

INVITATION



PFAS CONTAMINATED SITES RISK ASSESSMENT - A WEB BASED EUROPEAN “HOT SPOT” WORKSHOP 9 November 2020, ZOOM-Meeting

Highly fluorinated substances (PFAS) have been identified as an environmental and health problem that has gained increased focus in recent years. PFOS and PFOA are the two substances that have received most attention. However, it is well known today that there are a large number of different PFASs in areas where the substances have been handled. The state of knowledge for most of these substances is very limited or even non-existent. This poses a problem when assessing the risks posed by PFAS-contaminated soil and land.

Last year, the Swedish Geotechnical Institute organized a national workshop with invited experts and policy makers on the theme "Risk Assessment Methodology for PFAS". The main purpose of the workshop was to discuss the problems of characterization and risk assessment of PFAS-contaminated areas. It was expressed that analytical methods estimating the content of e.g. precursors or extractable fluorine have limited utility in assessing the risks posed by a contaminated area. The main motive put forward was that the analyses provide limited or no information on which contaminants are present in the analysed sample. Instead, it was concluded that today, the best way is to base a risk assessment of a PFAS-contaminated area on individual compounds that are quantified with LC-MS/MS. To assess the overall effect as a mixture of PFAS, the approach with relative potency factors proposed by RIVM¹ was considered to be a method that would be applicable.

The SOILveR platform (www.soilver.eu) is organising a webinar on PFAS on the 9th of November 2020. The aim of the webinar is to discuss topics related to human health risk assessment of PFAS contaminated land/sites. How can one take into account that the contamination consists of a large number of PFASs that we have poor knowledge of in terms of both physio-chemical and toxic properties? Can different types of chemical analyses (e.g. TOP, TOF) be of benefit? Do we need policy-based thresholds and decisions, until we know more?

Besides reviewing these risk assessment questions, a part of the webinar will focus on an international comparison on PFAS. The goal of this comparison is to look further than the underpinning of PFAS policies in countries, and to get to a deeper exploration of which national circumstances are used in setting PFAS standards and for PFAS-related decision-making.

An on-line workshop with maximum knowledge exchange – a goal and a challenge

Due to the COVID19 restrictions the meeting will be on-line instead of having local “hot-spots” in each country where participants are gathered, as planned originally. The benefit is still to be able to join an international meeting without long traveling distances. To have separate discussions in your own language during the day will be dealt with in “break-out sessions”. Each break-out session will serve as a “hot-spot”, e.g. a Belgium hot-spot, a Swedish hot-spot etc

Hot spots:

- Sweden, France, Denmark, The Netherlands, Belgium, Austria/Common Forum and UK (confirmed) Germany, and NICOLE (not yet confirmed)

¹ National Institute for Public Health and the Environment

Preliminary program

PFAS Contaminated sites risk-assessment

08.30 – 9.00 Registration and connection to Zoom

Start

09.00 – 09.15 Welcome by *Yvonne Ohlsson, Chairperson SOILveR Platform*

- The SOILveR Platform and its activities
- Practical information for this meeting

Setting the scene

09.15 – 11.00

- PFAS Contaminated Sites Risk Assessment - Outcome of a recent Swedish policy/expert WS

Michael Pettersson, Swedish Geotechnical Institute

- Decision tree developed within the Sullied Sediments project - a tool for deriving standards for sediment reuse – could it be useful for PFAS in soil?

Ruth Cartuyvels, Witteveen+Bos Belgium

Second speaker to be confirmed

10 minute break

- Overview of risk assessment approaches for mixtures

Professor Ian Cousins, Stockholm University

Possibilities and challenges for PFAS analysis

Anna Kärrman, Örebro University

- Introduction to break-out works groups including topics to discuss

11.00-11.05

"Move" to country specific break out session

11.05 – 12.30

Discussions in break out groups

lunch break

Plenary Discussions

13.00 – 14.45

Discussion in plenum – Best ways forward in short and long term

Wrap Up

14.45 – 15.00

Short sum up including how WS results will be shared and interest in joint productions of paper, policy brief or in further networking