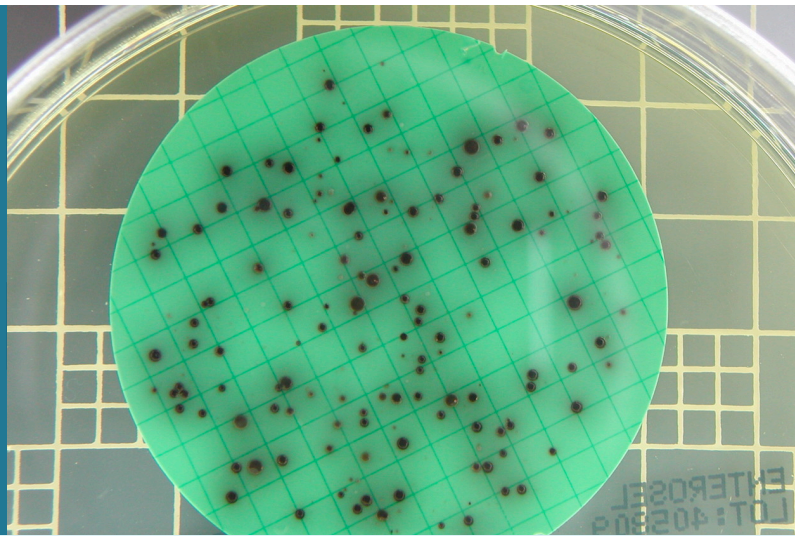


Environmental microbiology and biotechnology



As part of their activities in the Environmental Microbiology and Biotechnology group, researchers develop knowledge, know-how and innovative solutions in relation to the contamination of water, food and the environment by pathogenic microorganisms.

Main Expertise fields

- Environmental microbiology, with a focus on water resources
- Antimicrobial compounds and materials
- Environmental applications of probiotics
- Sewer-based epidemiology

Research Challenges

Microbial Risk Assessment in a One-Health perspective

Food and water are regularly contaminated by microorganisms along the production chains. Recent outbreaks of food-borne and waterborne microbial infections highlight the increasing risk of microbial propagation in a globalised world. These problems are worsened by an increasing antibiotic resistance in bacteria. The research group is engaged in understanding the way these microorganisms interact with the matrices they encountered (water, air, food, soil, sediment,...) in order to precisely characterise the risk associated with food or water production and consumption, water-based recreational activities, water reuse in agriculture or cities. The research group offer to private and public partners, among others:

- Development of monitoring tools for tracking contamination in environment or industry (water, food). These tools are based on a combination of culture methods, molecular biology tools and analytical chemistry analyses for assessing viruses, parasites, bacteria or algae and their relevant properties such as toxin production or antibiotic resistance
- Development of rapid diagnostic tools such as aptamer-based biosensors for viruses or MALDI-TOF identification databases of antibiotic resistance in bacteria
- Integrative studies of environmental contamination and public health epidemiology, e.g. for pathogens such as *Campylobacter*, Noroviruses, Adenoviruses or Cryptosporidium
- Assessment of the fate and transport of pathogens in surface water or groundwater in a drinking water protection perspective;
- Background or emergency studies of contamination for bottled water industry
- Drone-assisted monitoring of surface water resources contaminated with cyanobacteria in complement to assessment of the dynamics of algae and toxins

SEWER-Based Epidemiology

For 15 years, LIST has been investigating circulation of microbial pathogens in human populations through the monitoring of wastewater. This competence has been particularly useful when data from the group has fed the decision-making process of the Luxembourg's government during the SARS-CoV-2 sanitary crisis. The research group offer to:

- Determine the diversity of bacterial strains and virus variants circulating in wastewater and relate this to dynamics in human population
- Advise governments on the evolution of epidemics or pandemics such as SARS-CoV-2
- Communicate with media and citizens about sanitary status during crises

Clean-Tech related to microorganisms

Fighting microorganisms has become of paramount importance in order to propose responses to the increasing microbial risk generated by the globalisation. Researchers develop innovative decontamination processes for food- or water-based businesses. The research group offers to private or public partners:

- Development of technologies based on cold atmospheric plasmas for the decontamination of inert surfaces or food items
- Validation and marketing of new decontamination processes such as chemical additives, material structures, photochemical reactions or plasma treatments for example

Development of Clean-Tech based on Microbial Products

Researchers develop greener alternatives to classical treatments for water infrastructures, bottled water industry, food industry, hospitals,... using beneficial microorganisms (such as probiotics or microbial enzymes) to eliminate pathogenic microorganisms or chemical pollutants such as pharmaceuticals (antibiotics in particular), in wastewater or on building materials (polymers stainless steel, etc.). We therefore offer to private companies the following support:

- Selection, characterisation and cultivation of interesting bacterial strains or phages for industrial purposes
- Reference and manage microbial strains in the [Luxembourg Microbial Culture Collection](#) managed by LIST
- Produce free or fixed bacterial enzymes or other compounds for decontamination systems

Application areas

- Microbial risk assessment and management
- Viral diagnostics
- Probiotic production
- Cleaning technologies

Main assets

- Innovative biosensors for waterborne viruses
- Risk assessment tools for bathing areas affected by cyanobacteria
- Isolation, characterisation and culture platform for probiotics
- Culture collection of pathogenic bacteria such as *Campylobacter*

Equipment

- Fully equipped biosafety level 2 lab
- Illumina MiSeq sequencer
- qPCR
- Surface Plasmon Resonance
- Cell culture lab
- Water-solid separation lab with ultrafiltration and ultracentrifugation
- Anaerobic culture chamber
- Cold atmospheric plasma generator

Selected Publications

- [Setting a baseline for global urban virome surveillance in sewage](#), Nieuwenhuijse DF, Munnink BBO, Phan MVT, Munk P, Venkatkrishnan S, et al. 2020. Scientific Reports
- [Controlled co-immobilisation of fibroblasts on a virus-binding plasma polymer film for multi-functional biomedical surfaces](#), Cobble U, Moreno-Courajou M, Collard D, De Pauw-Gillet MC, Quintana R, et al. 2020. Plasma Processes and Polymers
- [MALDI-TOF mass spectrometry and specific biosensors: potential new tools for the identification of antimicrobial resistance in foodborne pathogens](#), Feucherolles M, Cauchie HM, Penny C. 2019. Microorganisms
- [Influence of physico-chemical characteristics of sediment on the in situ spatial distribution of Especific RNA phages in the riverbed](#), Fauvel B, Cauchie HM, Gantzer C, Ogórzal L. 2019. FEMS Microbiology Ecology
- [Global monitoring of antimicrobial resistance based on metagenomic analysis of urban sewage](#), Hendriksen RS, Munk P, Njage P, van Buren K, McAlilly L, et al. 2019. Nature Communications, vol. 10, no. 1, p. 1124
- [Isolation and characterisation of bacteriophages with a multipurpose coating deposited from an in-situ-synthesised polymeric solution](#), Moreno-Courajou M, Mauchauffe R, Bonot S, Detrembleur C, Choquet P. 2018. Journal of Materials Chemistry B, no. 4, pp. 614-623
- [Interactions of infectious Especific RNA bacteriophages with suspended matter and sediment: Towards an understanding of FISH/RTI distribution in a river water system](#), Fauvel B, Ogórzal L, Cauchie HM, Gantzer C. 2017. Science of the Total Environment, vol. 574, pp. 960-968
- [Significance of a Noble Metal Nanoparticle on the UV and Visible Light Photocatalytic Activity of Anatase TiO₂ Thin Films Grown from a Sol-gel Process](#), Bakir K, Babin S, Quisada-Gonzalez M, Bonot S, Collard D, et al. 2017. ACS Applied Materials and Interfaces, vol. 9, no. 47, pp. 41200-41209
- [Quantifying potential sources of surface water contamination with *Campylobacter* sp. and *Campylobacter* col.](#), Mughini-Gres L, Penny C, Ragimbeau C, Schets FM, Baak H, et al. 2016. Water Research, vol. 101, pp. 36-45
- [Contribution of hydrological data to the understanding of the spatio-temporal dynamics of Especific RNA bacteriophages in river water during rainfall-runoff events](#), Fauvel B, Cauchie HM, Gantzer C, Ogórzal L. 2016. Water Research, vol. 94, pp. 328-340
- [Human Campylobacteriosis in Luxembourg, 2010-2013: A Case-Control Study Combined with Whole-Genome Sequencing, Systemic Inflammation and Risk Factor Analysis](#), Mossong J, Mughini-Gres L, Penny C, Devaux A, Olingue C, et al. 2016. Scientific Reports, vol. 6, art. no. 20939
- [In-situ experiments: Approach to optimise MALDI-TOF MS spectrum processing parameters enhances detection of antibiotic resistance in *Campylobacter* sp.](#), Penny C, Grothendick B, Zhang L, Borrer CM, Barbano D, et al. 2016. Frontiers in Microbiology, vol. 7
- [Fast Atmospheric Plasma Deposition of Bio-Inspired Calcium/Oxone-Rich Nanoparticles to Immobilize NDM-1 Enzymes for Water Treatment](#), Mauchauffe R, Bonot S, Moreno-Courajou M, Detrembleur C, Boscher ND, et al. 2016. Advanced Materials Interfaces, vol. 3, no. 8
- [Antimicrobial Treatment of Plastic Thin Films as Platform for Biorecognition Immobilization - Application for Anti-Biofouling and Immobio-Decorating Surfaces](#), Camporeale G, Moreno-Courajou M, Bonot S, Mauchauffe R, Boscher ND, et al. 2015. Plasma Processes and Polymers, vol. 12, no. 11, pp. 1206-1219
- [Self-Defensive Coating for Antibiotics Degradation: Atmospheric Pressure Chemical Vapor Deposition of Functional and Conformal Coatings for the Immobilization of Enzymes](#), Bonot S, Mauchauffe R, Boscher ND, Moreno-Courajou M, Cauchie HM, Choquet P. 2015. Advanced Materials Interfaces, vol. 2, no. 14
- [Human Adenovirus Diversity in Water Samples Using a Next-Generation Amplification Sequencing Approach](#), Ogórzal L, Waiczak C, Galloux M, Etienne S, Gassilloud B, Cauchie HM, et al. 2014. BMC Microbiol, pp. 1-10
- [Formation of ammonia in saline solution treated by nonresonant pulsed cold atmospheric plasmas: A study on fast ionization of F₂ and N₂](#), Mahieu S, Drouy D, Belmonte T, Penny C, Cauchie HM, et al. 2015. RSC Advances, vol. 52, no. 5, pp. 42135-42140
- [Detection of small amounts of human adenoviruses in stools: Comparison of a new immuno real-time PCR assay with classical tools](#), Bonot S, Ogórzal L, El Mouali B, Zorzi W, Cauchie HM. 2014. Clinical Microbiology and Infection
- [Investigating the host specificity of *Campylobacter jejuni* and *Campylobacter coli* by sequencing *crasA* subunit A](#), Ragimbeau C, Collin S, Devaux A, Decruyenaere F, Cauchie HM, et al. 2014. BMC Microbiol, pp. 1-205
- [Spatial and temporal distribution of Cryptosporidium and Giardia in a drinking water resource: Implications for monitoring and risk assessment](#), Burnet JB, Penny C, Ogórzal L, Cauchie HM. 2014. Science of the Total Environment
- [Development of a quantitative immunocapture real-time PCR assay for detecting structurally intact adenoviral particles in water](#), Ogórzal L, Bonot S, Mouali B, Zorzi W, Cauchie HM. 2013. Journal of Virological Methods
- [Two-day detection of infectious enteric and non-enteric adenoviruses by improved iC²-qPCR](#), Ogórzal L, Cauchie HM, Penny C, Perrin A, Gantzer C, Bertrand I. 2013. Applied Microbiology and Biotechnology
- [Transient monitoring of *Cryptosporidium parvum* and *Giardia lamblia* occurrence in a reservoir and drinking water reservoir using advanced microscopic and molecular biology technology](#), Helmi K, Skraber S, Burnet JB, Leblanc L, Hoffmann L, Cauchie HM. 2011. Environmental Monitoring and Assessment
- [Concentration and diversity of protozoans detected in Luxembourg wastewaters in 2008-2009](#), Skraber S, Langlet J, Kremer JR, Mossong J, De Landtsheer S, et al. 2011. Applied and Environmental Microbiology
- [Genetic diversity of protozoans from outbreaks, sporadic cases and wastewater in Luxembourg 2008-2009](#), Kremer JR, Langlet J, Skraber S, Weicherdung P, Weber B, et al. 2011. Clinical Microbiology and Infection

Partners

- [Probiotic Group Luxembourg \(LU\)](#)
- [Molecular Plasma Group \(LU\)](#)
- [Luxembourg Institute of Health \(LU\)](#)
- [Laboratoire National de Santé \(LU\)](#)
- [Université de Lorraine - CNRS LCPME \(FR\)](#)
- [University of Luxembourg - LCSB \(LU\)](#)
- [Université de Liège \(BE\)](#)

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