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Editorial

Promoting recognition and implementation of exposure science in Europe: First elements of a European Exposure Science Strategy 2020–2030

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Exposure science is one of the key disciplines needed to evaluate chemical and biological risks as part of human and environmental health assessments, in support of a transition to sustainable societies in Europe and worldwide. In an effort to identify the needs, challenges and opportunities for advancing recognition, policy uptake and funding of exposure science in Europe, the Europe Regional Chapter of the International Society of Exposure Science (ISES Europe), newly-founded in 2017, started a bottom-up process to identify key priority areas for a *European Exposure Science Strategy* [1]. By involving experts from occupational, consumer, general population and environmental exposure assessment, this strategic effort is based on a broad understanding of exposure scientists across the whole landscape and across various sectors. This includes experts and stakeholders from academia, the private sector and regulatory authorities, such as the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), as well as international institutions, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment). Such cross-sector involvement assures a broad stakeholder support and implementation of the different strategy elements and their proposed action plans.

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Dedicated working groups were formed under the auspices of ISES Europe for the identified key priority areas on education and terminology, policy uptake, exposure models, exposure data and human biomonitoring [1]. These working groups reviewed the state-of-science, discussed critical elements for advancing the field, and developed a concrete action plan for each respective key priority area. In this ongoing process, ISES Europe acted as both a motor and a catalyst for the dialogue between different sectors that in Europe are still separated by regulatory silos and a lack of adequate knowledge exchange platforms around exposure science [1].

The present Special Topic introduces the first elements as output of developing an overarching European Exposure Science Strategy, and includes the finalized specific strategies and proposed action plans for the two key priority areas on policy uptake [2] and exposure models [3]. The Special Topic is complemented by a glossary on exposure-related terminology as one of the corner stones of consolidating exposure science as a scientific field [4]. Specific strategies and concrete action plans for all other key priority areas are currently being finalized and will be published in scientific journals.

The role of ISES Europe in the ongoing development of the strategy shows the utmost importance of scientific societies for promoting recognition and identity of a scientific field. By furthering the identity of the field, scientific and political recognition will be achieved, which is key to develop sustainable funding mechanisms for exposure science research and development. Thus, the European Exposure Science Strategy will help to promote and advance exposure science in Europe, and may serve as blueprint for establishing strategies on exposure science worldwide, fully aligned with the global ambitions for a sustainable development.

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Not applicable

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Author Contribution Statement

NvG provided a first draft, PF and NvG finalized together

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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