

Many unknown chemicals in the Baltic Sea

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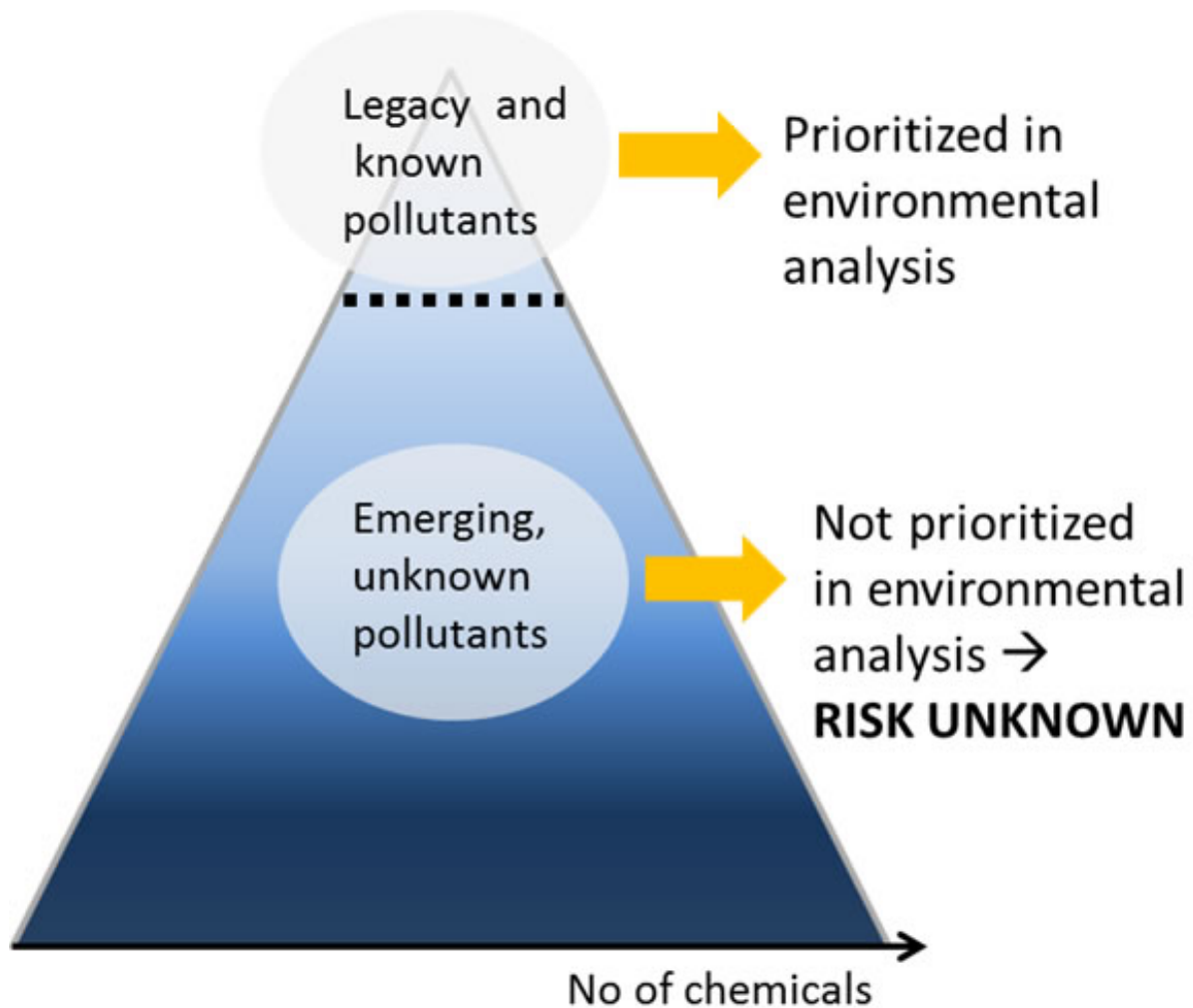
Fish from the Baltic Sea being dissected. Credit: Östersjöcentrum

The researchers examined data from research and monitoring reports from the years 2000-2012, to see what chemicals have been analysed in Baltic Sea fish.

"We found that often it is the already known chemicals that are being analysed again and again. The chemicals analysed in fish from the Baltic Sea are for the most part already regulated in some way, for example through EU's chemicals legislation REACH, the Stockholm Convention on [persistent organic pollutants](#) or the EU's Water Framework Directive", says Anna Sobek, Department of Environmental Science and Analytical Chemistry, Stockholm University.

Analyses of environmental chemicals are costly and time consuming; therefore you need to make a priority of which chemicals to analyse.

"Our study shows that there is a tendency to give priority to these chemicals just because they have already been analysed and have a known risk to the environment and humans. Although there are good arguments for monitoring these chemicals, at the same time we lack important knowledge about new toxic chemicals present in the environment", says Anna Sobek, Department of Environmental Science and Analytical Chemistry, Stockholm University.



New chemicals are often not recognized in analyses of fish in the Baltic Sea, shows a study from the Department of Environmental Science and Analytical Chemistry at Stockholm University. The reason is that one chooses to search for chemicals that are already known, and much of those who are already regulated by law. Many toxic chemicals that are not yet regulated are often overlooked in the environmental monitoring. Credit: Anna Sobek

More information: Sobek Anna et al. The dilemma in prioritizing chemicals for environmental analysis: known versus unknown hazards, *Environ. Sci.: Processes Impacts* (2016). [DOI: 10.1039/C6EM00163G](https://doi.org/10.1039/C6EM00163G)

Provided by Stockholm University

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