Polluters Everywhere: From Goierri to the Ice of Greenland!!

Contaminants are in the blood of young people from Goierri and on the surface of Arctic ice.

~Open and free activity
~18:00h
~Miramar Palace, San Sebastián or streaming

08.Oct 2026

Cod. W10-26

Mod.:
Streaming Face-to-face

Edition
2026

Activity type
Open activity

Date
08.Oct 2026

Location
Miramar Palace

Languages
Basque Spanish

Organising Committee

Description

In our day-to-day lives, we are exposed to chemical substances inherent to our food, consumption or lifestyles. The list includes sweeteners, plasticisers, medicines and personal hygiene products, along with classic pollutants such as heavy metals, hydrocarbons and pesticides. That same scenario is to be found in all ecosystems and affects all living beings.

Many of those compounds are often considered safe for our health, although less so for ecosystems. It is true that there is no clear evidence of its long-term effects in the majority of cases. Furthermore, many of the compounds found come from the transformation of disposed or used original compounds, which increases the uncertainty about their potential effects. The paradigm of the ‘chemical exposure’ of each person (or organism) throughout their life is therefore currently changing.

Lifelong exposure to numerous compounds is a complex and dynamic process that can increase vulnerability to certain illnesses and affect the balance of many ecosystems. Furthermore, the high use profile of many of them, such as caffeine, nicotine and perfluorinated products, mean that these substances released in urban areas have not only a large regional but also global distribution.

Studies by the IBeA (Ikerkuntza eta Berrikuntza Analitikoa) research group at the University of the Basque Country (EHU) have found the presence of those contaminants of emerging concern both locally and globally. In the Basque Country, projects have been conducted to assess the quality of treated and drinking water, as well as in several river basins and along our coasts. They have allowed many of those contaminants to be identified and quantified. Moreover, projects with Basque population cohorts – such as the case of children from Goierri – are now confirming the presence of perfluorinated compounds in human sample and trying to identify their potential impact on health. Globally, international collaborations of the group have included studies in such remote areas as the Amazon River, Antarctica and Greenland. They have shown that those supposedly pristine areas are not free from the presence of such contaminants. Therefore, an assessment of the risks that they may mean for the population, as well as for the environment, is fundamental.

This paper will highlight some of those studies and will seek to provide the public with information and raise awareness of the impact of the chemical substances that we use in our everyday lives; the aim is for a healthier Basque society and planet.

Objectives

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Program

08-10-2026

18:00 - 18:45 “Kutsatzaileak nonnahi: Goierritik hasta en el hielo de Groenlandia!!“

Néstor Etxebarria Loizate | EHU - Katedraduna EHUn, kimikari analitikoa / Catedrático EHU, Químico AnalíticoLanguage: BasqueSimultaneous translation: Spanish
Belen Gonzalez Gaya | EHU - Ikertzailea Ikerbasque fundazioan, ingurumen-aditua eta Itsas Zientzietan doktorea / Investigadora Ikerbasque, Ambientologa y Dra. en Ciencias del MarLanguage: Spanish

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Manu Soto Plentziako Itsas Estazioko zuzendariak hizlariekin hitz egingo du hitzaldia amaitu ondoren / Manu Soto, director de la Estación Marina de Plentzia, mantendrá un diálogo con los ponentes una vez finalizada la conferencia

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Teachers

Néstor Etxebarria Loizate

Professor at EHU, Analytical Chemist

Nestor Etxebarria Loizate has a PhD in Chemical Sciences (1993) and is a professor at the Analytical Chemistry Department of the University of the Basque Country (EHU), and a leading member of the IBeA Research Group. He embarked on research while studying for his PhD and focused on solution equilibrium studies. After initial stays abroad, at the KTH (Stockholm, 1990) and as a Marie Curie postdoctoral fellow at the JRC-IRMM (Geel, Belgium, 1994-1996), he consolidated his career at the EHU with department and group management posts. He is currently Deputy Director of the Plentzia Marine Station. In recent years, we have headed a research group dedicated to developing non-specific analytical methods and to their application to ecotoxicological and environmental issues. We have thus coordinated and taken part in several research projects where these methods have been applied in the area of metabolomics and exposomics nationally and internationally.

Belen Gonzalez Gaya

Ikerbasque Researcher, Environmental Scientist and PhD in Marine Sciences

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Belen González-Gaya graduated in Environmental Science from the Autonomous University of Madrid. After a Master’s Degree in Aquatic Ecology and Water Quality at the prestigious Wageningen University (Netherlands), she obtained a PhD in Marine Science from the CSIC IDAEA centre in Barcelona. While working on her thesis, she was part of the Malaspina 2010 project, thanks to which she sailed around the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans in search for organic pollutants. Belen has thus already sent 15 years (the last 6 in the Basque Country, after time in Argentina, Italy, Canada and Portugal) not only researching regulated pollutants, but also emerging substances in remote areas (such as the Antarctic and Greenland) in the marine environment and with the focus on studying their impact on ecosystems and on our health.

Registration fees

FACE-TO-FACE	UNTIL 08-10-2026
Free registration	0 EUR

LIVE ONLINE	UNTIL 08-10-2026
Free registration	0 EUR

Place

Miramar Palace

Pº de Miraconcha nº 48. Donostia / San Sebastián

Gipuzkoa