Success factors and hurdles for Biocontrol: An industry perspective

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IGOs and European Institutions all say we should green agriculture. FAO, OECD have greening initiatives.
Human health and our environment

Policymakers worldwide are on board!

In Europe we see the European Parliament MfR

And Council of Ministers 40 point Action Plan
Farmers see our industry providing the tools needed to feed our expanding world population and changing dietary needs.

- Biocontrol tools will add to food security.
Research funding for Agriculture

- Research funding continues into biological alternatives and involves stakeholders particularly farmers and SMEs.
New PPP active substances

A majority of new PPP active substances being approved in the EU from today will be biological and a majority of these will pose low risk
Biological PPPs

Solutions are being found and sought by all for not only protected and high value cropping systems
The structure of the Biocontrol industry

- SMEs
- Large multinational and consolidated bio companies
- University Spin-off companies
- Management buy-out companies
- Co-operatives
New Areas of Product discovery & development

- The Bernard Blum Award
- Flying Doctors
- Spear
- Attracap
- Tremos
ABIM development

• ABIM grows from strength to strength to importantly be the place on a yearly basis for the biocontrol industry to meet to exchange knowledge across the board!
The biggest hurdle

• Proportionate regulation for desired inputs
  • In the face of increasing pressure on chemical PPPs
• Currently regulated via the same regulation
• Currently regulated by the same regulators
• Currently using the same data requirements
• Calling for priority and speed
• Facing linked increased requirements
Where will it lead?

- No niche products come to the market
- Companies focus on markets outside Europe
- The composition of the industry mirrors that of the chemical PPP market
- Prolongation of use of problematic tools that would be substituted by using Article 53 emergency use provisions
- Europe has less tools available to farmers than other regions
How can we move on to achieve proportionate regulation?

• Learn from others – the US EPA
• Use available expertise
• Use the precautionary principle as intended not as it has been misused
• Recognise there is a difference between biology and chemistry and use this in making more sound assessments and risk management decisions whilst promoting and achieving holistic farming systems in tune with the environment
History of safe use

• Biological tools have a history of safe use
• They have come from nature where they have co-existed
• This needs to be taken account of with all naturally occurring substance assessments
• Comparison to natural levels needs to be assessed
• Already used in guidance eg. semiochemicals
Concluding remarks

If policymakers around our world including in Europe are in agreement and favour of greening agriculture using IPM as the standard practice and bringing more low-risk biological products to the market – what are we waiting for?

Scientists like Margarita have given us solutions let’s thank them and embrace their ideas!
Thank you for the opportunity for participating and good luck in whatever you attempt!