

## Eawag Seminar Invitation

# The human dimension in aquatic plastic pollution

Speaker **Prof. Sabine Pahl**, *University of Vienna, Austria*

When **February 25, 16.00 – 17.00**

Where **Online via Zoom, contact [seminars@eawag.ch](mailto:seminars@eawag.ch) for access details.**

Abstract Aquatic plastic pollution is entirely due to humans. Throughout the whole life cycle of plastic, from production via consumption to disposal, it is human decisions and behaviour that ultimately lead to plastic ending up in aquatic environments. Every sector, every individual plays a role in the fate of plastic waste. For example, designers and producers make decisions about materials, appearance and functionality; consumers make purchasing decisions and dispose of items after use; policy makers decide on regulation and legal frameworks. These processes can be documented and explained using theories and methods from the social and behavioural sciences. More importantly, these insights can guide social change processes systematically and help develop and evaluate effective communication and behaviour change interventions. This presentation will summarise recent work on the human dimension in aquatic plastic pollution. The focus will be on relevant literature from social and environmental psychology on risk perception and behaviour change. The talk will draw on interdisciplinary and international work to highlight challenges to such integrative research and misunderstandings between disciplines. It will include research on macro- and microplastics and a range of stakeholders, e.g., fishermen and young people. This will be complemented by a brief discussion of the research-policy interface in the context of plastic pollution, drawing on recent work with the EU Chief Scientific Advisors and UNEP