



BIOPESTICIDES

A Quarterly Newsletter of the ICGEB Biopesticides Group

Southern Africa Biopesticides Project | Contact details:

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The Southern Africa Biopesticides Project

Residue mitigation

One main component of the project involves conducting studies to identify biopesticides with the potential to be used as alternatives to late-season pesticides identified as contributory to residue violations. Such biopesticides will be promoted in order to enhance compliance with Maximum Residue Limit requirements in export markets, and hence promote trade. The studies will be conducted in Kenya and Tanzania from 2022 - 2024. Study teams have been formed in the two countries and the members linked with their respective counterparts in the international team. The studies will have field and laboratory elements. Training on Good Agricultural Practice, Good Laboratory Practice and soft skills development will also be provided to selected personnel from the project countries.

Regulatory harmonisation

On 29th October 2021 members of the Project Technical Working Group on regulatory harmonisation met to discuss elements of the South African and East African Community (EAC) biopesticide regulations. This was followed by another meeting on 29th November 2021 at which it was agreed to set up a sub-committee to further review the aforesaid regulations, with a view to ultimately determining a way forward with regard to developing guidelines for the Southern Africa region (e.g. whether to adopt the approach of the South African or EAC guidelines, or a combination of both).

"I am delighted to be a member of the Technical Working Group on regulatory harmonisation of the Southern Africa Biopesticides Project. The team is working towards creating harmonised biopesticide regulatory guidelines for the region. Expected benefits of this project include increasing ease of biopesticide registration and farmers' access to, and use of, biopesticide products - ultimately enhancing trade to export markets."

- Ms. Stella Simiyu-Wafukho

(Director of Regulatory Affairs & Stakeholder Relations at CropLife Africa Middle East)



Bringing Biopesticides to African Farmers

Dr. Imme Gerke (Co-founder, International Development of Regulatory Globalisation)

During the last 30 years, worldwide, thousands of biopesticides have been developed, authorised, manufactured and applied. However, very few of these products have reached the African market. Consequently, African farmers have experienced challenges with their produce reaching the global organic market where they would have a high commercial value. Without access to biopesticides, farmers have two choices: (i) no pest control or (ii) no organic certification. Option (i) results in damaged crops with low commercial value; while option (ii) results in the production of crops protected by conventional chemical pesticides, which have a lower commercial value on the global market than organic crops.

Giving farmers in Africa access to biopesticides requires the inclusion of African nations in international cooperation efforts. Plant protection problems need to be listed in the [Global Needs Database](#), extension services need access to the [Global Crop Protection Database](#), manufacturers from around the world need access to an [OECD-like authorisation process](#), and distributors in Africa need to create a network that will allow manufacturers of biopesticides to identify potential business partners in the different countries similar to [International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association \(IBMA\)](#) in Europe and [Biological Products Industry Alliance \(BPIA\)](#) in North America. With the exception of the last point, everything is in place. It is only the lack of transparency that prevents biopesticides from reaching African Farmers. In these times of a Digital World, transparency could be achieved within a few hours. Not doing so further disadvantages African farmers on the world market.



A Natural Approach to Combat Pests

Dr. Elizabeth Njuguna (Post-doctoral fellow, ICGEB Biopesticides Group)

Maize smallholder farmers across sub-Saharan Africa are battling with the fall armyworm, a new invasive pest that spread across Africa in less than five years. Most African governments made synthetic chemical pesticides readily available to fight the pest - some of which, if misused or mishandled, could be harmful to the environment and the farmers themselves.

As the climate changes, pest invasions like fall armyworms and locusts will become common. There is need for user-friendly and environmentally friendly sustainable pest control methods. Biopesticides are pest control products obtained from natural materials such as animals, plants, bacteria and certain minerals, and can provide a suitable complement to synthetic chemical pesticides. Elizabeth Njuguna seeks to promote the adoption of biopesticides as part of the Integrated Pest Management programmes geared towards climate change adaptation. "I am working towards identifying the policy and regulatory barriers to the research and development, registration, commercialisation and adoption of biopesticides in SSA," says Njuguna.

She intends to develop recommendations on relevant biopesticide policy as well as regulatory and guidance documents, in collaboration with regulators and policymakers. "Urgent policy adjustments are needed to ease the stringent biopesticide registrations for small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs. The process will incentivise production of biopesticides and increase availability, while reducing their price."

This article was originally published by Jive Media Africa, in association with the University of Cape Town's Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine, under the #theArtofResearch Programme.



You might be interested to read: "[New STDF Guide champions Good Regulatory Practices \(GRPs\) for Safe Trade](#)"

Up-coming Events in the Biopesticide Sector

- 28 February-3 March 2022 (originally 15-18 March 2021): 10th International IPM Symposium, "Implementing IPM across Borders and Disciplines". Denver, Colorado, USA. <https://ipmsymposium.org/2022/>
- 15-17 March and 22-24 March 2022 (virtually over two weeks): 6th International Symposium on Biological Control of Arthropods (ISBCA). British Columbia, Canada. https://www.iobc-wprs.org/events/20220315_ISBCA_2022_announcement.pdf
- 4-6 April 2022 (originally 14-16 September 2020): IOBC-WPRS Meeting on Citrus Pests, Diseases and Weeds, Working Group "Integrated Control in Citrus Fruit Crops". Napflio, Greece. http://web.niflab.inf.uth.gr/iobc_citrus
- 23-25 May 2022: Annual World BioProtection Summit and Awards, Birmingham, England. <https://www.worldbioprotectionforum.com/events/>
- 8-9 June 2022: Biopesticides Europe 2022 conference. Brussels, Belgium. <https://www.asdevents.com/event.asp?id=21911>

ICGEB Fellowship and Grant Opportunities

- ICGEB Arturo Falaschi PhD Fellowship in Life Sciences. Closing date for applications: 31 March 2022. <https://www.icgeb.org/activities/fellowship/guidelines-and-application-form-arturo-falaschi-phd-fellowships/>
- ICGEB Arturo Falaschi Postdoctoral Fellowship in Life Sciences. Closing date for applications: 31 March and 30 September 2022. <https://www.icgeb.org/activities/fellowship/guidelines-and-application-form-arturo-falaschi-postdoctoral-fellowships/>
- ICGEB WE-STAR Fellowship - PhD and Postdoctoral mobility scheme for Women Scientists in Africa. Closing date for applications: 28 January 2022. <https://www.icgeb.org/activities/fellowship/we-star/>
- ICGEB Collaborative Research Programme (CRP) - Research Grant for research in Life Sciences by ICGEB Member States. <https://www.icgeb.org/activities/grants/>

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