



Short biography

Karel J.F. Bolckmans

Born on October 13th, 1966; married; 3 children.

Nationality: Belgian

Education

Master in Agricultural Sciences (K.U. Leuven, Belgium, 1985 – 1991)

- major in Plant Production
- minor in Plant Protection

Professional Experience

Biobest N.V., Belgium 1992 – 1997

- Market Development Manager
- Product Development Manager
- Business Development Manager

Bugs for Bugs Pty Ltd, Australia (1998)

- Project Manager

Koppert Biological Systems B.V., the Netherlands (1998 – 2014)

- International Field Research Coordinator
- R&D Manager
- International R&D and Production Manager
- Director Global R&D and Production

Special Fruit N.V., Belgium (2014 – 2016)

- Business Development Director

Biobest Group N.V., Belgium (2016 – 2023)

- Chief Operating Officer
- Chief Technology Officer

BioFirst Group, Belgium (2024 -)

(consists of 4 divisions: Biobest, BioWorks, Biotrop and Plant Products)

- Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer

Other Relevant Experience

IBMA: co-founder (1995) and member of the Executive Committee (1995 – 2004); chairman of the Professional Group of Producers of Macrobiols and industry representative at the EPPO and OECD (1995 – 2004); chair of the IPM Working Group (2008 – 2014), especially involved in lobbying in close collaboration with IOBC (EC, EPPO, OECD, FAO, etc.)

GlobalGAP: Expert Member of the IPM Working Group of the Sector Committee Fruits & Vegetables. Lead author of the GlobalGAP IPM Toolkit. (2007 – 2010)

Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, Canada: Science Advisory Council Member (2008 – 2018)

Board Member: Rikolto (2016 – 2022), Protix (2016 – 2022), Arugga AI (2021 -), Ecoation (Observer, 2021 -), etc.

Awards and Recognition

ANBP (Association of Natural Biocontrol Producers): Award of Excellence (2014)

IOBC (International Organization of Biological Control): Honorary Member (2016)



Dear IBMA Members,

It is with great enthusiasm but also with great humbleness that I accept the nomination by Andermatt Group AG and BioFirst Group and that I hereby confirm my willingness to stand for election as IBMA President.

My journey in the biocontrol industry began in 1992. Since then I have dedicated myself to advancing our field through various leadership roles in business development, new product development, production, supply chain and strategy with some of the world's leading biocontrol companies. I currently serve as the Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer of the Belgian company BioFirst Group.

Through the years I have been able to develop a wide expertise across all the different biocontrol product categories (macrobiotics, biopesticides, semiochemicals and natural substances) and their markets. My contribution to the advancement of biocontrol-based IPM has been recognized by the IOBC and ANBP.

As one of the co-founders of IBMA in November 1995 (during the annual Brighton Crop Protection Conference), now almost 30 years ago, IBMA and its goals have always remained close to my heart. It is particularly exciting to stand for election as President at this moment in time since I believe that our industry has arrived at a pivotal point in its history.

The need for access to sustainable crop protection solutions has become more important than ever: the number of registered chemical crop protection products is rapidly decreasing due to a combination of pesticide resistance development and regulatory product withdrawal. This inevitably leads to an increasing number of gaps in crop protection programs, which potentially could impact agricultural productivity, food security, food prices and farmers' income. Farmers and policy makers start to understand that providing access to sustainable crop protection products could significantly contribute to filling these gaps.

However, from a global market access perspective, the slow registration process in Europe, which still takes 6 to 10 years while it takes 1 to 3 years in almost all other countries around the world, is the biggest challenge. I had the exceptional opportunity to address all the European Ministers of Agriculture about this issue on April 8th of this year during one of their meetings under the Belgian Presidency. I believe my call for support and action was loud and clear and the feedback received was highly encouraging. We must ensure that fast-track authorisation of biopesticides takes a prominent place on the agenda of the relevant European and national institutions.



Meanwhile, also in many other countries around the world the regulatory authorities start to struggle to keep up with the rapidly increasing number of registration applications for biopesticides. We must make sure that regulatory authorities around the world keep providing sufficient capacity as well as expert knowledge to rapidly process these registration applications.

The need for strong and smart advocacy is now more important than ever. Therefore it is crucial that as an industry we speak again with one voice. I intend to carefully listen to the needs and wishes of our members around the world and to actively use this feedback to make sure that everybody, especially manufacturers and companies that strongly invest in product development, feels well represented and at home in our association. Unity makes strength.

There is also an important level of technological and regulatory overlap between biopesticides and biostimulants (incl. biofertilizers and inoculants). Distribution channels for both types of products are the same. More and more companies are getting involved in both fields. Alignment and close collaboration between IBMA and EBIC (European Biostimulants Industry Council) is crucial in order to assure that we speak with one voice towards regulators and policy makers. This is now not always the case. I intend to take concrete action to ensure an open dialogue between the IBMA and EBIC leadership aimed at jointly investigating different options for closer collaboration.

While market access is probably the biggest challenge from a global perspective, the purpose of IBMA was and still is also to actively *promote* the uptake of biocontrol-based IPM on a global scale. This also includes finding ways to *educate* growers and farmers about the principles of IPM and how to use biologicals in such an integrated approach. Together, as a global industry, we need to actively collaborate with each other as well as with policy makers, authorities, extension services, NGO's, educational institutions, and farmer associations on ways to get even better at this. We have a joint responsibility to help farmers to make the inevitable transition to a more sustainable agriculture as smooth and painless as possible.

I look forward to continue contributing to the advancement of our beautiful industry and through this to an ecologically, economically and socially sustainable agriculture around the world.

Kind regards,

Karel Bolckmans





International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association (IBMA)
Rue de Trèves, 61
B1040 Brussels

To the attention of

Britta Schnittger, Project Manager
Soizick Menais, Office Manager
cc. Jennifer Lewis, Executive Director

Westerlo, Belgium, August 23rd, 2024

Dear Britta and Soizick, Dear Jennifer,

On behalf of Biofirst, I hereby nominate Mr. Karel Bolckmans as candidate for the position of President of IBMA.

Karel currently holds the position of Chief Strategy and Transformation officer in our Company. Since joining our company as Biobest's Chief Operating Officer in 2016 he has held key senior management positions in our group and has made a decisive contribution to our continuous growth. Karel has been fully dedicated to the biocontrol industry since 1992 and has also been actively involved with IBMA activities in the past.

The advocacy challenges and opportunities which we expect IBMA to successfully address are crucial for our industry. Therefore, we are happy to ask Karel to dedicate part of his time to the association.

For a number of reasons, we believe Karel is the ideal person to fulfil the role of IBMA President. These reasons include :

- His deep knowledge on and firm belief in the potential of biocontrol as a cornerstone of sustainable agricultural production
- His energy, passion and determination to make the association successful
- His strong ability to convince other people, with positive energy and strong drive.
- His extensive global network in our industry and in the research community as well as with key Belgian and European policy makers

Karel has provided you with his personal motivation letter. I trust that his application, with this nomination message, is now complete.

With best regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jean-Marc Vandoorne Feys", with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Jean-Marc Vandoorne Feys
Representing JM Vandoorne BV

CEO



Tuesday 30th July 2024

Dear Hermann
Dear Jennifer

In consultation with the candidate (and also with the CEO of the Andermatt Group AG as formal representative of the Andermatt Group as IBMA-member), I have the honour to nominate Mr Karel Bolckmans from the Biofirst Group as candidate for the office of President of IBMA-Global. I am convinced that Karel fulfils all the requirements for this task exceptionally well:

- Passion for the biocontrol industry
- Proven leadership capabilities
- Good network skills
- Fluency in English

I am looking forward to the upcoming elections!

Kind regards
Martin Andermatt

Andermatt Group AG
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