

# BWF 2025 Program: The Grey Zone of Water

Wednesday, 4 June 2025

9:00 – 9:40

## OPENING ADDRESSES

**Marko Gajić**, BWF co-founder, Slovenia

**Milin Patel**, BWF advisor, United Kingdom

**Anton Mežan**, Mayor, Municipality of Bled, Slovenia

**Tanja Fajon**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Slovenia

**Satja Sajko**, BWF Young, student at the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Matjaž Juhart**, secretary, Slovenian Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Slovenia

9:45 – 11:15

## PANEL 1: Global climate change, industry, people: the general state of water, the blue economy, and contaminants in water that are not under regulatory control

Panel discussion will explore the intricate links between climate change, industrial activity, and human behaviour - and their collective impact on our most vital resource: water. From the root causes of scarcity and pollution to the journey of unregulated pollutants from source to sea, this session will uncover the hidden drivers of water degradation and their profound effects on ecosystems and communities.

Framed within the context of the blue economy, our experts will spotlight innovative, sustainable solutions and global best practices. Together, we'll explore how industry, governments, and citizens can collaborate to protect water resources and build a resilient, water-secure future.

Panelists:

**Alistair Boxall**, Professor in Environmental Science in the Environment and Geography Department, University of York and NERC-funded ECORISC Centre for Doctoral Training, United Kingdom

**Uroš Vajgl**, State Secretary, Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy, Slovenia

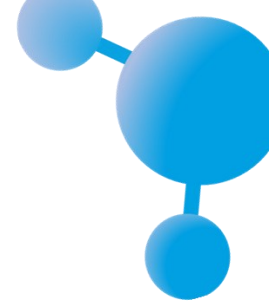
**Ladislav Faigl**, Director, Water Protection Department, Ministry of Environment, Czechia

**Martin Grambow**, former Bavarian Water Director, Germany

**Johan O. Verboom**, Ambassador, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

**Dagmar Behrendt Kaljariková**, International Relations Officer, European Commission – Directorate General for Environment, Belgium

11:15 – 11:45 Coffee break



11:45 – 13:15

## **PANEL 2: The global role of technological innovations in addressing modern-day challenges in water availability**

As climate change, pollution, and mismanagement threaten global water supplies, this panel will highlight the vital role of technology in securing water for people and nature. From desalination to reuse, storage, and groundwater recharge, we'll explore innovative solutions that improve water availability and quality.

The discussion will aim to inspire action, share best practices, and foster collaboration across industries, policymakers, and researchers for a more sustainable water future.

Panelists:

**Gonzalo Meschengieser**, CEO, Argentine Chamber of Water (CAA), Argentina

**Nataša Sovič**, Director of State of the Environment Office, Slovenian Environment Agency, Slovenia

**Dalibor Zdraveski**, Director, Fluid Projekt, North Macedonia

**Sabina Blatnik**, Director, Nanoten, Slovenia

**Yeun Hong**, PhD, Kyowon Property, South Korea

**Roland Wissekerke**, CEO / Co-Founder, HuProTec, Switzerland

**Takuzo Aida**, Group Director, Emergent Soft Matter Function Research Group, RIKEN Center for Emergent Matter Science, Japan

**Silvia Stefanuca-Serban**, Fine Drinks Expert, Divina Sips, Romania

**Sair Sarab**, Senior Expert, Saudi Water Authority, Saudi Arabia

13:15 – 15:00

Lunch

15:00 – 16:15

## **PANEL 3: What is the specific impact on human health of pollutants and the use of technological solutions?**

This panel aims to clearly define, in collaboration with experts, how modern pollutants impact the human body. Building on the insights from the previous two panels, the discussion will ensure that key messages have been effectively communicated and understood—framing these insights as actionable solutions to improve quality of life and support a more sustainable circular and blue economy.

Panelists:

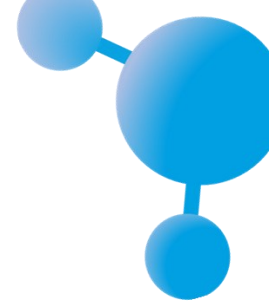
**Mari Asami**, Chief Senior Researcher, National Institute of Public Health, Japan

**Gonzalo Meschengieser**, CEO, Argentine Chamber of Water (CAA), Argentina

Assist. Prof. **Evgen Benedik**, PhD, RD Clinical and Research Dietitian, Division of Paediatrics, University Medical Centre Ljubljana and Biotechnical faculty, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Draženka Stipaničev**, PhD, Head of Central Water Laboratory, Josip Juraj Strossmayer Water Institute, Croatia

**Boštjan Križanec**, PhD, Acting principal of the Centre, National Laboratory of Health, Environment and Food, Slovenia



16:15 – 17:15 **PANEL 4: Returning to Nature Responsibly – The Case of the Bled Wastewater Treatment Plant**

The panel discussion will be held in the Slovenian language.

## Thursday, 5 June 2025: GLOBAL WATER STANDARDS

9:00 – 9:30 **BWF YOUNG**

Water Challenge presentations

9:30 – 10:15 **PANEL 5: The Premium Water Illusion - Cutting Through the Hype**

In a world filled with bold claims and glossy packaging, this panel cuts through the noise to spotlight what truly defines premium drinking water. With a focus on new quality standards, global market requirements, and the role of water in everyday life—from homes to hospitality—we'll explore how to identify and elevate the best waters worldwide.

The discussion will introduce four new categories for better consumer understanding, delve into international certification standards like BWF and Aquinity8, and highlight innovative solutions aimed at reshaping the water industry. The goal: to promote global awareness, ensure purity, and redefine what premium drinking water truly means.

Moderator: **Milin Patel**, BWF Advisor

Panelists:

**Boštjan Oblak**, Co-founder, Aquinity8, Slovenia

**Marko Gajić**, Founder, European Water Sommelier Association, Slovenia

**Haneul Kim**, Vice President, Korean International Sommelier Association, South Korea

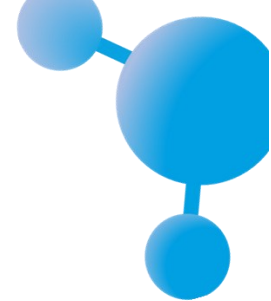
**Sam Wu**, Managing Director, The Water Sommelier, Singapore

10:15 – 10:45 Coffee break

10:45 – 11:45 **PANEL 6: Global Water Trends in Everyday Life and Gastronomy - The Future of Drinking Water and Water Menu**

This panel explores cutting-edge global developments in the distribution of drinking water to homes, hotels, and restaurants, showcasing breakthrough practices that set new industry standards.

By championing zero- and low-contaminant solutions that go beyond regulation, we're shaping the future of potable water. Through innovation, knowledge sharing, and smarter distribution, the goal is clear: to ensure clean, high-quality water reaches every corner of daily life—across households, hospitality, and industry worldwide.



Panelists:

**Boštjan Oblak**, Co-founder, Aquinity8, Slovenia

**Marko Gajić**, Founder, European Water Sommelier Association, Slovenia

**Danijel Galjot**, F&B manager, Hotel Triglav Bled, Slovenia (Michelin recommended restaurant)

**Elisabetta Neri**, Owner, NEBE Inspiring Dlub Events, Italy

**Iztok Altbauer**, Former Managing Director, Slovenian Spas Association, Slovenia

11:50 – 12:20 **LECTURE: East and West: Philosophies of Water and Its Everyday Uses**  
**Jaeyoun Ko**, President, Korean International Sommelier Association, South Korea

12:30 – 14:30 Lunch

15:00 – 16:00 **European Water Awards award ceremony**

Presentation of the projects that have been shortlisted for the prize (3 projects)

Award ceremony

16:00 – 18:00 **International Water Tasting and Water Cocktails**

*Under the aegis of European Water Sommelier Association and powered by Aquinity8*

Presentation and testing of waters and water cocktails according to new global trends in understanding water.