



BIOPESTICIDES

A Quarterly Newsletter of the ICGEB Biopesticides Group

The Southern Africa Biopesticides Project

Residue mitigation studies in Kenya and Tanzania: The project aims to conduct studies using biopesticides as potential alternatives to late-season pesticides identified as contributory to residue violations. The incorporation of these biopesticides in pest control programs could enhance compliance with Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) requirements in export markets. These studies will be conducted in Kenya (March-April 2022) and Tanzania (September-November 2022).

Functional capacity building: In collaboration with the Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions, a survey to determine the functional capacity and knowledge management needs of stakeholders was undertaken in February 2022. The data and information obtained from the survey would inform the development of a strategy to address key functional skills of project stakeholders and development of a project Knowledge Management plan.

Regulatory harmonisation: A sub-committee of the Technical Working Group (TWG) was established in December 2022. To determine the most appropriate approach to take in developing harmonised biopesticide regulations for the project countries, this sub-committee reviewed the following documents: i) the South African biopesticide regulations, ii) Zimbabwean pesticide regulations, iii) East African Community biopesticide guidelines, and iv) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development biopesticide guidelines. The review outcomes were presented to the full TWG meeting on 4th March 2022, after which it was agreed that the guidelines should be a hybrid of these existing documents.

Legal framework review: A review of the legal frameworks in the participating project countries, conducted from June-August 2021, has been published. This review considers the current legislation governing pesticides (and biopesticides), the respective processes for the registration of such products, and the requisite protocols to obtain legal status for harmonised biopesticides regulations per participating country.

Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting: The second annual PSC meeting was held on 24th February 2022, during which the Committee was updated on progress achieved during the first year of project implementation, as well as briefed on future activities. Additionally, the Committee provided the Project Team with strategic advice on various operational aspects of project implementation.

"Growers within the tropics are faced with a delicate balance between producing crops free of pests and meeting elusive MRL requirements for various markets. The Southern Africa Biopesticides Project provides homegrown innovative solutions to promoting the registration and adoption of biopesticides through elimination of regulatory barriers and promotion of good agricultural practices. This initiative would not only reduce MRL violations but immensely contribute to growth of global and regional trade, food safety and environmental sustainability."

- Mr. Eric Kimunguyi, *Chief Executive Officer, Agrochemicals Association of Kenya, and member of the Southern Africa Biopesticide Projects' Project Advisory Board*



Euphresco IPM Project: The ICGEB Biopesticides Group will be coordinating a Euphresco initiative titled: *Identifying IPM measures for given pest/crop combinations to improve plant health and decrease dependency on chemical pesticides*. Focusing on pests of major phytosanitary importance for specific crops, the proposed project aims to promote Integrated Plant Production as a holistic concept. Even though there are effective alternative or preventive pest control measures available, there has been limited progress in the adoption of integrated pest management (IPM), as well as in the reduction of dependence on chemical pest control, by growers at field-level. This is despite some regions having legal requirements for regulating plant production according to IPM principles. Reduction in the use of conventional chemical pesticides will enhance compliance with MRL standards and thus promote trade within and across regions.

ICGEB has been reaching out to potential funding donors and is requesting interested entities (including potential partners) to contact the Secretariat of the Biopesticides Group at sabiop@icgeb.org.

*You might be interested to read:
"New initiatives, renewed partnerships in 2022"*

Integrated Crop Management: A sustainable solution for reduction of residue levels in export horticultural produce

Phil Weller (Zimbabwe Distributor & Southern African Regional Consultant for Dudutech)

Integrated Crop Management (ICM) is a holistic farming system that considers socio-economic and environmental factors with a view of achieving long-term sustainability in agricultural production. To enable farmers access valuable export markets with regard to their horticultural produce they must comply with the regulations of their target market. One main area of concern has to do with chemical pesticide residues found in/on produce. To address this, farmers need to adopt a holistic management approach regarding their farming operation through the use of Integrated Crop Management (ICM); putting emphasis on biological control in order to achieve lower or zero residues.

Bioline Agrosciences, a French ICM company, defines ICM as: "a pragmatic approach to the production of crops. This can include integrated pest management (IPM), soil, social and environmental management. ICM aims to combine all aspects of crop inputs and management to achieve the needs of the producer and consumer". Sainsbury, a large supermarket chain in the United Kingdom, defines IPM as: "alternative strategies, such as disease resistant varieties and biological control". Through the use of IPM, alternative solutions and new innovation (where possible) Sainsbury encourages their growers to adopt and utilise best practice and minimise the use of pesticides. Overall, farmers need to "work with nature and not against it" in order to achieve a reduction in residues on their crops to access valuable export markets.



Proposed guidelines for the exemption of the establishment of MRLs for compounds of low public health concern and/or that do not give rise to residues

Eduardo Aylwin (Agricultural Engineer, Chilean Food Safety Agency & Chair of the CCPR Electronic Working Group)

In 2018, the Chilean delegation to the 50th Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) expressed concern over the lack of internationally harmonised criteria for the exemption of the establishment of maximum residue levels (MRLs) for compounds of low public health concern or that do not give rise to residues.

At the time, the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) had not established MRLs or set a standard for many of these substances, which include biopesticides.

At the 51st session of the CCPR, the committee agreed to start work on the development of guidance for such compounds.

An Electronic Working Group, chaired by Chile, and co-chaired by USA and India, was thus established with the mandate to: i) develop common criteria for the identification of compounds of low public health concern (and/or that do not give rise to residues) that should be exempted from Codex MRLs and, ii) provide harmonised Codex definitions as appropriate.

A draft based on the work done in 2019 and 2020 was presented at the 52nd CCPR in 2021, following which the committee agreed to advance the work to Step 5 of the Codex standards development procedure. In Step 5 of the 8-step procedure, the proposed draft standard is sent to the Commission/Executive Committee for adoption as a draft standard. The proposed draft guideline will be presented at the 53rd meeting of the CCPR, scheduled for mid-July 2022.



Up-coming Events in the Biopesticide Sector

- 5 April 2022: ICGEB Seminar: "[International Cooperation to bring Biopesticides to African Farmers](#)". Dr. Imme Gerke (Regulatory Strategist, International Development of Regulatory Globalization [IDRG]).
- 26-29 April 2022: [3rd BioAg World Congress](#), Valencia, Spain.
- 23-25 May 2022: [Annual World BioProtection Summit and Awards](#), Birmingham, England.
- 8-9 June 2022: [Biopesticides Europe 2022 Conference](#), Brussels, Belgium.
- 3-8 July 2022: [14th International Conference on Plant Pathogenic Bacteria \(ICPPB\)](#), Assisi, Italy.
- 31 July - 4 August 2022: [2022 International Congress on Invertebrate Pathology and Microbial Control, 54th Annual Meeting of the Society of Invertebrate Pathology \(SIP\)](#), Nelson Mandela Bay, South Africa.

ICGEB Fellowship and Grant Opportunities

- [ICGEB-JNU PhD Fellowships](#). Applications will be received March-May 2022.
- [ICGEB Arturo Falaschi Postdoctoral Fellowship in Life Sciences](#). Closing date for applications: 30 September 2022.
- [ICGEB Arturo Falaschi short-term PhD Fellowship](#). Closing date for applications: 30 September 2022.
- [ICGEB SMART Fellowship](#). Closing date for applications: 30 September 2022.

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