

# Emerging issues in biomonitoring research

13<sup>th</sup> BDS Biodetector Conference  
Prague, Czech Republic

Abel Arkenbout – September 14, 2022

# TW biomonitoring research in Europe



**The Netherlands**, Harlingen, REC WtE incineration,  
*in production since 2011*



**Lithuania**, Kaunas, WtE incineration,  
*in production since 2020*



**Belgium**, Beringen Biostoom, WtE incineration,  
*in production since 2020*



**France**, Paris, Paris-Ivry XIII, waste incineration  
*in production since (1969), modernised 1995/2005*



**Czech Republic**, Pilsen, ZEVO Chotíkov, WtE incineration  
*in production since, 2020*



**Spain**, Madrid, Valdemingómez WtE incineration,  
*in production since 1996*



**Basque Country**, Zubieta, WTE incinerator,  
*in production since 2020*

# Eggs of backyard chicken as biomarker for biomonitoring



One analyse sample of one location, contains preferable a total mixture of **10 eggs of that one location**. By this sampling approach the difference in each hens metabolism and their specific pattern way of foraging in the chicken enclosure is covered.

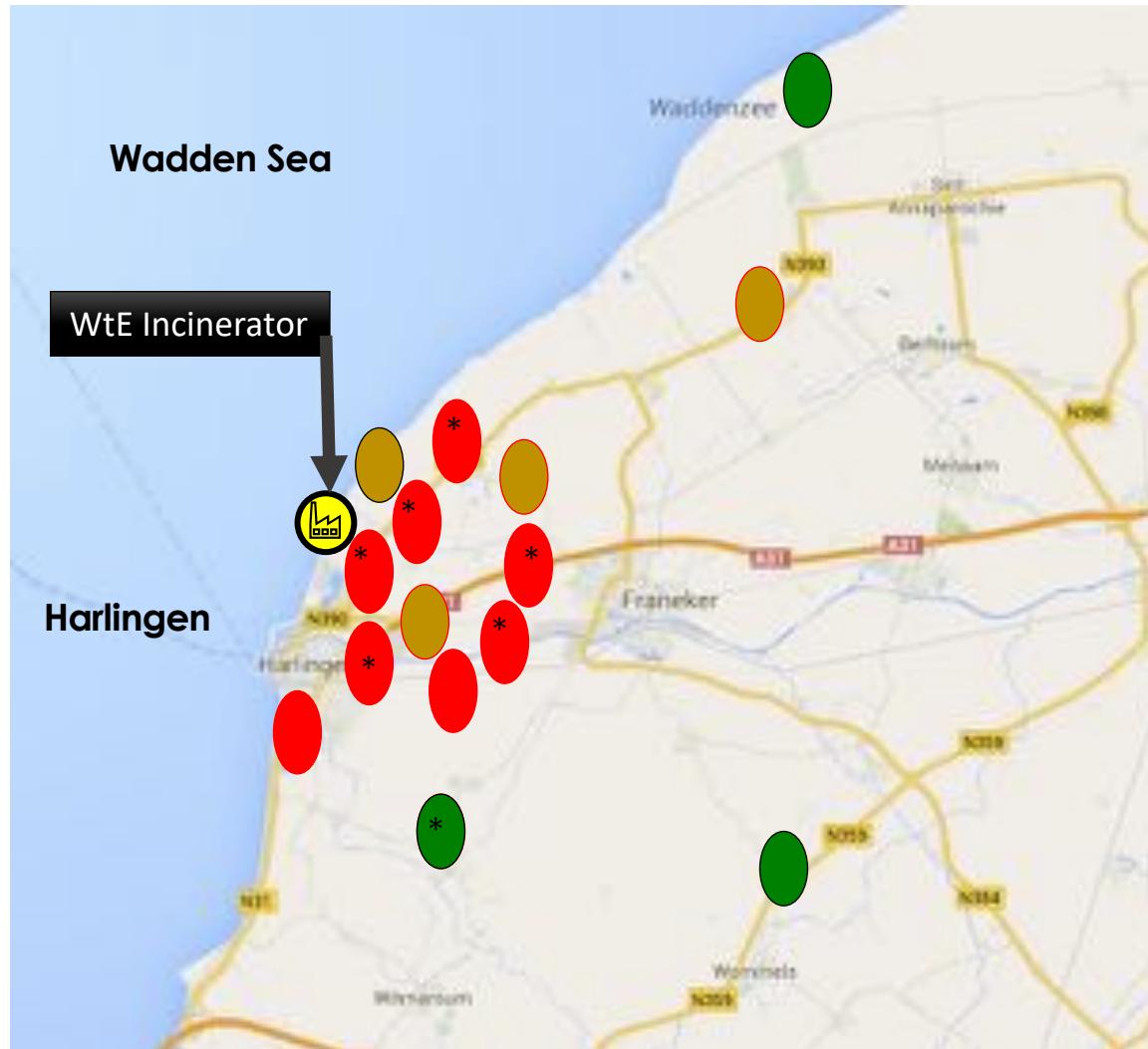


10 eggs/location



# TW Biomonitoring eggs starts with WtE incinerator in NL

TW biomonitoring eggs of backyard chicken, Harlingen/NL-2013



**DR CALUX®**

- > 3,4 pg BEQ /g fat
- > 1,7 pg BEQ /g fat
- < 1,7 pg BEQ /g fat

Verification by GC-MS

**BEQ: Bioanalytical EQuivalents**

Distance  
10 km



Explanation Biomonitoring video by [Zero Waste Europe](#)



# Biomonitoring for a better understanding of the real POP WtE emissions



People concerned about  
waste incineration emissions

More (semi) continuous  
measurements in the chimney of  
waste incineration is needed to  
know the real POP emissions



The screenshot shows the Le Monde news website with the headline: "Des élus réclament la « transparence » sur les niveaux de dioxines autour de l'incinérateur d'Ivry-Paris XIII". Below the headline, there is a brief summary of the story and the author's name, Stéphane Mandard.

Analyse results TW biomonitoring reports generates  
Media attention, questions



Which leads to discussion between  
government, industry, people movement

APESA measurement summary	
File identif: APESA_	3629-18-39
Sampled using:	
Cartridge box no: 3	Measurement no: 29
Start: 34.4.2020/01:48	Leakage rate: 0.79,29Pa/s
End.: 34.5.2020/01:38	Leakage rate: 0.82,57Pa/s
Measurement duration:	535:59 Robin
Sample gas volume: more NEW dry	324,121 Pa
Sample gas volume: more NEW hot	432,577 Pa
Sample gas volume: more gasometer	321,298 Pa
Sample gas volume: more gasometer (actual)	431,634 Pa
Condensate volume of sampling:	0.001 Pa
Operations density factor:	0.736
Mean H2O in flue gas:	219,2 g/m³
Mean CO2:	13,4 %
Mean CH4:	7,9 %
Mean CO:	380,0 ppm
Mean O2:	65,82 %
Mean NO:	13,64 ppm
Mean NO2:	40,18 ppm
Mean TNO:	29,39 ppm
Stack pressure: 1 bar:	1,00 Pa
Stack diameter:	1,00 m
Stack height:	1,00 m
Stack flue area:	1,00 m²
Stack flow area:	1,00 m²
Stack parameter: stack flow:	1,00 m³/s
1st actual year (N):	100 %
2nd actual year (N):	100 %
1st actual year (N):	100 %
2nd actual year (N):	100 %
1st last year (N):	97 %
2nd last year (N):	100 %

Collecting Data by  
(semi) continuous  
measurements

Resulting in better understanding of waste incinerator  
emissions by (semi) continuous measurements.  
These measurements are needed to know:

- Waste incineration is still far from pollution of zero POP emissions;
- More elevated dioxin emissions during (semi) continuous measurements comparing to the EU recommended short-term measurements;
- Elevated dioxin emissions during OTNOG situations like start-up and shutdowns.

## 126 incinérateurs de déchets en France : la mégapollution



La combustion des déchets libère énormément de CO<sub>2</sub> et un cocktail de gaz polluants. Dans le Val-de-Marne, un incinérateur XXL fait « flipper » les habitants. [ENQUÊTE 2/4]

Il y a quelques mois, le collectif 3R a fait appel à la fondation Toxico Watch, une ONG néerlandaise référente dans l'analyse toxicologique des polluants émis par les incinérateurs. L'ONG analyse les épines d'arbres résineux, les mousses et les œufs produits dans des poulaillers à proximité de l'incinérateur. Au mois de février, le laboratoire a rendu son [rapport](#).



« Les résultats des analyses de dioxines à la fois dans les œufs et dans les végétaux se situent parmi les niveaux les plus hauts rencontrés en Europe. » © NnoMan Cadoret / Reporterre

Conclusion : « *Les résultats des analyses de dioxines à la fois dans les œufs et dans les végétaux se situent parmi les niveaux les plus hauts rencontrés en Europe.* » Des valeurs de deux à quatre fois plus élevées que les valeurs limites européennes. En la matière, c'est le droit européen (directive

**Beringen**

## Leefbaar Tervant blijft verontrust over dioxines

Zondag 25 september 2022



Leefbaar Tervant houdt de vinger aan de pols wat betreft de Beringse verbrandingsoven. In het ToxicoWatch onderzoek bleek immers dat er toch veel dioxines werden gemeten in kippeneieren in onze buurt. "De huidige sfeer is absoluut die van "ik-wil-niet-wetenschap", terwijl er overduidelijk iets ernstig aan de hand is met het dioxineniveau in de onderzochte kippeneieren, meer bepaald betreft het een dioxinetype dat ook wordt uitgestoten door de afvalverbrandingsoven en dat afkomstig is van onvolledige verbranding van complexer samengestelde stoffen, zoals o.a. vuilniszakken (niet van houtkachels of auto's). Als die wetenschappelijke data ontkend worden, waarmee zijn we dan bezig?", zegt **Peter Houdmeyers van Leefbaar Tervant**.

De actiegroep nam ook contact met de Beringse milieudienst en de Limburgse milieusanctie.

"Als bij 7 van de 8 kippenrennen het dioxine-level van dit dioxinetype van 54 tot 668 % - waarvan op 5 locaties boven de 200 % - gestegen is sedert de opstart van de oven ... waarop wacht men dan voor verdere acties, waaronder zeker een bronbepaling? In de communicatie met de milieudienst van Beringen krijgen we replies die op geen enkele bezorgdheid wijzen, en, vooral bestaan uit de gekende oneliners van het vorige stadsbestuur. We gaan ervan uit dat de milieudienst van Beringen haar bevolking dient en het voorzorgsprincipe van de milieuwet dient toe te passen, ook in een politiek gevoelig dossier. Er is een zeer grote stijging van dioxines in Beringen, dioxines zijn absoluut kankerverwekkend. Het voorzorgsprincipe houdt o.a. in dat er een verantwoordelijkheid is in te grijpen en mensen te beschermen voor blootstelling aan schade waar wetenschappelijk onderzoek een plausibel risico heeft ontdekt op een gerelateerd gebied. Wij aanvaarden geen relativerende of ontkennende communicatie meer, en, doen een oproep aan onze vertegenwoordigers in het stadhuis om hun gewenste rol te spelen", zegt Houdmeyers nog.

"Ik heb begrip voor uw frustratie, maar wij blijven van oordeel dat wij niet het niveau zijn om bijkomende stappen te zetten. We hebben hier niet de middelen en niet de kennis voor, maar belangrijker nog is dat we slechts bevoegd zijn voor ons grondgebied en dat het duidelijk is dat de scope van een dergelijke opdracht veel verder gaat. Ik herhaal dat we de bezorgdheid onderschrijven en daarom het onderzoek laten doorgaan dit jaar. We hopen hierdoor meer inzichten te verwerven", zegt schepen van Milieu **Tijs Lemmens**.

[https://www.internetgazet.be/beringen/leefbaar-tervant-blijft-verontrust-over-dioxines.aspx?fbclid=IwAR349Y3MASIz-r6oakr\\_I1Ee7Mfbkvu8rsPt8a7yIXQtjpf9XPFIpPQ1VLK/](https://www.internetgazet.be/beringen/leefbaar-tervant-blijft-verontrust-over-dioxines.aspx?fbclid=IwAR349Y3MASIz-r6oakr_I1Ee7Mfbkvu8rsPt8a7yIXQtjpf9XPFIpPQ1VLK/)



GEZONDHEID 16/08/2022 - 12:30

## Meer onderzoek nodig naar verhoogde aanwezigheid dioxines in de lucht in Beringen

door Luc Moons

Uit onderzoek naar de luchtkwaliteit in Beringen blijkt dat op verschillende plaatsen hoge dioxinewaarden zijn gemeten. Maar het verband met de biotoomcentrale van Bionerga is niet bewezen. En daarom is bijkomend onderzoek nodig. Dat zegt de Beringse schepen van Milieu, Tijs Lemmens. De actiegroep Leefbaar Tervant, die de komst van - wat zij noemen - de verbrandingsoven altijd heeft tegenhouden, spreekt van verontrustende resultaten.

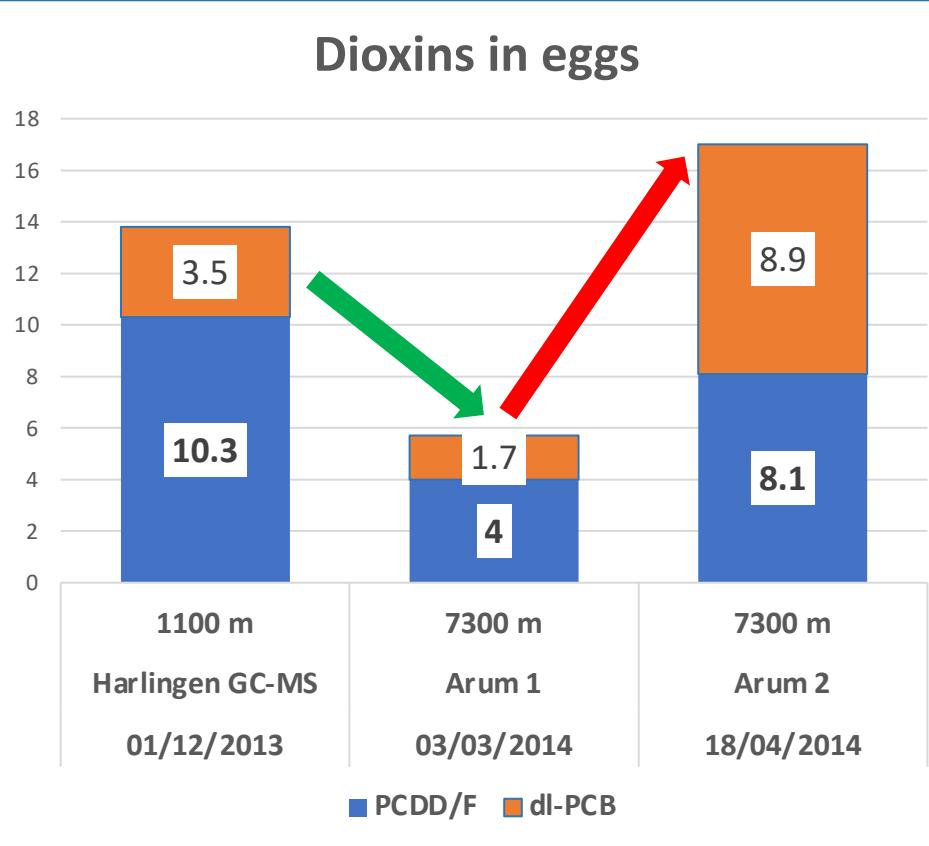
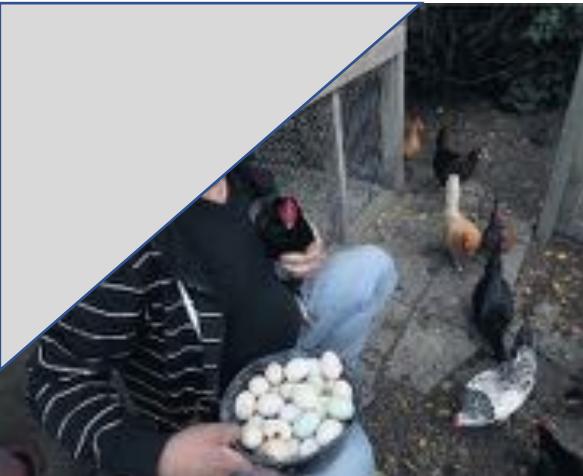
<https://www.tvl.be/nieuws/meer-onderzoek-nodig-naar-verhoogde-aanwezigheid-dioxines-in-de-lucht-in-beringen-142335?fbclid=IwAR2XbpW9Jcf8nrCxBw6bADzv3eKRxZcVMIgmWK4RzlbaeuNgPyNWRl6LY>

# Side impact of biomonitoring results and confounders

## Negative social impacts

- Isolation chicken owners
- Houses prices fall
- Stop farming chickens
- Stop growing vegetable
- cut down fruit trees
- Uncertainty people

Moving



Moving to another place:

1. Initially results show drastically decrease of dioxins in eggs
2. Again elevation dioxin results, due to confounders nearby



# TW research on RIVM data indicates dioxin emissions from biomass incineration

This study shows the importance of including all possible sources, and confounders.

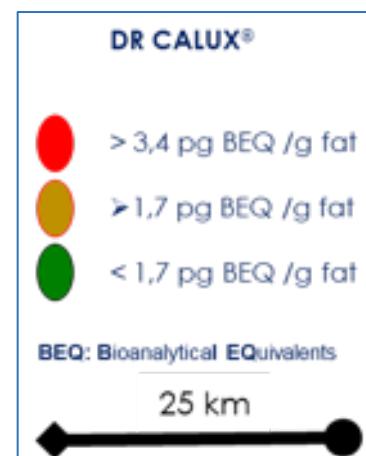
Biomass incineration is an underexplored source of dioxins emissions



The highest dioxin levels in eggs are found near an animal carcass incinerator (dl-PCB 126, the highest level in NL) and near WtE incinerator REC.



Elevated levels of dioxins in eggs found near biomass incineration plants (< 5 km).  
More research is needed.



# Confounding factors in TW biomonitoring research Basque Country 2019-2022

Analyse results shows elevated dioxin results in eggs.

What is the share of:

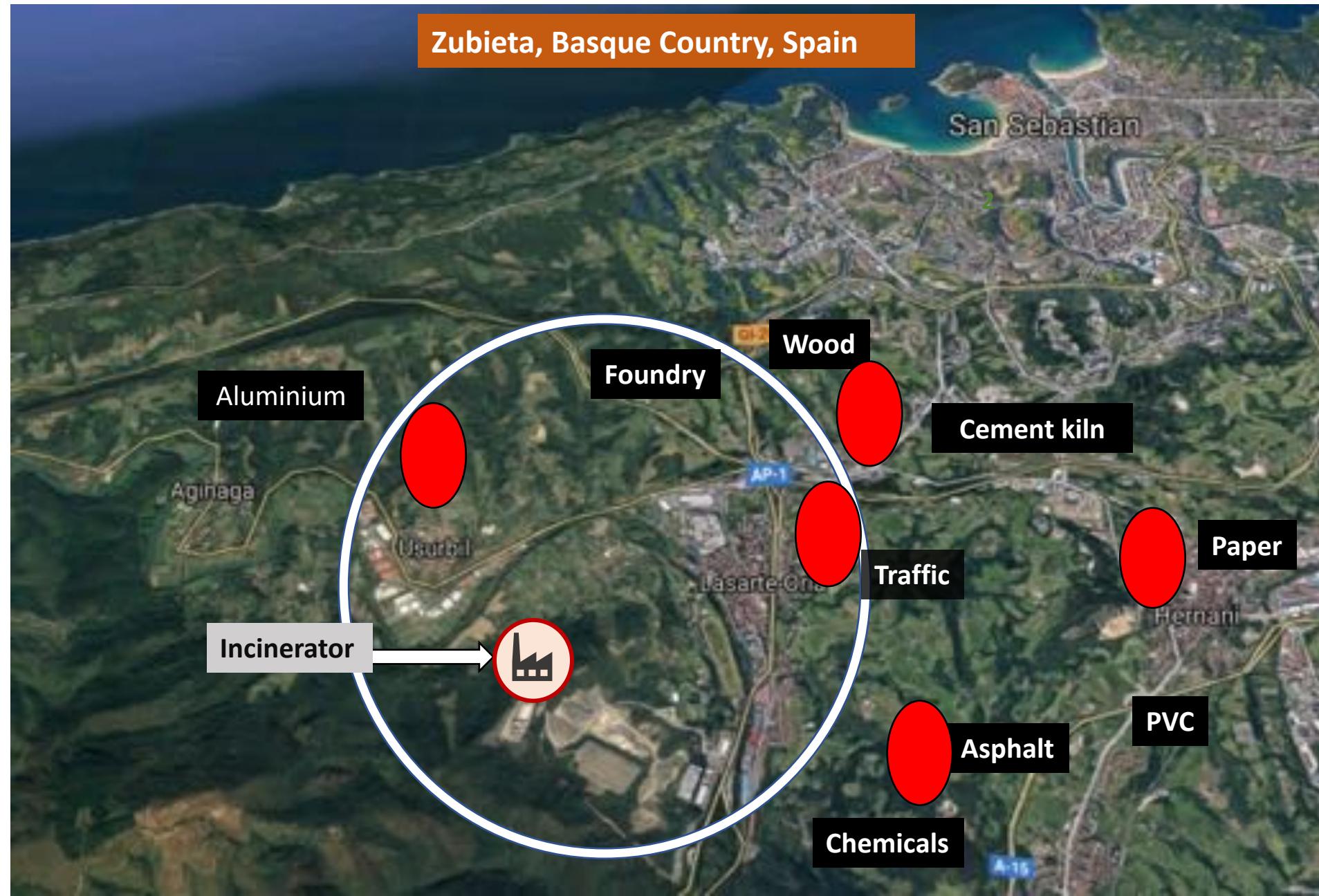
## Confounding factors?



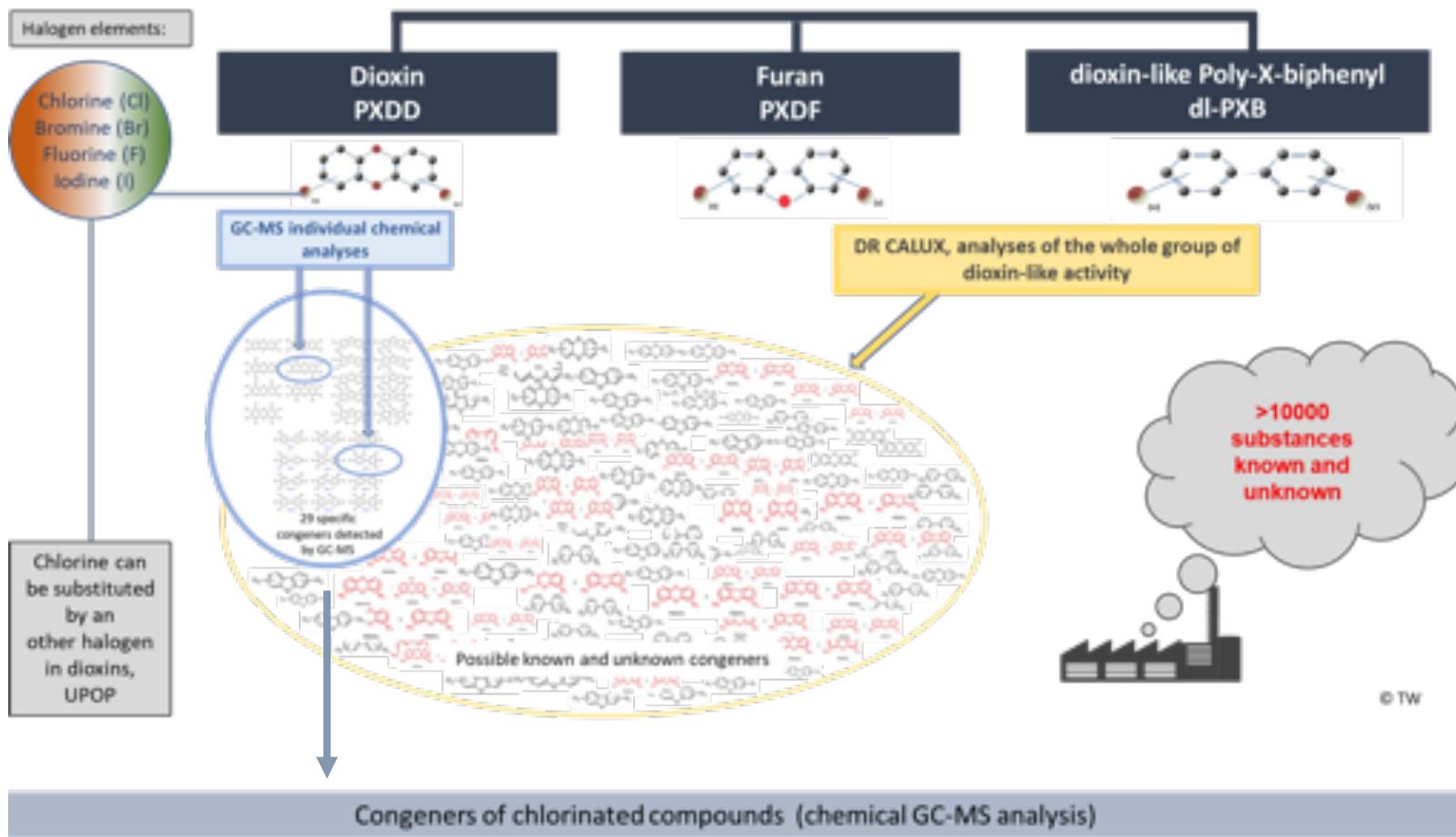
## Waste incineration emissions?

More clarity by (semi)continuous measurements in chimney  
WtE incinerator for knowing real emission data waste incineration

## Zubieta, Basque Country, Spain



# Chemical analysis (GC-MS) vs Bioassay (CALUX)



Congeners of chlorinated compounds (chemical GC-MS analysis)

Dioxins, Furans (PCDD/F) and dioxin-like PCBs		
Abbreviation	Congeners	TF
<b>Dioxins (n=7)</b>		
TCDD	2,3,7,8-Tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	1
PCDD	1,2,3,7,8-Pentachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	1
HxCDD	1,2,3,4,7,8-Hexachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	0,1
HxCDD	1,2,3,6,7,8-Hexachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	0,1
HxCDD	1,2,3,7,8,9-Hexachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	0,1
HpCDD	1,2,3,4,6,7,8-heptachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	0,05
OCD	Octachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	0,0003

Furans (n=10)		
	Congeners	TF
TCDF	2,3,7,8-Tetrachlorodibenzofuran	0,1
PCDF1	1,2,3,7,8-Pentachlorodibenzofuran	0,03
PCDF2	2,3,4,7,8-Pentachlorodibenzofuran	0,3
HaCDF1	1,2,3,4,7,8-Hexachlorodibenzofuran	0,1
HaCDF2	1,2,3,6,7,8-Hexachlorodibenzofuran	0,1
HaCDF3	1,2,3,7,8,9-Hexachlorodibenzofuran	0,1
HaCDF4	2,3,4,6,7,8-Hexachlorodibenzofuran	0,1
HCDF1	1,2,3,4,6,7,8-Heptachlorodibenzofuran	0,01
HCDF2	1,2,3,4,7,8,9-Heptachlorodibenzofuran	0,01
OCDF	Octachlorodibenzofuran	0,0003

Polychlorinated biphenyl (n=12)		
	Congeners	TF
PCB77	3,3',4,4'-Tetrachlorobiphenyl (#77)	0,0001
PCB81	3,4,4',5-Tetrachlorobiphenyl (#81)	0,0003
PCB126	3,3',4,4',5-Pentachlorobiphenyl (#126)	0,1
PCB169	3,3',4,4',5,5'-Hexachlorobiphenyl (#169)	0,03
PCB205	2,3,3',4,4'-Pentachlorobiphenyl (#205)	0,00001
PCB314	2,3,3',4,4',5-Pentachlorobiphenyl (#314)	0,00001
PCB318	2,3,3',4,4',5-Pentachlorobiphenyl (#318)	0,00001
PCB213	2,3,3',4,4',5-Pentachlorobiphenyl (#213)	0,00001
PCB256	2,3,3',4,4',5-Hexachlorobiphenyl (#256)	0,00003
PCB257	2,3,3',4,4',5-Hexachlorobiphenyl (#257)	0,00003
PCB267	2,3,3',4,4',5-Hexachlorobiphenyl (#267)	0,00003
PCB289	2,3,3',4,4',5,5'-Heptachlorobiphenyl (#289)	0,00001

# Dioxins (PCDD/F) in eggs 2019-2021, Beringen - Belgium

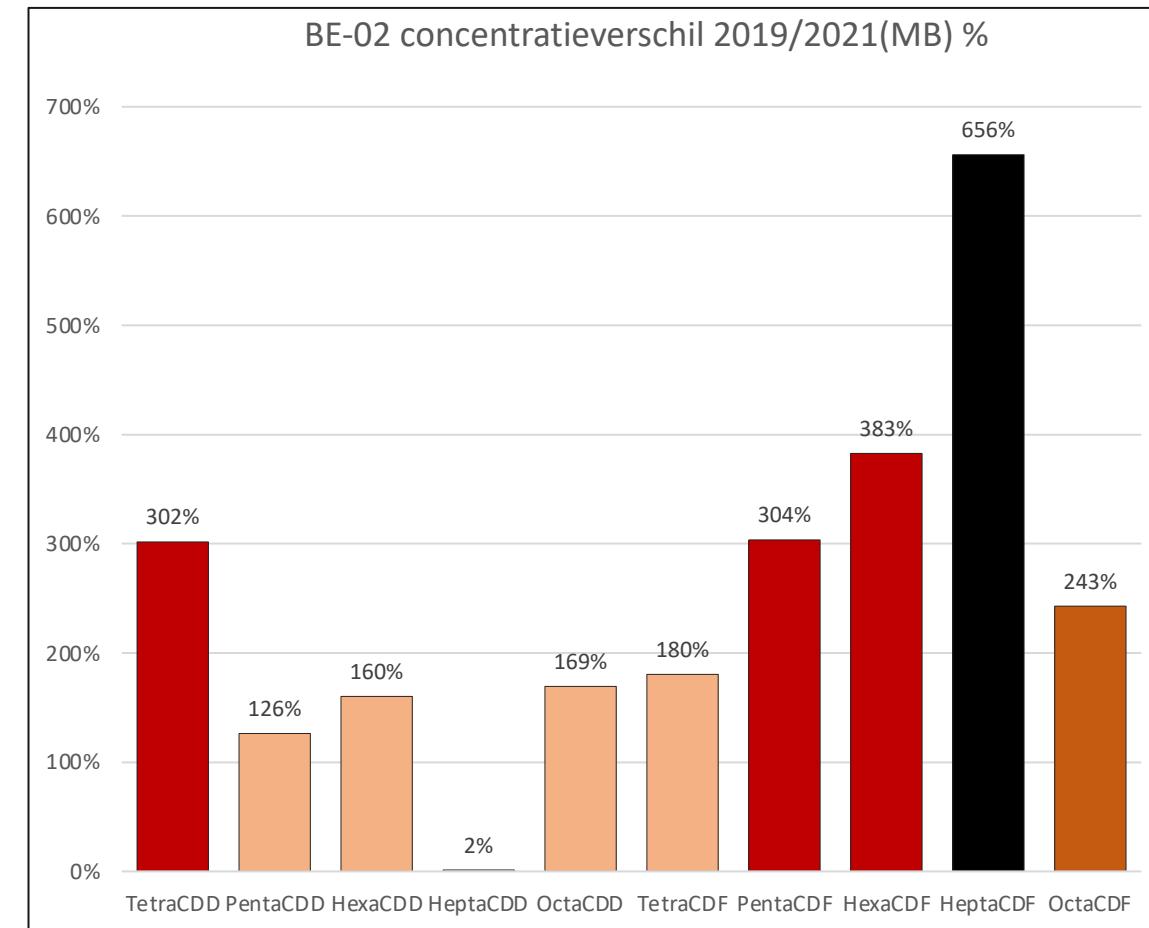
Locatie BE-2: PCDD/F (Medium Bound)				
	pg/g vet		Concentratie verschil	
	2019	2021	Absoluut	%
PCDD	56,48	118,69	62,21	110%
PCDF	15,59	89,88	74,29	476%
PCDD/F	72,08	208,57	136,49	189%

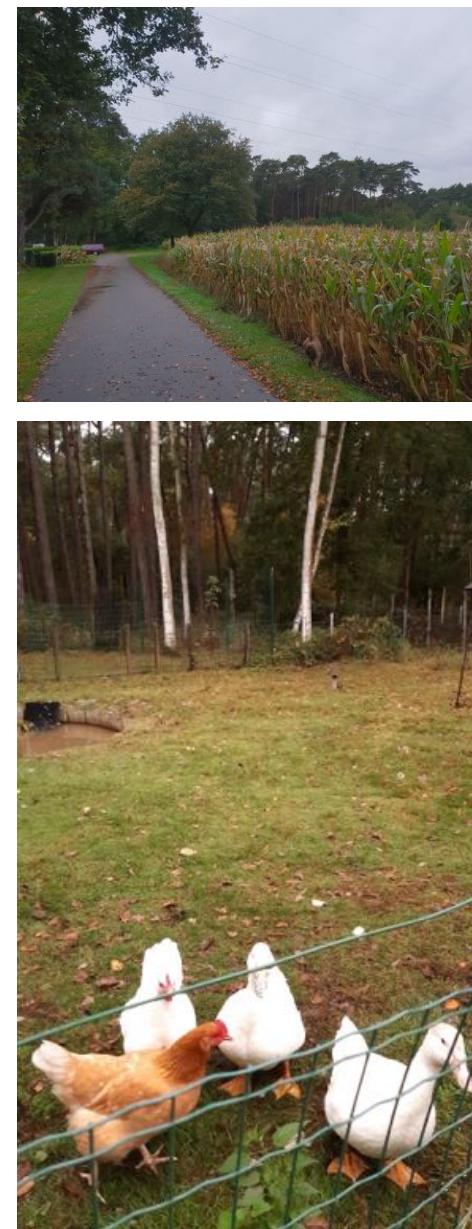
BE-2: Dioxinen (PCDD)				
TetraCDD	0,12	0,49	0,37	302%
PentaCDD	0,44	1,00	0,56	126%
HexaCDD	3,92	10,20	6,28	160%
HeptaCDD	19,70	20,00	0,30	2%
OctaCDD	32,30	87,00	54,70	169%

BE-2: Furanen (PCDF)				
TetraCDF	1,07	3,00	1,93	180%
PentaCDF	2,06	8,30	6,24	304%
HexaCDF	3,09	14,90	11,81	383%
HeptaCDF	7,63	57,68	50,05	656%
OctaCDF	1,75	6,00	4,25	243%



TW indicatieve legenda	
Verhoging %	> 500 %
	> 300 %
	> 200 %
	> 100 %
	< 100 %



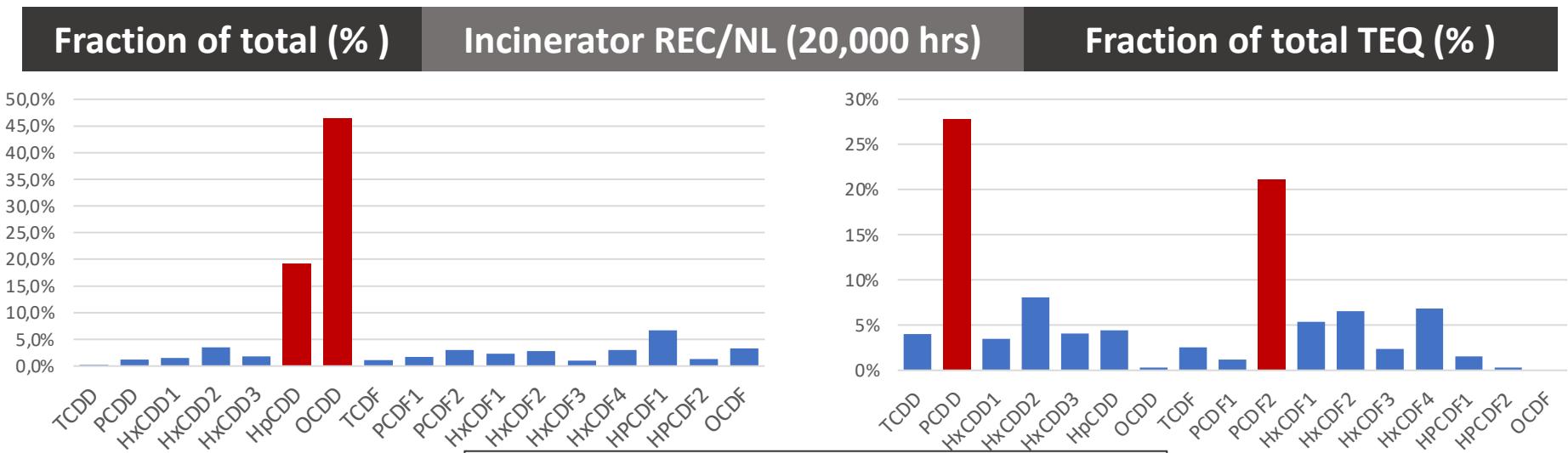
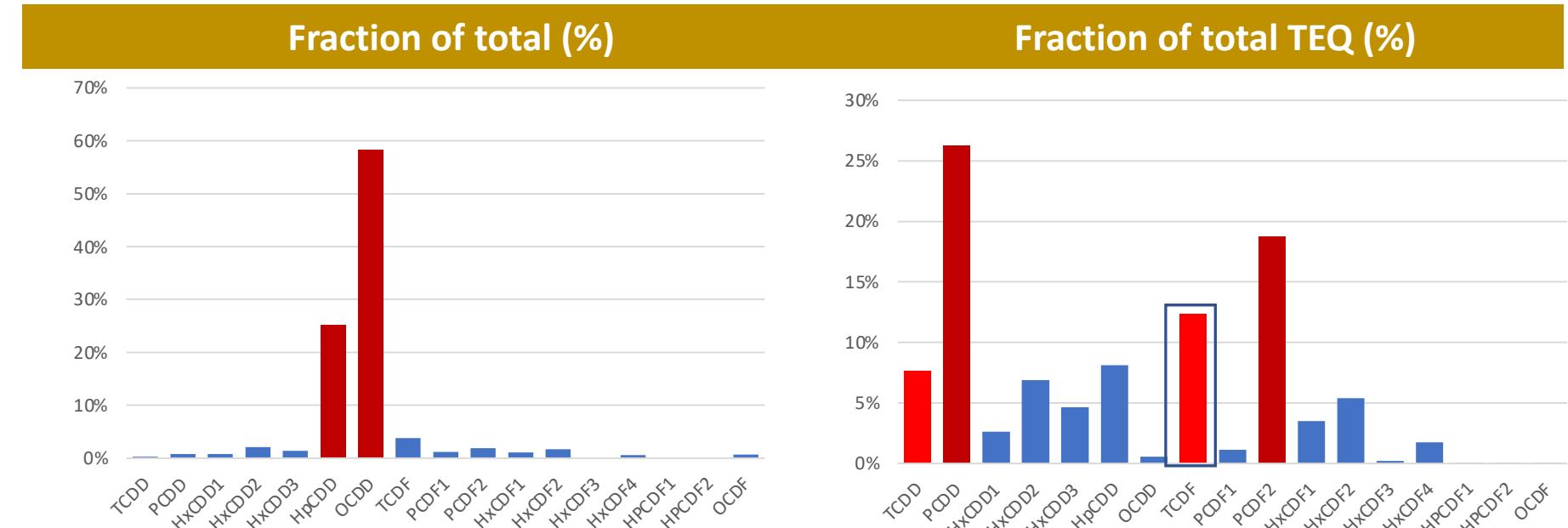
# Similar congener patterns found in Eggs (Paris) and emissions of WtE

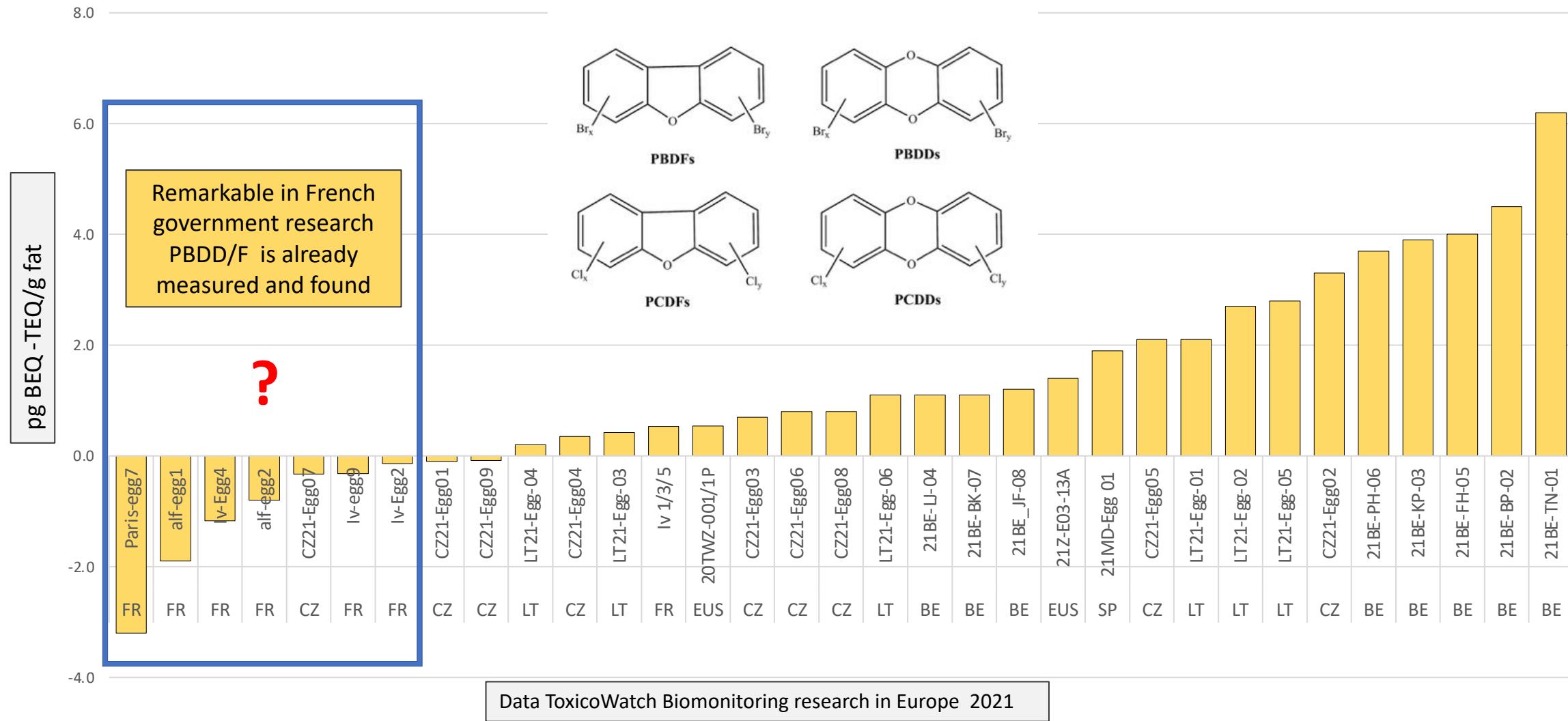
Alf-egg2	
Distance (m)	2810
Breed	
Hens (n)	2
Age (month)	10
Eggs/month	60
Foraging area (m2)	150
DR CALUX BEQ	
PCDD/F BEQ	7.1
dl-PCB	7.1
PCDD/F/dl-PCB	14.2
GC-MS TEQ	
PCDD/F	7.9
dl-PCB	21.0
PCDD/F/dl-PCB	29.0

DR CALUX PCDD/F and PCDD/F/dl/PCB exceed EU limit

NOT complying EU limit for PCDD/F and the sum of PCDD/F/dl-PCBs TEQ.

Action level dl-PCB is exceeded

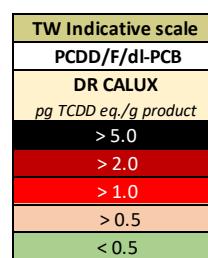
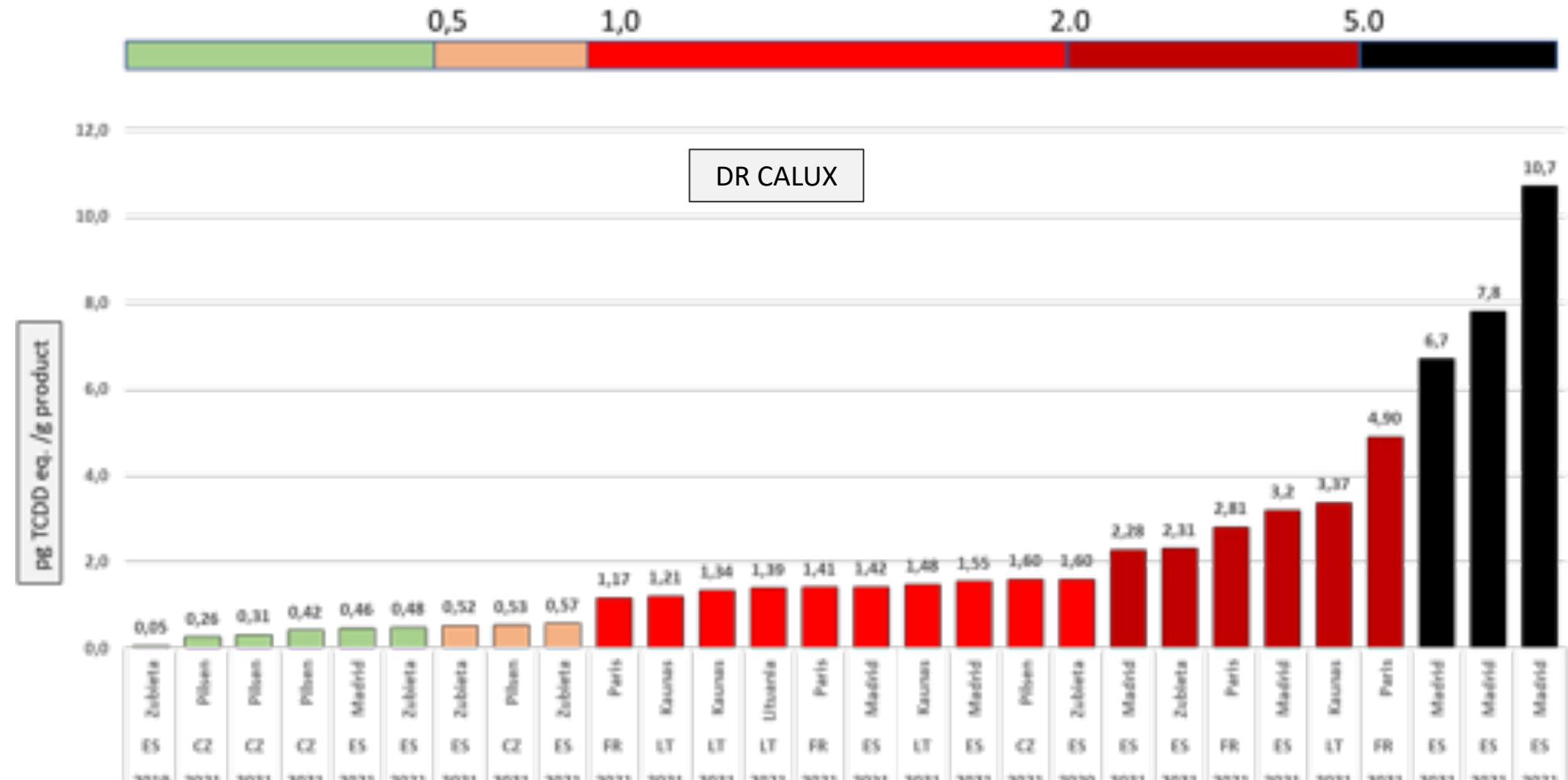




Most of the time DR CALUX > GC-MS, especially in Paris, (and Harlingen, NL)

dl-PCB difference much higher due TEF PCB 126

## Dioxins (PCDD/F/dl-PCB) in Mosses near Waste Incineration plants in Europe



Data ToxicoWatch Biomonitoring research in Europe 2019 - 2021

## PFAS in eggs by chemical analyses (GC-MS) and bioassays

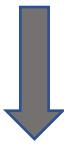
Zafeiraki et al. 2016



egg = 60 gram

Chemical analyses

3.1 ng PFAS (EFSA-4) /g



TDI adult 70 kg:

Exceeding the EFSA limit 4 x

TDI Child 20 kg:

Exceeding the EFSA limit 15 x

TW research 2021



Bioassay FITC-T4

1600 ng PFOA eq./g



TDI adult 70 kg:

Exceeding the EFSA limit &gt; 2000 x

TDI Child 20 kg:

Exceeding the EFSA limit &gt; 7000 x

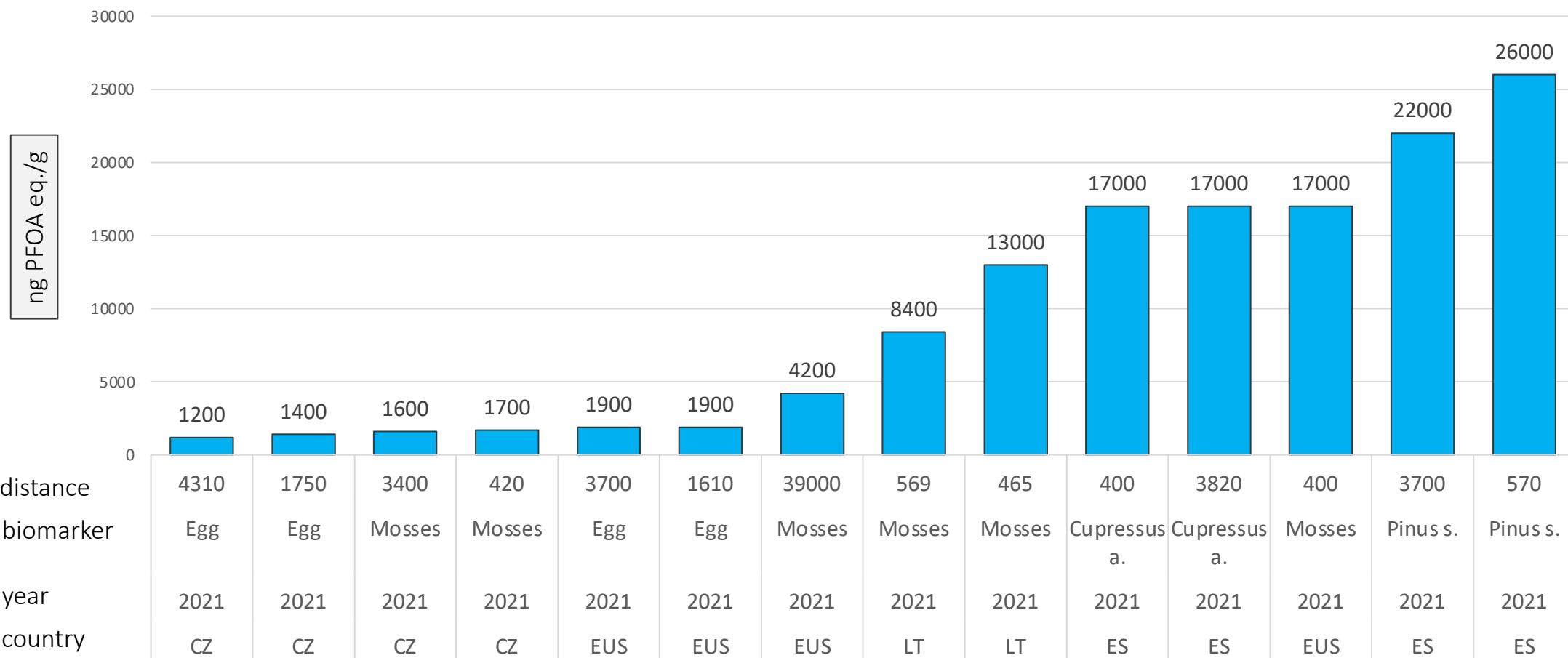
PFAS in eggs						
Country	Matrix	Date	Location	Distance	PFAS (FITC-T4)	PFAS CALUX
CZ	Egg	2021	Pilsen	4310	1200	250
CZ	Egg	2021	Pilsen	1750	1400	130
EUS	Egg	2021	Zubieta	3700	1900	
EUS	Egg	2021	Zubieta	1610	1900	
Average					1600	190

EFSA: Tolerable Daily Intake (TDI) PFAS  
0.62 ng PFAS/kg bw /day

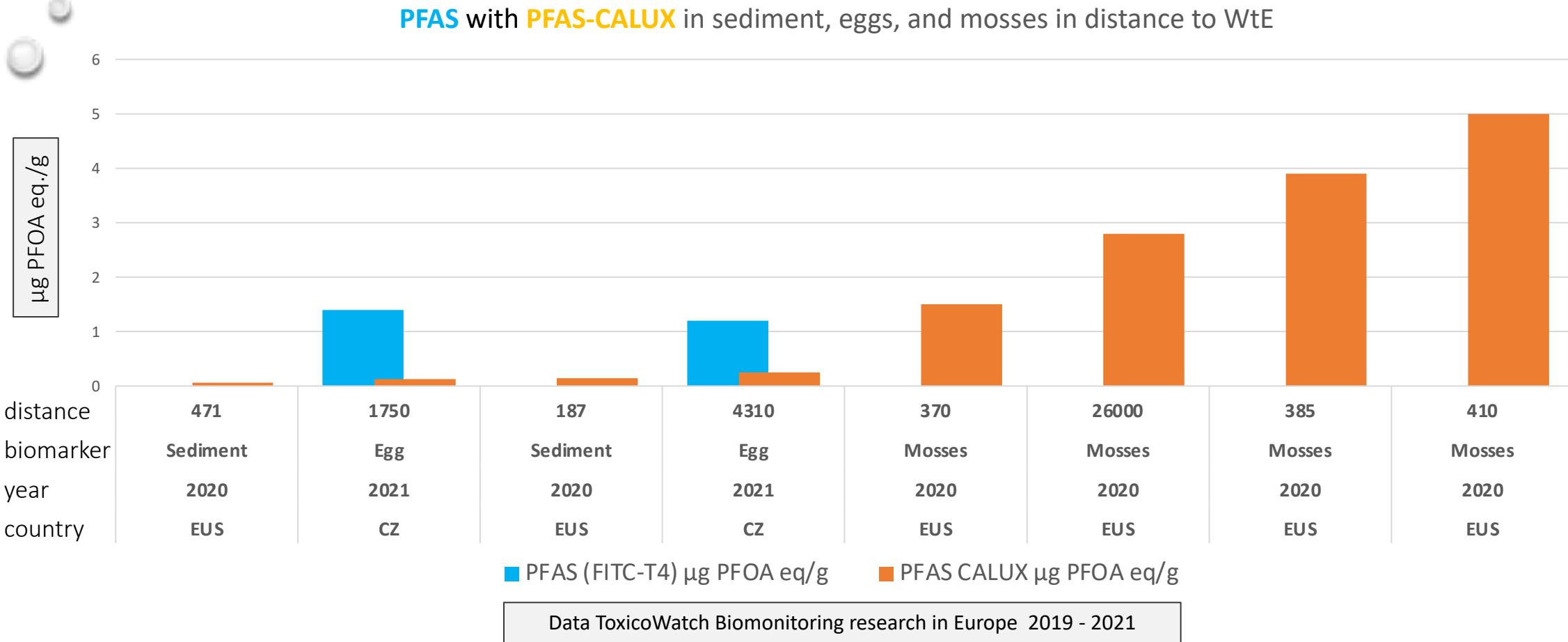
TDI adult 70 kg is  $70 \times 0.62 = 44.0$  ng PFAS/dayTDI child 20 kg is  $20 \times 0.62 = 12.4$  ng PFAS/day

EFSA: Tolerable Daily Intake (TDI) PFAS 0.62 ng PFAS/kg bw /day.

FITC-T4 - ng PFOA eq/g



## Measurements FITC-T4 and PFAS CALUX in TW Biomonitoring research Europe - 2020



More research is needed for comparison PFAS-CALUX and FITC-T4 in different biomatrices

## Tightening Tolerable intake of POPs in time by EFSA advise

Dioxins **35 x more toxic**

2018: **2 pg TEQ/kg bw/week**

2001: **14 pg TEQ/kg bw/week**

1997: **70 pg TEQ/kg bw/week**

Dioxins (PCDD/F/dl-PCB)

PFOA **> 2386 x more toxic**

2020: **4.4 ng PFAS /kg bw/week  
(PFOA+ PFHxS+PFOS+PFNA)**

2018: **6 ng PFOA /kg bw/week**

2008: **10500 ng PFOA/kg bw/week**

PFOA

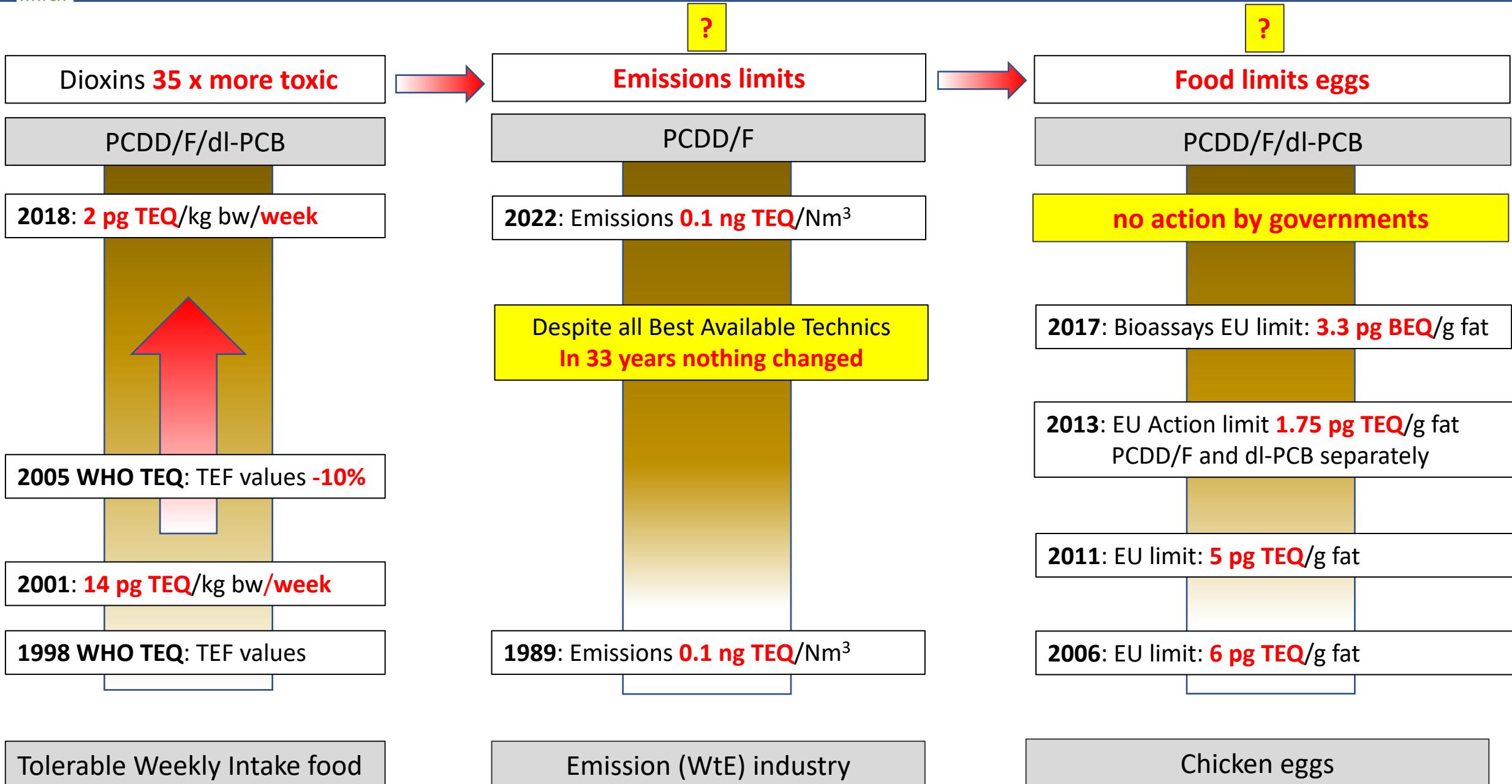
BPA **10000 x more toxic**

2022: **0.04 ng BPA/kg bw/DAY**

2015: **4000 ng BPA/kg bw/DAY**

BPA

# Tightening of EFSA Tolerable Weekly Intake (TWI) and delaying EU regulations





## In summary: Emerging issues in biomonitoring research

- Independent biomonitoring plays a key role in a better understanding of pollution
- There is a gap between chemical and bioassay analyses, and a big gap in the analyses of the PFAS family
- The levels of PFAS in the environment, eggs, vegetation; pine needles, and mosses, give a strong warning signal
- The technical capacity to destroy the ‘for-ever-chemicals’ PFASs is currently insufficient.
- The health risks of PFAS is known for decades and still, PFAS has been produced in large-scale quantities since the 1950s.
- Urgent need for a very strong limit on the production and use of PFASs (Madrid Statement)
- Strength and limitation of this study?

Strength: a lot of environmental samples are taken and analysed. Building up real data instead of models to which policy and regulations are primarily based on.

Limitation: The influence of confounders and laboratory analyses.

- We, as the human population, cross the line with a worldwide Tsunami production of for-ever-chemicals: thousands of PFAS compounds, which cannot all be analysed in detail in laboratories only a few PFAS compounds.