

## ABIM 2018

### President's Address

#### President's Report of the 2018 AGM, 22 October 2018

This was the 23rd Annual General Members Meeting of IBMA and the 13th held in conjunction with ABIM. It was attended by 62 active member companies with voting rights, 10 associated member companies, and 5 prospective members; all those companies were represented by 102 persons in total.

This audience was a good cross-section of our membership and represented about one quarter of the total membership. In my report to the members I usually go over the key achievements of the last year and look forward to priority issues that IBMA will address in the coming year. Let me start with key activities and achievements for 2018.



*The IBMA Board at the AGM:  
Vice-President Roma Gwynn, Treasurer Ralf-Udo Ehlers,  
and President Willem Ravensberg*



#### Governance and organisation

Concerning governance and the organisation of the association we anticipated the changes that will occur after 2018; replacement of 2 out of the 3 board members and replacement of our Executive Director (ED) David Cary who plans to retire from his position mid-2019. In that picture we also considered the workload of the current board by increasing the staff of IBMA to relieve the tasks for future board members. I will come back to that.

First it was decided to extend the position of Regulatory Affairs Manager to an almost full-time position of RA Director by employing Ulf Heilig within IBMA. Ulf has worked since 2005 for IBMA on regulatory issues, and in most years the hours in his consultancy contract increased. Therefore, this change was considered as RA tasks continue to increase and certainly with the expected activities following REFIT of 1107/2009 in 2019 and IBMA's proposed new regulation as presented in our White Paper (more on this subject later).



*IBMA Regulatory Affairs Manager Ulf Heilig  
at this year's ABIM*

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Secondly, we started an application process for our new ED. The board set out a process to recruit applicants, select and interview candidates, and come to an agreement on selecting the best candidate followed by negotiations on a job offer. We received 10 applications from around the world with some highly qualified candidates. Four persons were interviewed at our office after the summer. We developed a system of ranking candidates on background, knowledge, experience, etc., and selected the most suitable applicant.

We have started negotiations on a job offer for a new Executive Director and hope to come to an agreement soon. We will inform our members when a contract has been signed and a date fixed for the new ED to start, and to work alongside David for a certain period to handover the activities. David has agreed to stay longer in 2019 for as long as deemed necessary and we are very grateful for David's flexibility and commitment to IBMA.

During the discussions held on extending our staff we also touched upon hiring a Public Affairs manager in the near future. This was triggered by some applications that came in for the ED position and we considered hiring someone for this position as well. However, we think it is better to postpone that in order to see how things will go in 2019 with the new situation, and let the new board decide whether a PA role is a priority for IBMA.

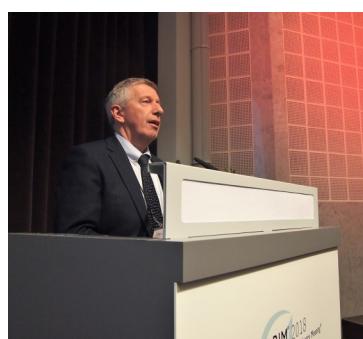
### Election for board positions

Continuing with governance of our association: before the summer, candidates were asked to step forward for the President and Treasurer positions as, according to the statutes, the current officers cannot continue after a six year period served. For each position only one candidate was nominated despite various activities over the summer period behind the scenes to attract more candidates. A vote was held during the AGM and both candidates were elected for the respective positions. Our new president in 2019 will be Sylvia Plak, from Sumitomo Chemical Agro Europe/Valent BioSciences, and our new treasurer will be Karine Grosbeau, from Elephant Vert.



*Future treasurer Karine Grosbeau (left) and future president Sylvia Plak at the 2018 AGM*

After the election Paul Koppert, as one of the founders of IBMA, addressed the members asking for more commitment and engagement to IBMA as the members must make the association successful and therefore also should supply candidates for positions in the organization. See also the minutes of the AGM for more details on this topic. I can only reiterate Paul's words, and ask you all to consider this seriously. **IBMA needs your active participation.**



*IBMA Founding Member Paul Koppert addressing members at the AGM*

### IBMA Honorary Membership awarded

In recognition of their dedicated collaboration for the last six years, leaving President Willem Ravensberg and leaving Treasurer Ralf-Udo Ehlers were awarded IBMA Honorary Membership and received at the AGM their Honorary Membership certificates and gifts from IBMA.

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### Low-risk procedures

In my AGM presentation I highlighted 2018 achievements in our lobbying for a fast track procedure for low-risk active substances and products. Members can see the details in my slides of the AGM available in the members-only section of our website. Together with PA Europe, we continued to ask support for the European Parliament's Resolution on low-risk plant protection products. Herein the EP asked the Commission to adapt 1107/2009 before the end of 2018. As we reach the end of 2018, DG Sante has not done anything in this respect, but continually refers to the REFIT report. This will come out in spring followed by a next report potentially providing recommendations for changes in 1107/2009. This will all take an unnecessarily long period before being decided on and put in practice.

### New EU Regulatory Framework for Bioprotection Agents

In IBMA we anticipated this response of DG Sante and we decided to have a look at other regulated products in the EU and how those go through the system. This resulted in the Arche-IBMA report describing approval procedures in medicines, chemicals (non-PPPs), cosmetics, feed additives, and biocides. It became clear that other frameworks offer many possibilities for smoother approval procedures and it is obvious that PPPs have to go through the most rigid system. I encourage you to read this report and you will be as astonished as I was to see that other legislations offer much more appropriate procedures and rules for their respective products. Why do we not have such flexibility and pragmatism for our biological control agents? The [report](#) formed the basis of the IBMA White Paper which the board took upon itself to produce over the summer.

Thoughts on such a white paper had been circling around in our minds for quite some time, and we deemed it the right time to put it on paper and release it to the outside world, particularly to politicians and decision makers. IBMA proposes the EU develops a new appropriate legislative framework and streamlined provisions with a dedicated centralized regulatory body, presumption of safe use, tiered assessment and tailored data requirements.

IBMA foresees a centralised procedure under the direction of this regulatory body with participation from Member States experts which should be operational by 2021.

As a result of this the farmers will get more sustainable tools to grow healthy and productive crops within an Integrated Pest Management programme in which biocontrol and other ecosystem services provide resilient food production with a minimum impact on the environment and human health. This will enable the EU to meet its goal of a future-proof sustainable agriculture and achieve the sustainability goals that our society urgently demands for food safety, food security, human health and protection of the environment. See our [website](#) for a copy of the White Paper.



### Continued Lobbying

IBMA will use this White Paper further in our lobby for a better registration process for our bioprotection solutions. For instance, a high-level meeting is planned at the beginning of 2019 in the European Parliament with speakers from Member States, the Commission and the EP. The goal is to gain more support for a quick amendment leading to a fast track of low-risk actives and products, and for a new system in the near future. We also plan to address all National Parliaments in the EU and try to get support for our view. We will keep you updated on the developments. Our strategic collaborations are also focused on the above subject. Copa-Cogeca is our highly appreciated ally in this process, the farmers are in need of more greener tools. We also align our policy with other stakeholders.

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### Bioprotection

With the White Paper we also introduced the term *Bioprotection*:

Bioprotection technologies include biological plant protection tools for control of pests and diseases. They originate from nature or are nature-identical when synthesized and in general have a low impact on human health and the environment. Examples are microorganisms, semiochemicals, plant extracts (botanicals) or natural substances. The term biopesticides is often used in the same way, but the suffix – “cidal” often does not describe the true mechanism(s) of these substances as they do not directly “kill” the target, but rather protect the plant. IBMA propose the use of the words “bioprotection” and “bioprotectants” in future.

### Strategic objectives for 2019 and further

We continue to work for a fast track procedure and will work to gain support for the proposal explained in the White Paper. We will follow closely developments in the Nagoya Protocol and ABS. The ongoing discussion on including Digital Sequence Information (DSI) in this system makes it an even bigger hurdle for the biocontrol industry to gain access to new genetic resources. We slowly make some progress as the biocontrol sector seems to be recognized as important and specific and should have less onerous and stringent rules.



In 2018 we had intense discussions with EBIC about a close collaboration, potentially a merger. But this did not work out. Still we keep in contact with EBIC on matters where we have a mutual interest and aim to align positions where possible.

We also want to strengthen our communication, particularly to the outside world as biocontrol is expanding and bound to get more attention. This should be the right attention. We continue to participate in BioProtection Global and assist in making the federation stronger.

### Closing remarks

Last but not least I thank all persons who have been active and volunteered in the association because without you we could not do all those things we have achieved in 2018.

I am very grateful to our staff that worked so hard and is very committed to progressing our association and its objectives. Further to this I want to call on any new member involvement, so please do not hesitate to talk to David or me if you want to be more involved.

I hope you enjoyed ABIM 2018 as much as I did, with the new set up and an ever-increasing number of attendees. It demonstrates how our growing industry increasingly plays a crucial role in securing food security and healthy products.

### IBMA President

#### Willem Ravensberg

*IBMA Vice-President Roma Gwynn and IBMA Executive Director David Cary with the two new Honorary Members of IBMA:  
leaving Treasurer Ralf-Udo Ehlers and leaving President Willem Ravensberg*

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### Executive Director's Address

#### ABIM 2018

Well ABIM this year again exceeded past years: we had 1162 delegates attend over the three days. They came from 52 countries and represented 526 organisations. We had a fully subscribed exhibition hall with 80 exhibitors. This of course was in the new exhibition hall which gives ability to grow the exhibitors in future years. The one-to-one networking proved extremely popular this year and meetings were able to take place in a manner that allowed conversation to be held without being overheard or creating interruption. The semi-private meeting rooms were popular and well used and there was sufficient space to do some private work or have an ad-hoc conversation. Our partner FiBL as always did a great job both before and during the event to ensure it was even more successful. The programme in the auditorium was well attended and the talks appeared on the whole to give plenty of thought to those that attended the various sessions. Our two keynote addresses by Hans Dreyer of FAO and Russell Blair of Andermatt USA were commented on favourably by many delegates. The cocktail receptions worked well in the new exhibition area and gave plenty of opportunity to network over well-earned glasses of wine or beer.

Finally, I would again like to thank our sponsors who enable us to keep the registration cost sufficiently low to allow organisations to attend often with several people. This year was the first year we had sponsors across all available categories – a big thank you from me and indeed everyone who attended ABIM for your generous support! We begin the planning for ABIM 2019 this week and what a job to make it better than the 2018 vintage!



#### Bernard Blum Award 2018



The 2018 Bernard Blum Award was won by our member Marrone Bio Innovations for Burkholderia, a new species of bacterium which produces several natural compounds.



Pam Marrone from Marrone Bio Innovations receiving the Bernard Blum Award 2018, with NewAg's Francois Levesque and IBMA President Willem Ravensberg



ABIM: the new exhibition hall (left) and the IBMA booth as well as the Bernard Blum Award booth (above)

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### Copa-Cogeca and IBMA Roadmap

After returning from our summer break a press conference was held in Copa-Cogeca. IBMA have not tended to schedule many press conferences so this was a novel event from our side. It was scheduled to release the newly penned Roadmap between Copa-Cogeca and ourselves. Both organisations had regarded our collaboration as strategic for our organisations and that a lot of unfinished business was still to be stewarded. It covered the existing three platforms of minor uses, low-risk and developing solutions for needs of farmers. We added an additional platform of regulatory reform either within or outside the REFIT process.

The fact that Copa-Cogeca have seen collaboration with our industry to provide the majority of new innovative crop protection solutions going forward is a reinforcement of the fact we are on the right track. Especially important is there is vision from both sides to extend the collaboration until 2025. Having finalised this document before the summer was a big incentive for IBMA to work on the Arche-IBMA Report and the White Paper that Willem discusses. Find the Copa-Cogeca IBMA Roadmap on our [website](#).



*The IBMA Document "Trilogy": White Paper, Arche Report and Copa-Cogeca - IBMA Roadmap*

### Biocontrols Meetings

As you are aware, IBMA have collaborated with NewAg International and 2BMonthly to bring Biocontrols meetings to regional locations. These are seen as supplementary and complimentary to our global industry meeting ABIM. They do not replace ABIM but bring a local / regional participation to our industry and also wet the appetite for people to engage further through attending and participating in ABIM. These events have been held in Africa, Asia and South America. 2018 has seen two of these events one in Kenya, Biocontrol Africa and another to be held next week in Columbia. This is the second Biocontrol Latam. IBMA will have representation from our IBMA Board, myself and several members.



Latin America is certainly a growth market with a lot of opportunities already spotted by our members. Government and regulators have seen this opportunity and are taking measures to ensure a smoother regulatory climate, reduce trade barriers and provide the right environment for developing biocontrol solutions for the region. I am sure there will be plenty of worthwhile discussion. For information on these events keep looking at the IBMA website and the newsflashes that alert to these events, there will be a Biocontrol Asia and a Biocontrol Latam in 2019 after all!



# IBMA Newsletter

International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association

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### BPG - BioProtection Global

BPG is I dare say suffering a bit from the success of our industry and of our own association and its sister associations in BPG. As we rely on the efforts of the secretariat and members of each regional association it is often the last item to have attention focused on it. This is a pity because BPG actually should save each association time and resources because it avoids duplication of efforts in each association. Anyway, the lack of dedicated resources is being addressed and will be progressed further in Medellin Colombia at the Biocontrol Latam meeting.

After ABIM BPG met and held an extremely worthwhile brainstorming exercise on who we need to communicate with and the message we need to be consistently giving to these stakeholders in the future of our industry. Discussion about an event to be held in the international year of plant health 2020 was also fruitful. The opportunity for making an impact and developing a proportionate approach to regulating our industry and then harmonising is an exciting prospect shared by the BPG member associations and their own members. Let's see whether we can progress the good work envisaged in this workshop over the next twelve months.

Like Willem I hope you found ABIM of interest and benefit ... I am sure you did!

**David Cary**

**IBMA Executive Director**



*The ABIM Steering Committee: ABIM Conference Secretary Anne Merz (FiBL), Willem Ravensberg, David Cary, David Loughlin (ABIM publicity and communication), Martin Andermatt (Andermatt Holding) and Lucius Tamm (FiBL)*

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