



Martin Ackermann becomes new Eawag Director

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Topics: Organisation & Staff

The 51-year-old succeeds Janet Hering, who is reaching retirement age. Martin Ackermann is group leader at Eawag and Professor of the Ecology of Microbial Systems at the ETH Zurich. He will take up his new post on 01 January 2023.

On 29 June 2022, the Federal Council elected Martin Ackermann as the new Director of Eawag at the request of the ETH Board. "We are very pleased with today's news," says Janet Hering on behalf of the entire Eawag staff. The Eawag director continues: "I am firmly convinced that Martin Ackermann will be an outstanding director. Under his leadership, Eawag is in good hands and will not only be able to continue to develop its high level of performance and cooperation in the ETH Domain, but also further expand its contributions to solving challenges facing society in connection with water and the water environment."

Asked for an initial assessment of the tasks and challenges ahead, Martin Ackermann says: "Eawag's focus - to develop concepts and technologies for the sustainable use of water as a resource - is more topical than ever, because water is at the centre of many of the most important environmental issues of our time. I am extremely excited about the opportunity to work together with my colleagues to tackle these challenges and develop this excellent institute further."

Ten years of Eawag experience

Martin Ackermann studied biology at the University of Basel, where he obtained his doctorate in 2002. He then worked for two years as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of California, San Diego. In 2004, he moved to the ETH Zurich as a senior assistant and became an SNF assistant professor in March 2006 and was appointed associate professor by the ETH Board in 2008 and full professor in 2015. In addition to his professorship, Martin Ackermann headed the Environmental microbiology

research department at Eawag for ten years with around 50 employees, which is a leader in solution-oriented research in aquatic microbiology.

With his research group, Martin Ackermann works on fundamental questions about the ecology and evolution of bacteria. The objective is to expand the understanding of the biology of bacteria in nature and also to provide insights that have practical added value for the check and use of bacterial activities.

Martin Ackermann has published over 100 scientific papers in international journals, many of them leading interdisciplinary journals. He is a member of the European Academy of Microbiology and is successfully involved in promoting young scientists. He was also Vice-President of the Swiss National COVID-19 Science Task Force from April 2020 and President from August 2020 to August 2021.

Cover picture: Martin Ackermann will take over as Head of Eawag on 01 January 2023.
(Photo: Eawag)

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