical geology, worked as a geoinformatics specialist at an engineering firm, and holds a doctorate in hydrogeology from the Free University of Berlin. She is also a research program manager in international corporation.



CONFERENCE: Birgit Fritz-Taute delivers welcoming words at the opening on 19 November.

Kamila Gruškeviča – Senior Expert

RIGA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

Kamila Gruškeviča, Dr.sc.ing., is responsible for PFAS risk assessment activities within the EMPEREST project. She is also a Senior Researcher at the Institute of Water Systems and Biotechnology at the Riga Technical University in Latvia. Her main research interests include water and wastewater treatment, with a focus on emerging micropollutants and microplastics, as well as strategies for their removal. She is currently leading several scientific and applied projects aimed at advancing the understanding of PFAS occurrence, distribution, and removal.



CONFERENCE: Kamila Gruškeviča delivers a presentation “EMPEREST risk-assessment tool for cities and local stakeholders” on 20 November.

Agnieszka Ilola – Head of Secretariat

UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES SUSTAINABLE CITIES COMMISSION

Agnieszka Ilola is the Head of Secretariat of the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission, hosted by the City of Turku, Finland. In this role, she leads the Secretariat team and oversees the coordination of the Commission's actions and strategic programs. With over 20 years of experience in managing international projects on sustainable urban development, Agnieszka brings extensive expertise in supporting cities and municipalities to advance their sustainability goals and drive the green transition. She is particularly passionate about protecting the Baltic Sea, fostering water resilience and creating platforms for dialogue and knowledge sharing that help cities turn innovative ideas into practical solutions.



CONFERENCE: Agnieszka Ilola delivers a presentation “Cities as the enablers of change” on 20 November.

Astrid Klose – Head of Department

BERLIN SENATE DEPARTMENT FOR URBAN MOBILITY, TRANSPORT, CLIMATE ACTION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Astrid Klose, Dipl.-Geol./Dipl.-Ing. (FH), is Head of Department “Soil protection and remediation of soil, contaminated sites and groundwater” at the Senate Department for Urban Mobility, Transport, Climate Action and the Environment, Berlin. Previously, she headed the department “Soil-groundwater, land recycling industrial sites” at the Ministry for the Environment, Climate, Energy and Agriculture in Hamburg. She is a Board member of the ITVA (Engineering Association for Contaminated Site Management and Land Recycling) and since 2024, a Chairwoman of the “PFAS Ad-hoc working group” of LABO and LAWA (Federal/State Working Groups on Soil and Water Protection).



CONFERENCE: Astrid Klose delivers a presentation “Concepts and strategies for Berlin's water management” on 20 November.

Jarkko Laanti – Quality and Environmental Manager

TURKU REGION WWTP LTD.

Jarkko Laanti, M.Sc. (Tech.), is the Quality and Environmental Manager at Turku Region WWTP Ltd. in Finland. The plant is a wastewater treatment service provider owned by 14 municipalities, offering high-quality wastewater treatment services to 300 000 inhabitants. In his work, Jarkko Laanti develops the WWTP to meet the future standards. He sees the WWTP not only as a site for purifying the water but also as a climate-friendly energy recovery facility.



CONFERENCE: Jarkko Laanti is a speaker in the panel “EMPEREST applicable solutions for micropollutant removal” on 19 November.

Lotta Lehti – Project Coordinator

UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES SUSTAINABLE CITIES COMMISSION

Lotta Lehti, PhD in applied linguistics, is the Project Coordinator of EMPEREST at the Union of the Baltic Cities – Sustainable Cities Commission (UBC SCC), hosted by the City of Turku in Finland. Before joining the UBC SCC team in 2023, Lotta Lehti worked for many years as a teacher, researcher and coordinator at the Universities of Turku and Helsinki. In her current role as the coordinator at the Lead Partner office, she has ensured the scheduling, documentation, communication, overall budget and implementation of the project contribute to achieving its goals and long-term sustainability.



CONFERENCE: Lotta Lehti delivers welcoming words and is one of the presenters of “The EMPEREST journey and key messages for policies and practice” on 19 November.

Paula Lindell – Senior Advisor

FINNISH WATER UTILITIES ASSOCIATION

Paula Lindell, M.Sc. (Tech.), is a Senior Advisor at the Finnish Water Utilities Association, responsible for matters related to the environment, wastewater, circular economy, and river basin management. Her career spans local, regional, national, and European levels. She currently serves as Co-Chair of the Wastewater Committee at EurEau, the European Federation of National Associations representing the water sector across Europe.



CONFERENCE: Paula Lindell is a speaker in the panel “How will we make the new EU policy into reality” on 19 November.

Piotr Miakoto – Manager of Pomorzany WWTP

WATER AND SEWAGE COMPANY LTD. OF SZCZECIN

Piotr Miakoto, M.Sc. in Civil Engineering, M.Sc. in Environmental Engineering and Sustainable Infrastructure is the Manager of WWTP “Pomorzany” at Water and Sewage Company Ltd. of Szczecin, Poland, responsible for managing the wastewater treatment plant and sludge incineration plant. He is actively involved in various development projects. Before, he worked as Engineer Coordinator supervising several contracts for “Improvement of water quality in Szczecin” Cohesion Fund Program 2000/PL/16/P/PE/016 of 280,9 mil EUR.



CONFERENCE: Piotr Miakoto is a speaker in the panel “EMPEREST applicable solutions for micropollutant removal” on 19 November.

Ornella Mundi – Technologist

TARTU WATERWORKS LTD.

Ornella Mundi, M.Sc., is a Technologist at the Tartu WWTP, the second largest in Estonia. Her work focuses on optimizing treatment processes to enhance operational efficiency and environmental sustainability while ensuring compliance with national regulations. Through her participation in the EMPEREST Project, she has gained practical experience with fourth-stage wastewater treatment technologies aimed at removing micropollutants. Holding degrees in Geology and Environmental Technology, as well as in Environmental Governance and Adaptation to Climate Change, Ornella Mundi is driven by science, technological innovation, and the pursuit of practical, applied results. She strives to contribute to projects that foster sustainable change in both society and industry.



CONFERENCE: Ornella Mundi is a speaker in the panel “EMPEREST applicable solutions for micropollutant removal” on 19 November.

Markus Raudkivi – Project Coordinator

HELCOM - BALTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMISSION

Markus Raudkivi, M.Sc. in Environmental Technology, is the EMPEREST and HAZGONE project coordinator at the HELCOM Secretariat. His main expertise lies in the intersection of hazardous substances and wastewater treatment, while his professional work is nowadays focused less on scientific research and more on developing international projects.



CONFERENCE: Markus Raudkivi delivers a presentation “PFAS in Baltic Sea region – a new assessment of an old problem” on 19 November.

Māra Reča – Project Manager

RIGA ENERGY AGENCY

Māra Reča, M.Sc. in Environmental Engineering, works at Riga Municipality in Latvia. In her organisation, she is the Project Manager of EMPEREST. For the past eight years, Māra Reča has been leading environment-related projects within the Riga Municipality and contributing to the development of local environmental policy documents. Her main fields of expertise include stormwater management, energy, and environmental protection.



CONFERENCE: Māra Reča delivers a presentation “EMPEREST risk-assessment tool for cities and local stakeholders” on 20 November.

Jörg Rehberg – Unit Manager

FEDERAL ASSOCIATION OF THE ENERGY AND WATER INDUSTRY (BDEW)

Jörg Rehberg, Dr.jur., is the Unit Manager at the European Water Policy, Division Water/Wastewater at BDEW – Federal Association of the Energy and Water Industry. Since 2003, he is also a lawyer at the law firm Barth Baumeister Griem, with the focus on public transport and public drinking water supply/wastewater. His project expertise includes a.o. taxes in PPP – with models in public wastewater, public fees in wastewater, and the sustainability in the water sector.



CONFERENCE: Jörg Rehberg delivers a presentation “Structure and organization of EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) in the wastewater sector in Germany” on 20 November.

Povilas Reskevičius – Chief Process Engineer

KAUNAS WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

Povilas Reskevičius, M.Sc. in Environmental Engineering, is the Chief Process Engineer at the Kaunas Wastewater Treatment Plant, Lithuania, responsible for wastewater treatment processes and actively involved in various research projects. With extensive experience in optimizing plant operations and implementing innovative solutions, he is committed to improving water quality and promoting sustainable resource management.



CONFERENCE: Povilas Reskevičius is a speaker in the panel “EMPEREST applicable solutions for micropollutant removal” on 19 November.

Henna Rinne – Senior Specialist

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN FINLAND

Henna Rinne (PhD, Marine and Environmental Biology) works as a Senior Specialist at the Ministry of the Environment in Finland, in the unit for Water Resources and Marine protection. She is a vice-member in the Monitoring Committee of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region programme, especially focusing on water and marine protection -related initiatives. She is also a lead of Finnish delegation in HELCOM Source to Sea and Seabased pressures working groups, that deal with various pressures to the Baltic Sea, including hazardous substances. Her other tasks at the ministry are related to government financing of water and marine protection and implementation of WFD and MSFD Programmes of Measures as well as the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan.



CONFERENCE: Henna Rinne is a speaker in the panel “How will we make the new EU policy into reality” on 19 November.

Lotta Ruokanen – Professional Secretary

HELCOM - BALTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMISSION

Lotta Ruokanen works as a Professional Secretary and Deputy Executive Secretary at the Secretariat of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, or HELCOM since July 2021. Some of her main responsibilities are to coordinate, support implementation and develop the regional policy work on management of nutrients and hazardous substances and sustainable agricultural practices as well as coherent and ecosystem-based maritime spatial planning. The tasks include also e.g. linking HELCOM processes to other international frameworks and marine environment protection policies in the EU, among the regional seas conventions and globally. Lotta has a Master's degree in limnology and another one in environmental engineering (processing industry).

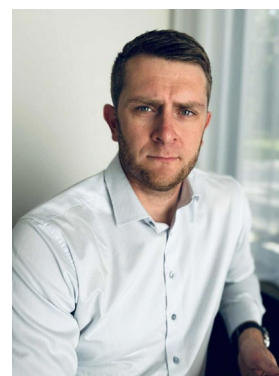


CONFERENCE: Lotta Ruokanen moderates the panel “How will we make the new EU policy into reality” on 19 November.

Ivar Ruubel – Chief Operating Officer

TALLINN WATER LTD.

Ivar Ruubel, M.Sc, MBA, is the Chief Operating Officer of AS Tallinna Vesi, the largest water company in Estonia with over 450 000 end consumers of the company’s services. As the COO of the company, his responsibilities are tied to water catchment, water treatment, wastewater treatment and pumping stations operations. With an environmental engineering background, supported by a degree in business administration, he prioritizes environmentally safe operations of treatment plants balanced with top of the class cost-efficiency for the end consumer of the company. In terms of water and wastewater treatment, anything can be done, the technology exists already. At the same time, one cannot disregard the question of does it have to be done and how will it affect the end consumers water bill.



CONFERENCE: Ivar Ruubel is a speaker in the panel “How will we make the new EU policy into reality” on 19 November.

Marek Swinarski – Chief Process Engineer

GDAŃSK WATER UTILITIES

Marek Swinarski, PhD in Water and Wastewater Technology, is a Process Engineer with over 30 years of experience in municipal water supply and wastewater systems. He specializes in process design, implementation of innovative and cost-effective technologies, and optimization of operational performance of water and wastewater treatment plants. Currently, Marek serves as Chief Process Engineer at Gdańsk Water Utilities, and works also as an independent consultant, focusing on energy efficiency improvements in wastewater treatment processes.



CONFERENCE: Marek Swinarski is a speaker in the panel “EMPEREST applicable solutions for micropollutant removal” on 19 November.

Taavo Tenno – Associate Professor

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

Taavo Tenno is an Associate Professor of Environmental Chemistry at the University of Tartu, Estonia, and leads a design office dedicated to wastewater treatment design and consultancy. With practical experience in the field, he is responsible for technology development and pilot-scale post-treatment work in the EMPEREST project.

CONFERENCE: Taavo Tenno is a speaker in the panel “EMPEREST applicable solutions for micropollutant removal” on 19 November.



Jens Tränckner – Professor

UNIVERSITY OF ROSTOCK

Jens Tränckner, Prof. Dr.-Ing. habil., is a professor of water management at the University of Rostock. His research focuses on integrated rainwater management, wastewater treatment, and reducing the impact of dispersed point-source emissions on surface waters. He is the spokesperson for two DWA working groups that deal with modelling pollutant loads and treating heavily polluted rainwater. He is currently coordinating the EU Interreg project APRIORA, which aims to develop a risk-based approach to prioritising the upgrade of wastewater treatment plants with quaternary treatment.

CONFERENCE: Jens Tränckner delivers welcoming words and a presentation “Risk-based prioritisation of quaternary treatment & the APRIORA tool” on 19 November.



Nikolaos Tzoupanos – Researcher

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN

Dr Nikolaos Tzoupanos, PhD (chem.), has been teaching and conducting research in the Urban Water Management Department at the Technical University of Berlin since 2022. Prior to this, he headed the analytical laboratory of the Water Engineering Department at the Campus El Gouna of the TU Berlin for ten years. Research interests: sustainable water supply, decentralised treatment systems, nature-based technologies, greenhouse gas emissions in wastewater and advanced wastewater treatment.

CONFERENCE: Nikolaos Tzoupanos delivers a presentation “EMPEREST capacity building: training package for local authorities and water operators” on 20 November.



Jelena Valtin – Operational Manager

TALLINN WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

Jelena Valtin, B.Sc. (Tech), is the Operational Manager at Tallinn WWTP. The plant receives and treats wastewater and stormwater collected from the entire city of Tallinn and its surroundings, providing service to over 400 000 people. Jelena is responsible for overseeing daily plant operations, ensuring compliance with environmental regulations, optimizing treatment processes to maintain efficient and sustainable performance. Jelena has 10 years of professional experience in wastewater treatment and a total of 20 years of expertise in the water sector.



CONFERENCE: Jelena Valtin is a speaker in the panel “EMPEREST applicable solutions for micropollutant removal” on 19 November.

Māris Zviedris – Head of the Riga WWTP

RIGA WATER COMPANY

Māris Zviedris, M.Sc. Heat, Gas and Water Technology, is a leading expert at Riga Water company for wastewater treatment technologies in the position of the head of the Riga wastewater treatment plant which serves 1 mln PE (population equivalent). His main responsibility is to plan, organize and coordinate the WWTP work to ensure the best quality environmental protection, including treatment of industrial and municipal wastewater applying mechanical and biological treatment, as well as treatment of sludge, production of biogas, running electricity and heat production processes according to legislative regulations. He currently serves as an expert in the Wastewater Committee at EurEau, the European Federation of National Associations representing the water sector across Europe.



CONFERENCE: Māris Zviedris is a speaker in the panel “EMPEREST applicable solutions for micropollutant removal” on 19 November.