

President's Report – General Assembly 2025: Activities of 2024

Marloes Eeftens, Basel, 20 May 2025

Since this is my first annual report as President of the Swiss Society of Aerobiology (SSA/SGA), let me briefly introduce myself. My name is Marloes Eeftens, and I am an Assistant Professor and [environmental epidemiologist](#) at the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute in Allschwil, near Basel. My research focuses on environmental exposures—such as air pollution, radiation, noise, and pollen—and their effects on public health, involving data science and statistics to make connections between the two. In recent years, I have led several projects related to pollen exposure and associated population health impacts. Originally from the Netherlands, I have lived in Basel for the past 12 years.

I succeeded Pierre Gumowski as President following the last General Assembly and have since enjoyed collaborating with Roxane Guillod, Benoit Crouzy, Regula Gehrig, and Maria Lbadaoui on the executive committee. We aim to continue and develop SSA/SGA as a platform for interdisciplinary exchange—bringing together expertise in measuring and modelling aerobiological exposures, as well as researching, preventing, and mitigating their health effects.

Highlights from 2024

Swiss Academies Factsheet

In collaboration with the Swiss Commission for Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics, we contributed to a Swiss Academies Factsheet on pollen allergies and climate change, published in May 2024. It is available in English, German, and French:

- *Pollen allergy and the impact of a changing climate* ([in English](#))
- *Pollenallergie – Auswirkungen eines sich wandelnden Klimas* ([in German](#))
- *Allergie au pollen et impact du changement climatique* ([in French](#))

Authors: Marloes Eeftens, Fiona Tummon, Bernard Clot, Benoit Crouzy, Regula Gehrig, Ana Vicedo
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World Aerobiology Conference – Vilnius, 1–5 July 2024

SSA/SGA members actively participated in the [World Aerobiology](#) international conference in Vilnius, Lithuania, presenting research through talks and posters. Maria Lbadaoui-Darvas represented the society, promoting our newly published factsheet and announcing our December 2024 symposium.

SSA/SGA Symposium – 5–6 December 2024

Our 1.5-day symposium, [Bridging Environmental Monitoring and Health Research](#), was held at EPFL Lausanne and attended by 20-30 participants. Sessions covered topics such as pollen's impacts on health, modern allergy medicine, European monitoring networks, real-time measurements, and alternative measurement techniques. The event included a lab visit to the Laboratory of Atmospheric Processes and their Impacts, hosted by Athanasios Nenes.

Speakers came from institutions including MeteoSwiss, the University of Lausanne, Inselspital Bern, and EPFL. Invited international speakers included:

- Elaine Fuertes (Imperial College London)
- Stephanie Gilles (University of Augsburg)
- Athanasios Damialis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)
- Mariel Suarez (Technical University of Munich – Medicine)
- Julia Palamarchuk (Finnish Meteorological Institute)

We also took the opportunity to thank Pierre Gumowski for his dedicated service to SSA/SGA. He was named an honorary member in recognition of his contributions over the years.

Looking ahead

SSA/SGA remains committed to engaging its members through symposia, publications, and broader dissemination of aerobiological knowledge. Our aim is to organize a major symposium every two years, with smaller-scale events and outreach activities in between. We also plan to diversify our communication channels, including a stronger social media presence. In 2025, we will focus on expanding our interdisciplinary reach. Notably, we hope to re-engage the medical and public health community, which has become underrepresented in recent years.

Planned activities for 2025 include:

- Launching our SSA/SGA LinkedIn page. Follow us to stay up to date on aerbiological news from Switzerland and beyond: [Swiss Society of Aerobiology \(SSA/SGA\) | LinkedIn](#).
- Migrating our website to a new platform to improve cost-efficiency and presentation.
- Co-organizing a 1-day joint symposium with the Prof. Dr. (med) Karin Hartmann (UniSpital Basel) on 16 October 2025 in Basel. Watch our [Events page](#) for more information!