



# **The 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of the International Association for Biomonitoring of Environmental Pollution**

October 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> 2025, Belgrade, Serbia

## **Book of Abstracts**

### *Editors*

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**IABEP**  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR  
BIOMONITORING OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

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## Preface

After the successful launch of the International Association for Biomonitoring of Environmental Pollution (IABEP) in Trieste (October 2023) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> conference in Lisbon (November 2024), the 3<sup>rd</sup> IABEP Conference (IABEP 2025) was held in Belgrade, Serbia, from 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

The IABEP conference gathered scientists, students, policymakers, and professionals in the field of biomonitoring of environmental pollution across terrestrial, freshwater, and marine habitats. It featured insightful presentations, engaging discussions, and networking opportunities focused on the latest advancements, challenges, and solutions in biomonitoring. For the first time, the conference also embraced topics related to mitigation and removal of pollutants from the environment through bioremediation and phytoremediation.

The main topics of IABEP 2025 included:

- Biomonitoring techniques to assess spatial and temporal patterns of pollution and its impact on biodiversity, pollutant accumulation, molecular markers, and magnetic analysis
- Novel biomonitoring methodologies
- Emerging pollutants and their toxicity
- Advances in bioindicators and biomarkers
- Bioremediation and phytoremediation approaches
- Integration of biomonitoring data into risk assessment and policy-making

The local organizer of IABEP 2025 was the **Institute of Physics Belgrade**, a National Institute of the Republic of Serbia, University of Belgrade (IPB), with support from the **Faculty of Biology** and the **Faculty of Chemistry**, University of Belgrade.

The scientific program of IABEP2025 included plenary, invited, and honorary lectures, as well as oral presentations and poster sessions. Special attention was given to promoting young researchers through short talks and awards.

The first conference day was dedicated to mosses and lichens as biomonitors of air pollution and began with a plenary lecture by Prof. Marko Sabovljević, who provided a comprehensive overview of *“Bryophytes as biomonitors – from laboratory research to field application.”* It was followed by remarkable examples of long-term biomonitoring programs, including *“Past, present and future of the UNECE ICP Vegetation”* by Prof. Marina Frontasyeva and *“50 years of moss biomonitoring in Sweden”* by Dr. Marta Segura Roux. In addition, Prof. Linda Geiser emphasized *“Mapping air quality and climate vulnerabilities of epiphytic macrolichens across North America.”* The afternoon session concluded with a critical evaluation of lichen and moss biomonitoring data presented by Prof. Stefano Loppi.

The second conference day focused on the potential of vascular plants as biomonitors of inorganic and organic pollutants, with special emphasis on microplastics research. The day began with an inspiring plenary lecture by Prof. Roeland Samson on *“One Health concept, citizen science approach, and bio(magnetic)monitoring of vegetation.”* The afternoon session highlighted *“Phytoremediation perspectives: metal hyperaccumulation in Noccaea caerulescens”* presented by Prof. Mark Aarts.

The third day explored animal biomonitoring, particularly of PFAS (the “forever chemicals”) in marine and terrestrial environments. A memorable plenary lecture by Prof. Joerg Feldmann

opened the session, followed by *“Legacy and emerging pollutants monitored by birds”* presented by Prof. Silvia Lacorte. Other contributions showcased the use of algae, mollusks, and fish as biomonitors of emerging pollutants, and bioavailability of contaminants from food of animal origin presented by Dr. habil. Stefan Jurjanz.

**The IABEP Awards** were presented to recognize outstanding scientific achievements and to encourage early-career researchers. The Best Oral Presentation Awards were granted to Tomica Mišljenović (*“Decoding survival: A synthesis of studies on Viola species from Allchar”*) and Tijana Milićević (*“The human milk as a biomonitor of potentially toxic elements – bioaccessibility and infant health risk assessment”*) while the Best Short-talk Awards were granted to Milica Popović (*“Application of nonlinear optical imaging and Nile Red staining in microplastic analysis”*) and Mirko Legnaro Diamanti (*“Biomonitoring of airborne elements and microplastics: a comparison of terricolous and epiphytic lichens”*).

This *Book of Abstracts* represents a concise summary of the scientific contributions presented at IABEP 2025 highlighting current advances, challenges, and perspectives in biomonitoring of environmental pollution. We hope it inspires future collaborations and innovations in this vital field.

**Dr. Mira Aničić Urošević**  
Chair of the 3<sup>rd</sup> IABEP Conference

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## Contents

<b>Plenary Speakers</b> .....	11
Bryophytes as biomonitors – from laboratory research to field application.....	12
One Health and bio(magnetic)monitoring of vegetation.....	13
Understanding the bioaccumulation and transformation of PFAS – the forever chemicals in the marine and the terrestrial environment.....	14
<b>Honorary Speaker</b> .....	15
Monitoring long term and large-scale deposition of air pollutants based on moss analysis: past, present and future of the UNECE ICP Vegetation .....	16
<b>Invited Speakers</b> .....	17
Metal concentrations in moss in comparison to deposition and air particles PM10 measured at EMEP background stations, Sweden – 50 years of moss monitoring.....	18
Interpreting lichen and moss biomonitoring data: <i>hic sunt leones</i> .....	19
Birds as biomonitors of legacy and emerging contaminants.....	21
Food of animal origin as a bio indicator of exposure to environmental pollutants .....	22
<b>Oral Speakers</b> .....	23
Mapping Air Quality and Climate Vulnerabilities of Epiphytic Macrolichens Across North America .....	24
Thiol-peptides for Metal detoxification and homeostasis in Lichens and Bryophytes .....	25
Active biomonitoring of potentially toxic elements in urban air by two distinct moss species and two analytical techniques: a pan-Southeastern European study .....	26
Urban and Rural PAH Contamination: A Comparative Moss Bag Biomonitoring Study in Serbia and Montenegro .....	27
Species-specific metal accumulation in moss bags exposed to urban and industrial pollution: a case study Tula, Russia.....	28
Spatial distribution of <sup>7</sup> Be atmospheric deposition measured during three years using terrestrial mosses.....	29
Bioaccumulation of potentially toxic elements in mosses: a case study of cities in the Perm Region, Russia.....	30
Interactions between mosses and substrate soils in the assessment of trace elements in mosses .....	31
Influence of light pollution on photosynthetic performance and elemental uptake in lichens .....	32
Tracking trace element pollution in Wallonia through lichen biomonitoring: past trends and spatial contrast .....	33
Rare earth elements in lichens to trace atmospheric deposition: insights from historical and contemporary samples .....	34
The Black Box of Environmental Biomonitoring .....	35
Working group on sampling protocols: mission and opportunities for IABEP .....	36
Chemical and magnetic biomonitoring with lichens and vascular plants for the preservation of cultural heritage: a case study at two museums in a megacity (Buenos Aires, Argentina) .....	37
Biomonitoring of airborne trace elements in forest ecosystems: the use of <i>Tillandsia usneoides</i> and the case study of Monte Amiata, Central Italy.....	38
Current challenges in biomonitoring for ozone impacts on vegetation .....	39

Biomonitoring of airborne anthropogenic microfibers by <i>Pittosporum tobira</i> leaves: Effects of season and rainfall .....	40
Biomonitoring the present and the past using macrobenthic invertebrates: a case study from the eastern Italian Alps .....	41
Transplants of <i>Pseudevernia furfuracea</i> to assess the deposition of anthropogenic microfiber: refinement of the method.....	42
Detection of small microplastics in the atmosphere using fluorescent tagging and moss biomonitoring ..	43
Enhancement of low- to medium-quality digital images towards reliable microplastic particle counting ...	44
An efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly protocol for extracting microplastics from soil samples .....	45
Decoding survival: A synthesis of studies on <i>Viola</i> taxa from Allchar .....	46
Assessing tree response to soil contamination in a Milan urban park to support phytoremediation planning .....	47
CO <sub>2</sub> -activated biochar–chitosan blend for (bio)monitoring potentially toxic element deposition in urban and industrial environment .....	48
Biochar-assisted phytoremediation of Cd and Cu in lettuce: effects on metal uptake and plant stress responses .....	49
Removal of pollutants in blue-green infrastructures .....	50
From plastic to biomass: the role of <i>Tenebrio molitor</i> in waste valorization.....	51
Greenspaces can reduce the level of airborne microplastic contamination in urban environments: Evidence from a lichen biomonitoring study .....	52
Biodiversity indicators for national reporting in Serbia: integrating biomonitoring and environmental risk assessment .....	53
Distinguishing between anthropogenic and natural sources of carbonaceous aerosol in Belgrade .....	54
Mapping urban ecosystem health with bioindicators in Verona .....	55
Nonlinear laser imaging for unravelling biomonitor potential: from insect down to fungi .....	56
Challenges for the use of ecological indicators in small ponds and streams .....	57
Biomonitoring of potentially toxic elements in the Venice Lagoon (Italy): a century-long comparison using natural history collection macroalgal specimens .....	58
Application of fish and bivalves in biomonitoring of microplastic impact on the aquatic environment .....	59
Interspecies variability of heavy metals and other microelements in mussels from the selected marine zones of South Africa .....	60
Soil-dwelling insects, order Coleoptera, could be indicators of microplastic pollution of soils .....	61
Determination of <i>in vitro</i> gastrointestinal bioaccessibility of organochlorine pesticides in poultry .....	62
Phthalate Contamination in Cow Milk: Age-Dependent Risk Assessment .....	63
The human milk as a biomonitor of potentially toxic elements – bioaccessibility and infant health risk assessment .....	64
<b>Short-talk Speakers</b> .....	65
Magnetic and Chemical Biomonitoring at Cultural Heritage sites: In Remembrance of Antonio Sgamellotti .....	66
Application of nonlinear optical imaging and Nile Red staining in microplastic analysis .....	67
Polystyrene microbeads affect seed germination, plant growth and nutrient uptake in two cultivars of <i>Capsicum annuum</i> L.....	68



Biomonitoring of airborne elements and microplastics: a comparison of terricolous and epiphytic lichens	69
“Moss wars”: <i>Hypnum</i> vs. <i>Sphagnum</i> in biomonitoring of urban trace element atmospheric deposition – a case study in Novi Sad, Serbia	70
Climate change as a driver of the range expansion of the invasive diatom <i>Skeletonema potamos</i> (C.I.Weber) Hasle in Serbian lowland rivers	71
Screening soil microbial isolates for PTE tolerance and solubilisation traits	72
Proteomic Insights into the Adaptive Response of <i>Pseudomonas</i> sp. to PFOA Exposure	73
Seasonal dynamics of metal accumulation in <i>Chlorella sorokiniana</i> biomass from the urban photobioreactor LIQUID3	74
Potential of crosslinked P(MAA-co-PEGMA) hydrogel for pharmaceutical (fluoxetine) removal from aquatic environment	75
Wasp and Hornet Nests as Biomonitoring Tools: Elemental Composition and Temporal Trends	76
Bats as bioindicators: First insights into seasonal metal exposure and immune stress in bats from mining area	77
Fish as bioindicators of reservoir pollution	78
Determination of LD <sub>50</sub> and sublethal effects of cypermethrin in <i>Myathropa florea</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	79
Towards the validation of an <i>in vitro</i> method to predict the bioavailability of soil organic contaminants	80
Indirect human health risk assessment of consuming agricultural products influenced by PAHs from illegal landfills in agricultural areas	81
First assessment of environmental genotoxicity using the the long-fingered bat <i>Myotis capaccinii</i> (Bonaparte 1837) as a bioindicator	82
Badger ( <i>Meles meles</i> ) hair as a bioindicator of metals in the environment – the importance of methodological approach (washed vs. unwashed)	83
Seasonal Variability of PM <sub>10</sub> Oxidative Potential: Insights from Nine Months of AA and DTT Measurements at Two Urban Locations in Serbia	84
<b>Poster presentations</b>	85
Clean Air in Abruzzo? A Three-Year Overview of Monitoring and Biomonitoring Systems	86
Lichen collections for tracking environmental change and the problem of residual Hg contamination in herbaria	87
Machine learning prediction of heavy metal accumulation in transplanted <i>Hylocomium splendens</i> : case study from Upper Silesia	88
Biomonitoring of microplastics with terrestrial plants – opportunities and challenges	89
Assessing air quality around a ceramic industry in Italy through vascular plant biomonitoring	90
Ozone biomonitoring on top: a case study in the Italian Alps	91
Biomonitoring of Toxic Metals Using Selected Conifer Species	92
Assessment of atmospheric potentially toxic elements pollution in Kurchatov (former Semipalatinsk Test Site), Kazakhstan, using moss-bags technique	93
Effect of ferric ions on the UV-induced degradation of piroxicam in acidic aqueous solution	94
Computational ecotoxicity assessment of fluoxetine as an emerging aquatic pollutant	95
Protective role of Fe <sup>3+</sup> ions against the photodegradation of meloxicam	96
Phytoremediation Potential for Monitoring and Removing Perfluorooctanoic Acid from Aquatic Environments	97
Heavy metals – environmental river water risk	98

Spruce ( <i>Picea abies</i> L.) and Douglas-fir ( <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> Mirb.) as bioindicators: Field study of heavy metal uptake .....	99
Spatiotemporal Comparison of Environmental Dust and Apicultural Samples Across Urban and Industrial Landscapes .....	100
Evaluating the human health risk from consuming plants growing in the metal(loid)-contaminated mine waste site.....	101
Accumulation of trace elements in the grain of two varieties of organically grown spelt ( <i>Triticum spelta</i> ) .....	102
Mitigating wastewater irrigation stress in maize: The synergistic role of biofertilizers and biochar .....	103
Metal exclusion and physiological plasticity shape orchid success across diverse geologies .....	104
Monitoring Polar Pesticide Residues in Europe via Honeybee Matrices: Results from the INSIGNIA-EU Project.....	105
Optimized extraction of neonicotinoids and their metabolites from honey bees for comprehensive environmental monitoring .....	106
Centipedes (Myriapoda: Chilopoda) as bioindicators.....	107
Mussels as biomonitors of volatile methylsiloxanes: temporal trends and depuration .....	108
Metal bioaccumulation in muscle tissue of the northern pike <i>Esox lucius</i> Linnaeus, 1758 from Tisza River .....	109
Microplastic occurrence in gastrointestinal tracts of freshwater fish: addressing data gaps in Serbia and adjacent countries .....	110
Erythron profile and liver enzymes as potential biomarkers of water and sediment pollution in vimba bream ( <i>Vimba vimba</i> ) from the Danube River: effects of varying pollution and sampling season.....	111
<i>Chub</i> species as biomonitors of potentially toxic elements in river environments .....	112
AI-driven insights into PCB-138 dynamics in Mediterranean pelagic fish .....	113
Ecotoxicological Evaluation of Peloids from Serbian Spas .....	114
Development and validation of methods for the determination of phthalates in milk and packaging materials by QuEChERS-GC-MS.....	115
<b>Author ORCID</b> .....	116

## An efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly protocol for extracting microplastics from soil samples

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As land plastic pollution has accumulated over recent decades, small fragments of its degradation, microplastics (MPs) [1], have become an increasingly urgent problem in soil environments. Monitoring and reporting soil MPs will be essential in the future, but existing literature describes many protocols, none of which appear to be efficient for this purpose. The initial step in MP analysis from soils is extracting MP particles, which is particularly challenging due to the substrate [2]. Challenges include aggregate formation and the presence of other organic particles of similar size, complicating the development of efficient and reliable extraction protocols. Density separation methods are commonly used, and finding solutions that are effective, affordable, and environmentally friendly is crucial, with data comparability being vital for advancing knowledge on this topic. Here, we introduce an environmentally friendly protocol based on density separation using a sucrose solution. Its effectiveness for extracting MPs from soil was tested and validated. Validation results showed that this method efficiently recovered polyethylene (PE) for all tested MP sizes (>32 µm) and PVC for particles >500 µm, with high recovery rates. Extraction of 125–500 µm PVC is justified, despite a lower recovery rate of  $64.04 \pm 1.73\%$ , because sucrose solution is practically free and environmentally safe, unlike previously used more expensive and toxic media. Validation results suggest that the proposed protocol has strong potential for extracting MPs from challenging soil samples. This method can be effectively used in any soil science laboratory, including those responsible for monitoring.

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