

Risk assessment of chemical mixtures: strategies, bottlenecks, and the steps ahead

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While approaches for the assessment, management and mitigation of the impacts of local pollution from singular events and point sources are largely agreed upon and widely applied on a routine basis, the assessment of diffuse pollution is still a major challenge for science, environmental policy and chemical management. Meeting this challenge will require a move away from a narrow focus on individual pollutants, coarse individual level end points, the exclusive consideration of single emission sources and exposure routes towards a broader, more holistic approach. Several suggestions on risk assessment approaches for chemical mixtures have recently been published, including the mixture communication from the European Commission, ECETOC's mixture reports and the opinion paper by the EU's scientific committees. Although the suggested approaches have a large common denominator, they differ in scope and technical implementation. As practical experience is often limited, the area is continuously evolving. The current developments tackle several issues, including fundamental scientific challenges, strategies for actual implementation of mixture assessment into regulatory frameworks and the development of appropriate quality targets for chemical mixtures. The session hence aims to be a forum for presenting and discussing experiences from all these areas. Cross-cutting, conceptual analyses are especially welcome. The session also provides room for the presentation of case studies on specific chemicals and chemical classes or focusing on certain environmental compartments (soil, freshwater, etc.), and for novel experimental techniques. We invite presentations that analyze the issue from the perspective of all the different stakeholders (academia, industry, regulators, NGOs), covering all aspects of the risk assessment process.

SESSION TYPE: Platform, Poster spotlight and Poster