

# **IBMA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2024**

---

**Pre-reading**

## Contents

Final Agenda of the Autumn General Assembly .....	3
Minutes of the 2024 Annual Assembly ( <i>Annex 2.1</i> ) .....	4
Activity Report from the IBMA Council 2024 ( <i>Annex 3.1</i> ) .....	10
Background	
Council Meetings	
Council Members	
Member Matters, Membership Model Discussions, New National Associations	
IBMA Strategy and strategy implementation	
Other items, including Budget	
Annex 3.1.1 IBMA Council 2024	
Annex 3.1.2 IBMA Membership Model	
Annex 3.1.3 2024 Objectives and priorities	
Activity Report from the Executive Director 2024 ( <i>Annex 3.2</i> ) .....	25
Proportionate Regulation in Europe	
Biocontrol at the Centre of the Debate	
Industry Information Provision	
New Technology - Peptides	
Organic Regulation	
Global Policy Output	
Professional Groups – other activities	
Working Parties	
RATION – Horizon project on Risk Assessment Innovation for Low Risk Pesticides.	
Other activities and consultations	
IBMA Budget 2025 Proposal and Fee Review ( <i>Annex 5.1</i> ) .....	38
IBMA Budget 2025	
Annex 5.1.1 IBMA Budget 2025	
Annex 5.1.2 IBMA Budget extended version	

## FINAL AGENDA

### IBMA AUTUMN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Location:** Auditorium Montreal, Congress Center Basel, Switzerland and online

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024 – 14:00-16:00 CET

14:00	<b>1. Welcome, opening of the Autumn General Assembly and introduction from the IBMA President Herman Van Mellaert</b>	HVM	
14:05	<b>2. Administration</b>		
	2.1. Approval of the minutes of the April Annual Assembly 2024 and record of any amendments. <i>(Annex 2.1)</i> <i>Do you approve the minutes from the April Annual Assembly 2024 as a true record?</i>	HVM	<b>Information</b>  <i>Vote</i> <i>(yes/no/abstain)</i>
14:10	<b>3. Overview of the past year</b>		
	3.1. Activity Report of the Council <i>(Annex 3.1.)</i>	HVM	<b>Information and questions</b>
14 :15	3.2. Activity Report from the Executive Director - this will highlight substantial progress achieved over the past year as well as IBMA's roadmap for the future <i>(Annex 3.2)</i>	JSL	<b>Information and questions</b>
14 :25	3.3. Update from the Professional Groups and Working Parties.	AM	<b>Information</b>
	3.4. Approval of the Council Activity Report <i>Do you approve the Activity Report of the Council?</i>	HVM	<i>Vote</i> <i>(yes/no/abstain)</i>
	3.5. Approval of the Activity Report of the Executive Director <i>Do you approve the Activity Report of the Executive Director?</i>	HVM	<i>Vote</i> <i>(yes/no/abstain)</i>
14 :40	<b>4. IBMA Communications</b>		
	4.1 Recent communication projects and plans for 2025	JSL	<b>Information</b>
14 :50	<b>5. IBMA Treasurers Report 2024 YTD and 2025 Budget</b>	JSL/AQ	<b>Information and questions</b>
	5.1. YTD figures – financial position end of Aug 2024 and year end forecast <i>(Annex 5.1)</i>		
	5.2. Budget proposal and fee review 2025	JSL/AQ	<b>Information and questions</b>
	<i>Do you approve the proposed 2025 fees?</i>	HVM	<i>Vote</i> <i>(yes/no/abstain)</i>
	<i>Do you approve the IBMA Budget for 2025 as proposed by the Treasurer?</i>	HVM	<i>Vote</i> <i>(yes/no/abstain)</i>
15:30	<b>6. Membership Survey – information and plans for 2025</b>	JSL	<b>Information</b>
	6.1. Survey goals for 2025		
15:35	<b>7. Endorsement of Board Members</b>	HVM	<b>Information</b>
	7.1. Endorsement of the candidates of President and Treasurer following the election process		
15:50	<b>8. Honorary Members</b>	JSL	<b>Information</b>
	8.1. Presentation of IBMA Honorary Membership		
15:55	<b>9. AOB</b>	HVM	
16 :00	<b>CLOSE OF MEETING</b>		

## Annex 2.1

### Annual Assembly 2024 – Unadopted Minutes

To be proposed for formal approval at the next General Assembly meeting

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024

13.00 – 16.00 CET

Brussels, Belgium & Online

The General Assembly commenced with a warm welcome to all attendees, both physically present in Brussels and joining virtually. The impressive turnout of 110 registered attendees from 77 member companies, along with 5 honorary members, was acknowledged by the President. Special greetings were extended to the new members joining their first Annual Assembly Symbiotic Sciences Private Ltd, Mycea and Cehtra from France and BioGene Technology Limited from Australia. HVM noted it was inspiring for the Board to see so many new faces contributing to IBMA.

HVM expressed his pride and determination in representing a sector pivotal to sustainable agriculture and asserted the association's position as the leading voice of biocontrol. Highlighting IBMA's thirty years of experience and technical expertise, HVM emphasized the association's role as a trusted partner for institutions and administrations worldwide. IBMA has been politically impactful, advocating for changes in legislation to facilitate access to biocontrol products and while setbacks such as the withdrawal of the SUR proposal may have delayed progress, IBMA's determination remains unwavering.

The importance of enhanced communication efforts, including an expanded social media presence and transparent decision-making processes, was underscored. These efforts were recognized as strengthening the organization and fostering cohesion among members.

IBMA's network of National Associations were thanked for being instrumental in successfully advocating for the inclusion of biocontrol on the European agenda. At both National and EU levels, IBMA has navigated challenges and made difficult decisions, particularly regarding the network of national associations. IBMA has responded by engaging in comprehensive discussions involving all national associations and actively seeking input from Council members. Efforts in the past 12 months have been made to refine and redefine IBMA's membership model. The resulting model serves as a solid foundation for IBMA's future endeavours, promoting cohesion and ensuring a clearly defined structure that safeguards the financial health of IBMA.

#### **1 Adoption of Minutes from the Autumn General Assembly 2023**

There were no questions or remarks on the minutes, Caroline Reid proposed the vote for the adoption of the minutes which was seconded by Alessandra Moccia.

Yes	No	Abstain
90%	0%	10%

Minutes approved.

**2 Overview of the IBMA Annual Accounts 2023**

IBMA Accountant Lode Buyse (LB) provided a comprehensive overview of the 2023 statutory accounts for the accounting year ended on December 31, 2023. His presentation began with an examination of the balance sheet, highlighting IBMA's assets.

Notable among fixed assets was a modest amount of €7,000 in IT equipment, alongside a 50% stake in the capital of ABIM, amounting to 90,000 Swiss francs. Current assets included a receivable from invoicing to ABIM, VAT refunds and withholding tax on salaries. On the liability side of the balance sheet, the presentation outlined accounts payable, which included supply invoices and provisions for staff holiday pay. Moreover, there was income to be carried forward from an EU grant.

Moving to the profit and loss account, it was reported by LB that operating income amounted to €1,294,000, driven by increased membership fees and other revenue streams. However, operating charges totalled €1,317,000, reflecting higher advocacy, marketing, and operational expenses. Consequently, the operating profit resulted in a loss of €22,671, with additional financial charges leading to a net loss of €30,654 for the year.

A comparison with the previous year showed a significant shift from a profit of €135,000 in 2022 to a loss of €30,654 in 2023. This variance was attributed to increased income alongside higher operating costs. It was emphasized that these results reflected activity on strategic initiatives and projects and showed proactive management of resources to advance IBMA's objectives.

AQ provided a high-level overview of the 2023 closing accounts noting to members that modifications to the financial reporting took place during 2023 to make them more practical for the Association. AQ noted that the loss for 2023 was expected and was the result of decisions made by the Board with the support of members to proceed with a mandate on various projects. Staff numbers have increased which has allowed IBMA to increase regulatory and communication activities. . Increased spending in the areas of advocacy also allowed IBMA, guided by the political agenda, to implement a number of projects.

After questions from members, the following items were clarified:

- Lobby and advocacy costs– the majority of these costs are allocated to the services of a retained advocacy consultancy, Sustainable Public Affairs. It was noted that charges in 2023 changed in September, with a higher expenditure in the second half of the year due to increased activities.
- Minimum safety buffer required by IBMA. A buffer of approximately 40-50% of the expected turnover was considered prudent.

**2.1 Approval of the IBMA 2023 Annual Accounts**

Alessandra Moccia proposed the vote to approve annual accounts 2023, seconded by Alain Querrioux.

Yes	No	Abstain
91%	0%	9%

Accounts approved.



## 2.2 Release from liability

Tillmann Frank proposed to vote for the release from liability of the Non-Executive and Executive Directors for the performance of their duties in the course of the financial year 2023 ending December 31<sup>st</sup>, seconded by Caroline Reid.

Yes	No	Abstain
86%	3%	11%

Release from liability approved.

## 3 IBMA Update and plans for 2024

### 3.1 IBMA Membership

JSL provided an overview of the IBMA membership, which overall is stable. Companies being purchased by larger companies are lost as individual members and often become subsidiaries and so called "Daughter" members of IBMA. There has been an influx of new members, notably small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Despite maintaining stable overall membership numbers, the composition of IBMA's membership has seen a shift towards smaller entities joining the Association.

JSL highlighted the fact that approximately 27% of members have progressed to higher membership categories which indicating increased turnover for these companies and growth in the industry. Thanks was extended to the members who have completed their Declarations of Honour for 2024 and paid their fees with 40% of payments already processed.

The new membership model was approved unanimously by the Council in March. This is aimed at fostering cohesion between National Associations and IBMA Global while keeping financial stability and flexibility for National Associations. In particular, by allowing local stakeholders supporting biocontrol to join National Associations without the necessity of IBMA Global membership. The implementation of the new membership model, coupled with positive industry trends, sets a promising trajectory for the association's expansion and influence in the global arena.

A clarification on the dual membership obligation for Active members exception was requested. In the membership model an exception applies for companies which are active only in the country of the relevant National Association and with a turnover of less than 0.5 million Euro.

### 3.2 ABIM

AQ gave a short update on ABIM AG. The General Assembly of ABIM will take place in the week following the IBMA Assembly.

AQ celebrated the success of the 2023 event with approximately 1,800 participants and over 500 organizations from 53 countries in attendance, along with 115 exhibitors showcasing their contributions to the industry. Current financial reports indicate a robust performance, with reported income amounting to approximately 1.5 million Swiss francs and a net profit of 279,000 Swiss francs. These figures represent an encouraging 18% of turnover, contributing to an equity level exceeding 600,000 Swiss

francs. It was noted that the audited accounts, along with any decisions regarding dividend distribution, are subject to validation by the General Assembly during the upcoming meeting.

IBMA has two representatives currently serving on the ABIM AG Board – Martin Andermatt and Karin Mouret-Grosbeau. AQ thanked them for their dedication and contribution to the organization's success, particularly amidst challenging circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The subsequent recovery in attendance and financial performance in 2023 was lauded as a testament to their efforts.

Additionally, it was announced that Jose Alfredo Garcia from RovensaNext along with Alain Querrioux will join the ABIM AG Board pending their validation during the upcoming General Assembly. Members were reminded of the new for 2024 IBMA early bird delegate fee discount of 10%, compared to the previous year's 5%.

### **3.3 IBMA Projects for 2024**

JSL began by providing an overview of IBMA strategy, which has 6 themes organized around two pillars. One pillar about putting biocontrol at the centre of the debate - demonstrating biocontrol and industry statistics, also food chain interaction. The other pillar is about proportion regulation aimed at advancing biocontrol practices and addressing regulatory challenges. Members were reminded that the member survey in November 2022 prioritised proportionate regulation as the highest priority action.

At ABIM in 2023 IBMA launched a market survey of all its members. JSL thanked the members who completed the survey with a 66% completion rate. Some key points presented showed the biocontrol market in Europe is growing and is valued at more than 1.6 billion Euros, representing about 10% of the crop protection market. Additionally, the survey provided insights into job statistics, with approximately 6,500 individuals employed in biocontrol-related roles, primarily within IBMA Active member companies. Impressive growth is seen in all 4 biocontrol categories, with a doubling in size since 2016. Of the 4 categories, the invertebrate biocontrol sector has seen the strongest growth since 2019, reflecting the shorter authorisation procedure for invertebrate biocontrol compared to biopesticides. A full report on the survey will be sent to all members in the coming week.

JSL noted that IBMA's 3 step approach to speeding up biocontrol had resulted in broad support for biocontrol within the EU institutions and within the Sustainable Use Regulation (SUR) proposal. The farmer protests and the resulting political decision to withdraw the SUR, has led the European Commission to start looking for another vehicle for inclusion of the biocontrol definition and amendments to the legislation for authorising biocontrol. The 5<sup>th</sup> July document very clearly states what needs to be done to speed up the authorisation of biocontrol and the actions proposed in this document were supported by the EU Parliament in their proposed amendments to the SUR. IBMA will be continuing political advocacy to push forward these amendments and these approaches in the next Parliament and any suitable future legislative initiative.

### **3.4 European Actions – Advocacy**

IPB began by providing a background on the European institutions and the ordinary EU legislative process. For IBMA maintaining our close engagement throughout the processes is crucial. IBMA continues to focus on defining biocontrol, facilitating targeted changes for fast-tracking, and advocating for a comprehensive biocontrol regulation.

The European elections, in June across EU member states, will determine the composition of the European Parliament and subsequent coalition formation. This will impact political agendas and legislative priorities. As IBMA navigates these dynamics, it will remain steadfast in its advocacy efforts, ensuring biocontrol solutions remain a priority in the evolving political landscape. This includes engagement with the European Commission, strategic dialogue participation, and collaborations to achieve our objectives.

IPB noted that biocontrol continues to have a broad support in the Brussels arena. The European Commission is overall supportive of making changes as they spelled out in their 5th July document. However, with the withdrawal of the SUR they need a legislative vehicle and a political mandate. Currently the Secretariat are working on making the voice of IBMA heard both within our asks for the next European Commission work program and our input to the strategic dialogue. The strategic dialogue for the future of agriculture is a new forum to shape a shared vision for the future of agriculture. This work is happening through meetings and written input but outside the usual processes. Links to further information and actions by IBMA were shared with members during the meeting.

IPB mentioned a recent high-level discussion on biocontrol meeting held by IBMA with European Commission, Representative Member States Permanent representations, including Belgium which holds the Council Presidency, NGOs, food chain actors, farmers and growers' organisations. This meeting was extremely successful, and discussions will continue with this group when relevant.

JSL continued to outline the further plans IBMA has for 2024 in particular collaborating with farmer associations to further advocate for biocontrol, focussing on explaining and demonstrating biocontrol to farmers through field trips for farmer associations and policy makers and updating IBMA roadmaps with IFOAM and CopaCogeca . Training and communication at IBMA are ongoing. Last year a webinar on new organic regulation involving multiple stakeholders was held leading to ongoing discussions with DG AGRI and these will continue in 2024.

JSL closed this topic on IBMA projects by mentioning the Council review of the IBMA strategy which is coming to the end of its 5-year period. A survey will be sent to all members in May with questions to ask members to tell us their priorities for the industry for the coming 5 years. The results of this survey will be discussed and reviewed by the IBMA Council at their Strategy meeting in June.

Following questions from the members the following points were answered.

- Primary legislation is what is preferred to ensure a definition of biocontrol is most impactful.
- There has been no specific impact on IBMA from the Biocontrol coalition. IBMA is confident to be and determined to remain the leading voice of biocontrol, yet there will always be other organisations speaking on biocontrol or on behalf of biocontrol stakeholders. Our members are free to also be part of other organisations as is the case for some IBMA members for the Biocontrol coalition. While we of course collaborate intensely and structurally with our National Associations, with other



organisations we evaluate on a case by case basis whether collaboration can contribute to reach our goals.

- Amateur Use Working Group would IBMA consider expanding the scope of this group to e.g. golf, grain storage. In the past JSL had discussed this with the member. Suggested to have a follow up meeting to review this topic, review the objectives of such a new group and then take this proposal to the Council for a decision. It was also suggested that at National level in France, in France Biocontrol there are members who are active in the storage grain sector and this may be interesting for the member.

#### **4 External Speaker**

JSL introduced Ellen Hoff the Chief Operating Officer from Sustainable Public Affairs who gave a presentation “The Political Future of Biocontrol in Europe”.

EH introduced Sustainable Public Affairs their background and philosophies. She began her presentation with an explanation the EU political environments and key developments since 2019. Ellen provided a review of what was happening when the SUR vote took place and how it became collateral damage, in the political decisions following farmer protests. She provided an overview of the future landscape in Brussels and what is coming after the European elections and what that might mean for the biocontrol industry. EH covered the potential shift in focus which may be required from sustainability to competitiveness.

EH noted that the building blocks are in place for IBMA with broad support for biocontrol, dedicated groups working actively on solutions and policy priorities providing opportunities for biocontrol.

For IBMA EH suggested this will mean making the most of the political environment for IBMA. Ellen's presentation can be found on the IBMA members area of the website.

#### **5 Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

#### **6 Summary and Conclusions**

The President thanked the members of the Board, Council, National Groups, Professional Groups and Working Groups and the Secretariat for their work. He thanked the members for their engagement and input to the meeting and looks forward to working with members in the coming months on their input to IBMA. HVM and JSL thanked Ellen for her presentation.

**Close of meeting**

## Annex 3.1

### Activity Report of the IBMA Council (Q4 2023 – Q3 2024)

Authored by Herman Van Mellaert, IBMA President, on behalf of and reviewed by the IBMA Council.

#### 1. Background

Following IBMA Global's change of statutes in July 2022, a number of specific responsibilities were allocated to the Council, including the Association's strategy, member related matters and establishment of working parties.

In line with this allocation of well-defined responsibilities the articles provide for an activity report by the Council to be presented by the President.

#### 2. Council meetings

Since the General Assembly in Basel on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, the Council held in person meetings on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024 and June 20<sup>th</sup> 2024 (strategy meeting) as well as several online meetings (December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and January 24<sup>th</sup>, February 21<sup>st</sup>, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024). Several items were also dealt with via email exchange.

Formal minutes of Council meetings are available in the members only section on our website.

#### 3. Council members

The following changes in the composition of the Council took place:

The mandates of Roma Gwynn as Vice-President of the Board, Lara Ramaekers as PG Head Natural Substances, and Alessandra Moccia as PG Head Semiochemicals ended on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

Alessandra Moccia began her mandate as Vice-President of the Board and Emmanuelle Bonneris as PG Head Natural Substances on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

Tomasz Magacz was elected chair of the PG Semiochemicals as a representative of an Associate Member, following due process according to IBMA rules when no Active member stands for the position. The Council welcomed him as PG representative, recommending that an Active Member representative should be elected to the Vice-Chair role in the PG and would take over the Council representation at a later stage.

In June 2024 Magda Galeano Revert the current Vice-President of IBMA Spain, was elected by the National Associations as Council representative thus becoming the fourth National Group representative, a position which had been vacant since January 2024 with the withdrawal from the role by Adriana Guerra.

See below in the Annex 3.1.1 an overview of all current members of the Council 2024.

#### 4. Member Matters, Membership Model Discussions, New National Associations

The Council approved 10 new members of the Association since the General Assembly at ABIM 2023, of which 6 are Active members and 4 are Associate members. Sylvia Plak, Karine Mouret-Grosbeau and Roma Gwynn were all presented with Honorary membership in 2023.

The Council continued its discussions on the IBMA Membership Model initiated during 2022. These discussions were aimed at defining the key parameters required to ensure cohesion

between and financial health of all IBMA National Associations and IBMA Global. The topic was discussed at several Council meetings. The Council made it a priority to extensively involve the National Associations seeking detailed input and feedback on draft versions of the Membership Model. The Council finalised its conclusions during its meeting of March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2024.

The Council believes that the Membership model agreed by the Council (attached as Annex 3.1.2) is a sound basis for IBMA Global and its National Associations to maintain and further develop a strong and productive collaboration. Recent discussions on EU legislative proposals have once again demonstrated the need to develop well-coordinated advocacy efforts at both national and EU wide level. The same applies to other international bodies in which IBMA Global is involved e.g. at FAO and OECD level.

The Membership model makes a clear choice to continue to operate as a “company member association” both internationally and nationally. IBMA Global does not intend to become an association of National Associations. The Membership model builds on certain basic common principles (such as proper coverage of biocontrol interests and dual membership of companies qualifying for active membership of IBMA Global) while leaving maximum degrees of freedom to National Associations e.g., to involve other types of stakeholders and to choose their own modus operandi to accommodate their national reality of biocontrol business. The Membership model further provides for a transition period to achieve full alignment of National Associations with all items of the Membership model.

The Council also views this Membership model as an important asset for further expansion of its network of National Associations. Discussions with several associations or initiatives in different countries or regions with regard to the creation of new National Associations of IBMA Global have been conducted or are ongoing. During the Council meeting on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024 the Greek Association BioCrop was accepted as a new IBMA Global association.

## **5. IBMA Strategy and strategy implementation**

The Council scheduled dedicated strategy sessions during its meetings on Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023, with a follow up on January 26<sup>th</sup> 2024 as well as full day strategy discussion on June 20<sup>th</sup> 2024. These sessions utilized feedback from the members feedback gathered through surveys both at ABIM 2023 and during the year.

The Council strongly emphasized the importance of communication and enhanced engagement with members. The newly appointed Communication Manager, Niamh Holland-Essoh (since October 2023), a new full-time role in the Secretariat, presented in the September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024 meeting a status review and several ideas for discussion which were supported and further developed with input from the Council. The central role of communication and member engagement has been reflected in the position at the centre of the IBMA Strategy Wheel, to underline its impact on each of the strategic priorities.

Following a review of the 2023 goals and achievements to date in the November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023 meeting, the Council discussed 2024 objectives and priorities based on input given by the Executive Director. Based on a review in Council break-out groups and a second round of discussion in a January follow-up meeting, the Council agreed the table with 2024 priorities shown in Annex 3.1.3.

The need to accelerate and facilitate biocontrol regulatory approval processes in the EU, with actions detailed under the heading “Proportionate regulation,” remains the top priority. IBMA remains fully committed to advocate for targeted short-term changes in EU legislation and improvements in administrative practices of regulatory authorities. Yet, to deliver the

full potential of biocontrol for EU agriculture, it further calls to develop an entirely new regulatory framework for biocontrol. The Council encouraged internal discussions to develop a clear vision on what such new regulatory framework should deliver and how it should function. The document describing the required framework was prepared under the initiative of IBMA's Advisory Regulatory Working Group (ARWG), which organised a dedicated workshop and collected substantial input from many members in PG's and National Associations throughout the year. The final document was approved by the Council as a technical paper during its September 2024 meeting. The Council requested input from the Advocacy Working Group to prepare, on the basis of this document, a short and forceful advocacy message as well as input on the best timing to seek media attention.

Other important areas of priority, highlighted by the Council, relate to IBMA's role

- in collecting industry statistics;
- in further strengthening the association's activities on a global scale (FAO, OECD and developing our network of National Associations);
- in strengthening the collaboration with farmers organizations;
- in developing our position on various technology interfaces such as evaluating whether new technologies fit under the definition of biocontrol and the interface with digital technologies and biostimulants.

The Council welcomed substantial progress during 2024 on several of these priorities, including:

- the new and simplified member survey achieved an increase in response rate and compelling outputs presented to the May General Assembly;
- FAO and OECD explicitly turn to IBMA for input on biocontrol related topics, e.g. peptides;
- intensive and productive contacts with farmer and landowner organisations have been developed in the post-SUR context (e.g. joint letter with COPA-COGECA to EU COM President);
- based on extensive input prepared by the Natural Substances Professional Group, a Scoping Committee (Council & IBMA Technical Project Manager) decided on which peptides will fit under the biocontrol definition. This has been reflected in a specific reference to peptides in the IBMA definition.

As to the improving of the EU regulatory environment, IBMA had placed substantial emphasis on the SUR as the faster "vehicle" available to deliver real progress for biocontrol. During early 2024 – in spite of continued efforts by the Belgian presidency and following broad support for biocontrol related items, the negative vote on the full SUR package in the European Parliament led EU COM President Von der Leyen to completely withdraw the SUR-proposal. Hence, the SUR as a short-term path to deliver positive change for biocontrol disappeared.

The Council has consistently prioritised, encouraged, and supported IBMA's efforts to ensure that the positive initiatives for biocontrol as foreseen under the SUR would remain high on the EU institutional agenda. It has welcomed, on various occasions, the successes obtained by IBMA in this regard. These include: the joint letter to EU COM President Von der Leyen together with COPA-COGECA, the outcome of the Strategic Dialogue on Agriculture with extensive reference to biocontrol, the Mission letter for the EU Commissioner on Health and Animal Welfare, the EU COM's initiative to move forward with a biocontrol definition under the "Uniform Principles" Regulation and the explicit EU COM intention to include biocontrol improvements including provisional authorization in the framework of the Biotech Act.

Council strategy discussions in the second half of 2024 envisaged defining a new multi-year strategic plan post 2025 (when the current plan will expire). In order to contribute to this discussion, a member survey was set-up by the IBMA Secretariat. This survey lent further support to prioritising regulatory changes in the EU, both short term and long term in the form of a new regulatory framework, and to keep biocontrol at the centre of the debate. Interfaces with other technology areas (digital, biostimulants) received a relatively low priority score from participating members.

The Council discussed how different stakeholders are currently taking positions on biocontrol in the EU political arena. It noted that IBMA initiatives have been the key driver to bring biocontrol in the centre of the political debate. The Council believes that IBMA is well positioned to remain the leading industry voice while engaging with other stakeholders.

The Council recommended to clearly define and communicate IBMA's unique features ("our USP"). The list of unique IBMA strengths includes its long-established expertise, the wide geographic spread, the diverse range of member companies (from large companies to SMEs ranging from biocontrol pioneers to companies just starting to switch to biocontrol as well as innovative start-ups in the biocontrol space), experienced CROs and the wide network of National Associations. The Council has tasked the Secretariat with considering the USPs of IBMA and how these can be further leveraged to deliver the key goals of delivering proportionate regulation and keeping biocontrol at the centre of the debate. This output will be discussed in the upcoming Council meetings.

The Council also discussed developments in the area of biostimulants. IBMA supports an EU environment favorable to innovation in different types of biosolutions. While biostimulants are within the mandate of several IBMA National Associations, setting up dedicated biostimulant activities at IBMA Global level should not be, currently, a priority. IBMA focus should be on actions ensuring that boundary issues between biocontrol and biostimulants are properly covered, in a way that encourages innovation and duly takes into account biocontrol interests. The Council is in favour of an association-to-association dialogue with EBIC aiming at a common view on current issues with an impact on biocontrol–biostimulant boundary issues and takes note of several initiatives taken by the Board and the Secretariat to reach out to EBIC in this regard. IBMA awaits a response to this invitation for dialogue.

## **6. Other items, including budget**

The Council was kept up to date with regular YTD financials and year-end forecasts. The Council took note of the expectation that 2024 figures will be in line with the budget approved by the General Assembly in 2023. This provides for a limited use of the Association's reserves to fund part of the 2024 expenditure, the deficit is currently expected to be slightly lower than budgeted.

The 2025 budget proposal is within the responsibility of the IBMA Board, but the Council has the right to provide a written statement to the General Assembly. The Council members provided input to the Board with respect to budget preparation during the first half of 2024 and were informed of the budget proposal which the Board intends to present at the October General Assembly. This budget allocates for increased expenditure aimed at taking full advantage of the unique opportunity to drive real change for biocontrol in the EU at this time, as well as to support further international development and enhance IBMA's visibility during its thirtieth anniversary. The budget also targets revenue increases to achieve financial equilibrium for the 2025 fiscal year.

The Council also received an update on the 2025 membership fee structure, which will be presented at the October General Assembly, following its review by the Finance Committee.





This proposal is crucial for achieving a balanced budget, in combination with steps to gradually increase other sources of income.

During its meeting on September 25th, the Council unanimously agreed that a written statement regarding the budget proposal presented on behalf of the Board was not necessary.

### Annex 3.1.1 IBMA Council 2024

Role	
President	Herman Van Mellaert
Vice- President	Alessandra Moccia
Treasurer	Alain Querrioux
Executive Director	Jennifer Lewis
Professional Group Chair – Macrobiales	Caroline Reid
Professional Group Chair – Microbiales	José Carvalho
Professional Group Chair - Natural Substances	Emmanuelle Bonneris
Professional Group Chair – Semiochemicals	Tomasz Magacz
National Association Representative	Bart Sosef
National Association Representative	Tilmann Frank
National Association Representative	Flavio Lupato
National Association Representative	Magda Galeano Revert

#### **Biography of the IBMA Council**



#### **Herman Van Mellaert, President**

Herman is the Director Strategic Alliances at Biobest Group NV, with headquarters in Belgium. Biobest, originally a pioneer in bumblebee pollination and in invertebrate biocontrol agents, is now active worldwide with a complete range of solutions for biological control.

Herman holds a Ph.D. from the University of Leuven in insect physiology. He was Researcher, then Business Development Manager and subsequently founding CEO in the plant biotechnology industry. He also worked at the EU Council Secretariat (Agriculture) and at the European Commission (DG Research and Development). After several years as a consultant and interim Manager in the Life Sciences industry (with assignments in biotechnology, biological control, food ingredients, manufacturing of biomolecules) he became Director Business Development and subsequently Director Strategic Alliances at Biobest Group NV since 2013. Herman can be contacted at [Herman.VanMellaert@biobestgroup.com](mailto:Herman.VanMellaert@biobestgroup.com).



### **Alessandra Moccia, Vice President**

Alessandra is Senior Director of Global Regulatory Affairs at Suterra, a global leader in the development and commercialization of semiochemicals products. She strongly believes in a future where our farming practices become more sustainable.

After working in the development of risk assessment frameworks for nanomaterials, in 2012 she joined Suterra where she now directs the regulatory affairs department, ensuring with her team the registration of semiochemicals active substances and products globally.

From 2019-2023 she was the chair of the IBMA semiochemicals professional group, working with the professional group for a more proportionate regulation for semiochemicals plant protection products. In 2024 Alessandra was elected as Vice President of IBMA. Alessandra can be contacted at [alessandra.moccia@suterra.com](mailto:alessandra.moccia@suterra.com).



### **Alain Querrioux, Treasurer**

Alain is a French-born agronomist, active in the agricultural sector for the past 35 years. He has assumed several technical, commercial and management positions covering a wide spectrum of agricultural and regulatory environments around the globe. In the late 90's, his deep rooted commitment to alternative solutions triggered his decision to fully dedicate his energy to the development of Biocontrol. He joined

pure-players and witnessed the early development of the industry in pioneering times, and now enjoys the excitement of its booming development.

Innovation has always been a key driver in Alain's professional live, together with the aim to let farmers benefit from performing, healthy and cost-effective alternative solutions to protect their crops. Over the years, Alain has developed an excellent knowledge of the biocontrol industry, it's history, markets and main stakeholders. In 2014, Alain co-founded the French branch of the Andermatt group, which he has successfully been running and developing. Alain has been active in IBMA governance, as a Council and Board member of the French association. In January 2023, he was elected to the IBMA Global Board as Treasurer. Alain can be contacted at [alain.querrioux@andermatt.fr](mailto:alain.querrioux@andermatt.fr).



### **Jennifer Lewis, Executive Director**

Jennifer was appointed as IBMA Executive Director in 2019. Jennifer represents IBMA on FAO and OECD and works with members and other stakeholders to advance biocontrol and the implementation of IPM worldwide.

Prior to IBMA, Jennifer was a member of the Certis Europe Management Board leading Innovation, Development and Regulatory Affairs for 10 years. Before this she was General Manager of Biological Crop Protection Ltd, a beneficial insect production company selling beneficial insects for pest control in UK, Europe, and Africa.

Jennifer has worked in crop protection for 35 years in various marketing, regulatory and stewardship roles in the US, Brazil and Europe. Jennifer has always been passionate about IPM and biocontrol and its essential role for sustainable regenerative agriculture. Jennifer is an agronomy graduate with a Masters in Business Administration and a Diploma in Sustainable

Business Development. Her broad background allows her to bring a blend of international business experience, biocontrol knowledge and regulatory know how as well as a shared passion for biocontrol, to our industry. Jennifer can be contacted at [jennifer.lewis@ibma-global.org](mailto:jennifer.lewis@ibma-global.org).



**Caroline Reid, Professional Group Chair**

Caroline is one of the two Senior Technical Specialists at Bioline Agrosciences. Bioline Agrosciences is part of InVivo by Bioline and is a producer and supplier of beneficial insects, IPM and advice. Responsible for giving near market technical advice and managing commercial trials. Caroline has worked in the Horticultural industry for 30 years since gaining her PhD at the University of Lancaster in Plant Biochemistry. She worked at the R&D sites at GCRI Littlehampton and Stockbridge House, followed by a technical/ and commercial role at Bioline Agrosciences for 20 years gaining experience of successfully developing and implementing biocontrol in a commercial environment.

Now responsible for technical support across Northern Europe and North America Caroline visits customers and growers regularly to maintain contact with the market and any new developments which may be required. Speaking regularly at national and international conferences as well as grower groups and distributor meetings. Caroline is currently President of IBMA UK and the Chair of IBMA Global Invertebrates Professional Group. Caroline can be contacted at [CReid@biolineagrosciences.com](mailto:CReid@biolineagrosciences.com).



**José Carvalho, Professional Group Chair**

José is currently the Chair of the MPG and Regulatory Lead for Certis Biologicals in the EMEA Region. Jose holds a PhD in Environmental Chemistry (water) from the Humboldt University in Berlin and a Master in Pharmaceutical Sciences from Porto University, with a focus on microbiology, antibiotics resistance and immunology.

After his MSc degree, he worked in Drinking Water at the Portuguese Water Institute (implementation of the WFD), the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) and the German Federal Institute for Material Science and Testing (BAM) in analytical methods, where he published 11 peer-reviewed articles and 3 book chapters. Jose started his industry career with Bayer Environmental Sciences in global regulatory and moved on to Knoell Consulting to work in several positions in global regulatory policy, team lead Regulatory European dossiers, and business development. Since 2018, he has been active within IBMA, firstly within the Natural Substance Professional Group and for the past three years as chair of the Microbials Professional Group and Member of the IBMA Council. José can be contacted at [jcarvalho@certisbio.com](mailto:jcarvalho@certisbio.com).



**Emmanuelle Bonneris, Professional Group Chair**

Emmanuelle is an experienced regulatory scientist in plant protection products and biopesticides. She is graduated in chemistry, biological sciences with a specialty in environmental toxicology (PhD). She has been working for Bayer for more than 18 years in the R&D and regulatory arenas with experience at country and global level of the Bayer Crop Protection Organization as ecotoxicologist dealing with

ecotoxicological risk assessments and risk management activities as well biodiversity topics. Emmanuelle is currently regional regulatory manager on biopesticides for Europe, Middle East, and Africa with a portfolio of biocontrol products (plant extracts, semiochemicals, microbials). She is the Chair of the Natural Substances Professional Group and can be contact at [emmanuelle.bonneris@bayer.com](mailto:emmanuelle.bonneris@bayer.com).



**Tomasz Magacz, Professional Group Chair**

Tomasz is an experienced professional in Plant Protection Regulatory Affairs with over 10 years of expertise, specializing in low-risk and biosolutions products. He has played a key role in the successful renewal of Annex I inclusion of Straight Chain Lepidopteran Pheromones (SCLP) in the EU, where he advocated on behalf of the SCLP EU Task Force in discussions with major regulatory bodies such as EFSA and the EU Commission. Involved in IBMA Semiochemicals Professional Group since 2021, he actively contributed to shaping regulatory frameworks and joint IBMA-OECD initiatives. Tomasz is currently the Chair of IBMA Global Semiochemicals Professional Group. Tomasz can be contacted at [tomasz.magacz@gabconsulting.de](mailto:tomasz.magacz@gabconsulting.de).



**Bart Sosef, National Association Member**

Bart is currently General Manager of Biobest Netherlands where he has worked since 2014. He is also Sales Manager for Benelux and Distribution Project manager for Biobest Group. He also currently holds the position of Chairman of Artemis/ IBMA Netherlands. Bart has an MBA in MBA Food & Finance from the Nyenrode Business University, Breukelen. He has been professionally active in the horticultural business since 1993 and started out in sales, combined with advisory roles in the field, promoting IPM. Subsequently focussing on sales, marketing and executive management for a wholesale company in the horticultural business he joined Biobest Group in 2014. Bart can be contacted at [bart.sosef@biobestgroup.com](mailto:bart.sosef@biobestgroup.com).



**Tillmann Frank, National Association Member**

Tillmann has been the managing partner of e-nema GmbH since it was founded in 1997. The company's purpose is the biotechnical production of entomopathogenic nematodes and microorganisms for use in the field of biological plant protection. In addition to his work as director of this company, Tillmann has been involved in IBMA global for more than 20 years. Tillmann has been the chairman since the foundation of German/Austrian IBMA in 2008. As such, he has been involved in discussions with political committees and associations about the future development of biological plant protection for many years. Tillmann can be contacted at [t.frank@e-nema.de](mailto:t.frank@e-nema.de).



**Flavio Lupato, National Association Member**

Flavio is the General Manager of Koppert Italy. He has been working for the past 25 years in the agro market, covering several national and international roles in the seed, nursery, and plant protection markets. Through his various roles and experience, initially more operational and then gradually more and more managerial, he was able to experience first-hand the changes taking place along the supply chain of the various agricultural productions, while also from the point of view of the political and regulatory orientation. He currently holds the role of Vice President of IBMA Italy and is active in various other roles in the field of sustainable production through biocontrol.

By participating in the activities of the association and in the various comparison events on the world of biocontrol, he is convinced that he can make an active contribution in bringing the local point of view into a context of global synthesis as required by the mandate undertaken. Flavio can be contacted at [FLupato@koppert.it](mailto:FLupato@koppert.it).

**Magda Galeano Revert, National Association Member**

Magda is the Regulatory Affairs Manager for Spain and Portugal at Koppert, a position she has held since 2022. Prior to this role, she served as a senior researcher in the R&D department at Koppert Spain, where she worked from 2002 to 2022. Throughout her career, Magda has dedicated herself to advancing research in biological control solutions, particularly focusing on nematodes, including those related to soil, plants, and animal parasitism, as well as entomopathogenic nematodes. A committed advocate for biocontrol, Magda has been actively involved with IBMA Spain for the past 13 years. She began in 2011 as the leader of the Microbial Professional Group at the national level before transitioning to the Macrobial Group, where she continues to be involved. In addition, she currently holds the position of Vice President of IBMA Spain

Magda earned her PhD from the University of Valencia and brings 34 years of scientific experience to the field. She firmly believes that biocontrol represents the future of sustainable agriculture and views the registration of biological solutions as one of the greatest challenges facing the industry today. Magda can be contacted at [mgaleano@koppert.es](mailto:mgaleano@koppert.es).

## Annex 3.1.2

### IBMA Membership Model (Version 5)

Approved by IBMA Council 22/03/2024

#### Outline

1. Scope/Mandate of a National Association
2. Membership
3. Membership category in IBMA Global and NA representation rights
4. Decision making in the National Association should be structured to ensure cohesion with IBMA Global
5. IBMA Brand and Logo
6. New National Associations
7. Governance

#### 1. **Scope/Mandate of a National Association**

- 1.1. IBMA National Associations should cover biocontrol as a key part of their mandate.
- 1.2. Where appropriate for the market and territory specificities, NA may include in their scope other biologicals where synergies exist such as biostimulants.
- 1.3. There will be only one IBMA National Association in a given territory (country or region).

#### 2. **Membership**

- 2.1. IBMA's National Association's are expected to respect certain rules in connection with IBMA Global membership.
- 2.2. All **Active IBMA Global** members – in each of the countries in which they operate – should be allowed to join with fair and equal rights as a voting member of the relevant National Association.
- 2.3. All **Associate IBMA Global** members – in each of the countries in which they operate – should be allowed to be a member of the relevant National Associations.
- 2.4. **Dual membership obligation: Members who qualify for Active membership of IBMA Global** need to be Active members of IBMA Global in order to become/remain a member of a National Associations.
  - i. National Associations will put in place appropriate mechanisms to ensure compliance with this requirement.
  - ii. An exception applies for companies which are active only in the country of the relevant National Associations AND with a turnover < 0.5 million Euro.
- 2.5. **Dual membership obligation: Members who do not qualify** for Active membership of IBMA Global.
  - i. An obligation to be an **Associate member of IBMA Global** in order to become/remain a member of a National Associations applies to CRO's or consulting organisation that are engaging in business activities beyond the country of the relevant National Associations.

- ii. National Associations will put in place appropriate mechanisms to ensure compliance with this requirement.
- iii. While membership of IBMA Global is recommended for all, a dual membership **obligation does not apply** to the following categories of National Associations members *(to the extent considered within scope by the relevant National Associations and regardless of whether the National Associations accepts them as voting or non-voting member)*
  - Biostimulant companies [this would change automatically – subject to a transition period - if IBMA Global would formally expand its mandate to include biostimulants]
  - Research organisations / Universities
  - Food Companies
  - Biocontrol distribution companies
  - Retailers
  - National crop Associations (e.g. Tomato growers)
  - Farm companies and groups
  - Other members not mentioned as being subject to a dual membership obligation.

2.6. IBMA National Associations **are free to differentiate or not** between Active and Associate members **and/or between voting and non-voting members** at National Level. IBMA Global Active members shall qualify as active and voting members of the National Associations.

**3. Membership category in IBMA Global and National Associations representation rights**

- 3.1. National Associations representatives in the IBMA Global Council **need to be members of the Board/Council of the National Associations**, or appointed by National Associations Board, **and can only be Active members** of IBMA Global.
- 3.2. Non-Active Members of IBMA Global **cannot have representation in the IBMA Global Council, PGs Chair positions** nor voting rights in IBMA Global. Exceptions maybe possible for a PG Chair position that may be opened to Associate members, subject to detailed justification, and by formal approval of the Board and Council.

**4. Decision making in the National Associations should be structured to ensure cohesion with IBMA Global**

4.1. IBMA Global requires 2/3rds of the votes in any National Associations decision making body (Board or Council equivalents) to be IBMA Global members. Any exception to this rule should be specifically authorized by the IBMA Global Council based on compelling National Associations argumentation that IBMA Global members will have a decisive voice in any National Association’s decision related to biocontrol. Other types of National Associations members which are not subject to the dual membership obligation and hence not members of IBMA Global (for example biostimulant companies if within the mandate of the National Associations) can be members of the decision bodies (Board or Council equivalents) of the National Associations.

**5. IBMA Brand and Logo**

5.1. IBMA National Association has the right to use the IBMA trademark and logo free of charge subject to signature of a licence agreement with IBMA Global.

## 6. New National Associations

6.1. National organisations with a potential to become a National Association, can be accepted as Associate members of IBMA Global for a period of maximum two years, provided it is clearly communicated that this mechanism is allowed with a view to prepare for full National Association status e.g. members financially planning to become members of IBMA Global. Extension of the period of two years can be agreed upon between the IBMA Global Council and the National Association, provided that sound grounds exist to allow for an extension.

## 7. Governance

7.1. IBMA Global Council has the responsibility, on behalf of IBMA Global, to review that National Associations:

7.1.1. function in **compliance with each of the rules of the membership model** as defined herein or, if required, implement necessary changes with respect thereto without undue delay.

7.1.2. in its organisation and in the positions, it takes in the public debate, acts in reasonable **cohesion with IBMA Global** and other National Associations.

7.2. If the IBMA Council deems there are concerns with the above items, it can take initiatives to request clarification and discuss such concerns with a National Associations with a view to resolve the concerns.

7.3. The IBMA Global Council's maintains the right to terminate the status/mandate of a National Association as an IBMA Global National Association, as foreseen in IBMA Global statutes if a resolution is not achieved.

**Appendix 1**

On the 22/03/2024 Council approved Artemis' request to continue to benefit from an exemption to a strict obligation to adhere to the rules of the membership model.

This request was approved taking into account:

- (i) the existence of Artemis pre-dating the existence of IBMA Global
- (ii) the fact that such exemption has been applicable ever since Artemis became a National Association of IBMA Global

Moreover the Council has taken into account:

- (iii) the assurance by the Artemis representative that Artemis supports the principles expressed in the membership model and agrees to act in line with the spirit and the principles as described therein
- (iv) a good faith intent on behalf of IBMA Global and the Artemis representative to maintain a dialogue aimed at finding a mutually agreeable path to make this exemption unnecessary in the future.



### Annexe 3.1.3



## IBMA – 2024 Strategic Plan

*Top Priorities in yellow, maintenance in green, lower priority orange*

Strategic Theme	Topic	Priority	
Industry Statistics	Collect 3 types of information to inform the biocontrol industry. (i) market size through the industry survey	1	
	(ii) biocontrol authorisations by Member State analysed from Panorama database	1	
	(iii) pipeline snapshot through members willing to share information with IBMA (do we want to make this annual or biennial?)	2	
Biocontrol Examples	Revise the IBMA website and incorporate IBMA examples website	1	
	Commission a scientific literature review on the wider sustainability benefits of biocontrol esp. soil health, biodiversity and carbon balance to create a platform for future work with food industry (ESG strategy), FAO and advocacy.	1	
Food Value Chain Interaction	Review potential for collaboration alongside farmer roadmap review.	2	
	Review Oatly possibilities for farmer field programme collaboration	2	
Proportionate Regulation	Sustainable Use Regulation – conclude legislative process to have an EU wide biocontrol definition and fast track registration of biocontrol	1	
	Include new biocontrol legislation in the new commission work programme	1	
	Propose a framework for a new biocontrol regulation – process and outline technical content – ensuring wide member ownership of the final document	1	
	Establish IBMA as a key stakeholder in the EU Strategic vision for Agriculture to 2050.	1	
	Create IBMA policy messages, make an implement an engagement plan to introduce these to new MEPs and Commissioners in 3Q 2024	1	
	IBMA to fully contribute to EU Horizon Europe RATION project ensuring input of IBMA decision trees and expertise on proportionate regulation	1	
	Publish DT on microbials and semiochemicals	1	
	SUR plan B – find a mechanism to incorporate biocontrol definition and fast track into 1107 and a means to review 1107 if SUR fails in 2024	1	
	Training	Member webinars for (i) organics (ii) advice for biocontrol start ups and other specific points to be included in the year and at ABIM	1
	Collaboration – Farmers	Farmers – Continue to build collaboration with CEJA (young farmers union) particularly to have some common goals in the strategic vision for agriculture.	1
Farmers - Review and revise COPA COGECA and IFOAM Roadmaps		2	

**IBMA – 2024 Strategic Plan**  
*Top Priorities in yellow, maintenance in green, lower priority orange*

Strategic Theme	Topic	Priority
<b>Demonstrate global reach of IBMA</b>	FAO – (i) continue to participate fully as an observer in the Joint Management of Pesticides Meeting (ii) Progress and sign an LOI by June 2024 (iii) Agree actions for incorporation into a MOU by January 2025.	1
	OECD – (i) continue to participate fully as an observer in the OECD Expert Group on Biopesticides (EGBP) and in the Working Party on Pesticides (WPP). (ii) Complete OECD projects on semiochemicals and microbial testing (iii) advocate for OECD to prepare a peptide guidance document.	1
	Expand the IBMA National Associations by 2 in 2024, focussing on regions and countries where there is no biocontrol association	1
	Enter discussions with SABO to see whether and how IBMA can assist them in current problems.	2
<b>Technology Interfaces</b>	Biostimulants – define IBMA goals with biostimulants. Initiate an exploratory meeting with EBIC to understand their goals, share our goals and determine what joint actions may be possible. Note that the strategic vision for agriculture may be a key area for finding common ground. Contribute fully to the expert group on fertilizer product regulation.	1
	Digital Ag - develop IBMA position on digital agriculture and engage on this subject with key stakeholders in particular CLE and COPA COGECA	1
	Peptides and RNAi – ensure peptide scoping committee actions are completed and new RNAi scoping committee is done	1
<b>Membership</b>	Maintain and manage existing PGs and WGs	1
	Manage ABIM programme and organisation	1
	Assign each Council member an individual contact point within the Bioprotection Global network. The purpose is to share and learn about policy approaches around the world illustrate global value of IBMA	1
	Create and roll out a new membership model for the National Groups and ensure all National Groups are aligned or have plans to align to the new model.	1
<b>Communication</b>	Farmer videos – create and access new farmer videos explaining the use and benefit of biocontrol that are convincing to farmers and food industry on the role of biocontrol in the transition of agriculture	1

## Annex 3.2

### Activity Report of the Executive Director

Written by Jennifer Lewis

Over the past twelve months, the global conversation around the impact of climate change on agriculture and the need to build more resilient global food and farming system has intensified. Biocontrol has a key role to play in that, which is increasingly recognised by policy makers worldwide. In Europe political tensions have been high, with farmer protests over low returns and excessive red tape. Notably, 1300 tractors converged in Brussels in February 2024 leading to the initiation of the Strategic Dialogue for Agriculture. The European elections in June 2024 have ushered in a new Parliament, which is now working on appointing Commissioners who will shape the work programme for the 2024-2029 EU Commission. IBMA has been and continues to work to put biocontrol at the centre of the political debate, to make meaningful legislative change for the biocontrol industry. Delivering these desired changes are the backbone of the IBMA strategy.

In November 2023, IBMA members were invited to review IBMA's strategic themes and provide feedback prior to the Council strategy day in November. Members reaffirmed support for IBMA's two main pillars proportionate regulation and putting biocontrol at the centre of the debate. The six strategic themes from the 2020-2024 strategy were ranked.

- (i) **Proportionate regulation**
- (ii) **Demonstrating biocontrol**
- (iii) **Providing industry statistics and evidence.**
- (iv) **Engaging with the food value chain**
- (v) **Training**
- (vi) **Collaboration to amplify messages**

The top three priorities were achieving proportionate regulation for biocontrol, demonstrating biocontrol success and information provision for the industry as indicated above. Working with the food industry was seen as important, while training and collaboration were of lower importance. Some members commented that collaboration with key partners such as farmer organisations to achieve our core goals was indeed very important.

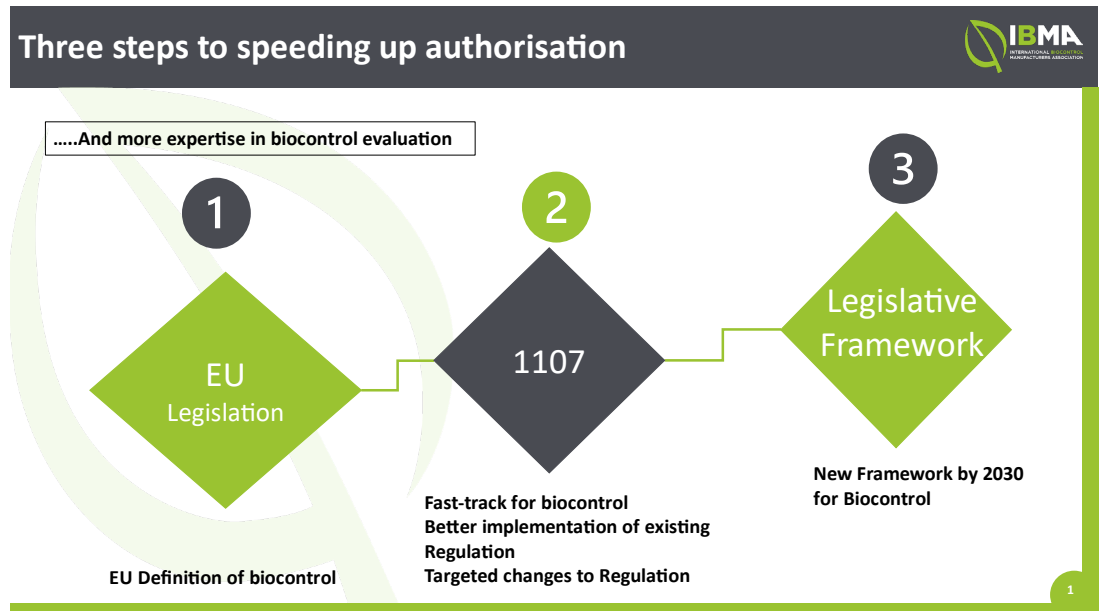
The workplan for 2024 was developed around these core themes and endorsed by Council in January 2024. The remainder of this report outlines the achievements in each of these areas.

#### 1. Proportionate Regulation in Europe

The Sustainable Use Regulation (SUR) was voted through the ENVI Committee in the EU Parliament but was ultimately voted down by the European Parliament in November 2023. Despite the Council under the Belgium Presidency trying to salvage key elements of the SUR including biocontrol, these attempts were not successful, and the SUR was formally withdrawn by the College of Commissioners in February 2024. As a result, IBMA is now seeking a new legislative vehicle for the definition and to implement the fast track authorisation process. Advocacy efforts continue, focusing on the three key steps to achieving faster biocontrol authorisation:

- (i) EU wide biocontrol definition

- (ii) Fast track
- (iii) New regulation



In July 2024, the SCoPAFF initiated discussions on a proposed definition for biocontrol within the Uniform Principles of EU Reg No 1107/2009. This definition is being developed in collaboration with the Member States to help them prioritise biocontrol authorisations within their Member States, a task requested by the Single Market Enforcement Task Force of the EU. The biocontrol definition will serve as the foundation of any broader definitions in future legislation such as the upcoming Biotech Strategy, for which a proposal is expected in late 2025 or early 2026. IBMA made written input into the SCoPAFF, welcomed the definition and highlighted the importance of including minerals in the definition as per IBMA's definition. IBMA also indicated that, when a definition of biocontrol extends outside EU Regulation No 1107/2009, all four categories of biocontrol should be included in any wider definition.

Current indications suggest that biocontrol will be included in the Biotech strategy, though the final content will depend on the new EU Work Programme. It is also clear that Provisional Authorisation is seen by the EU Commission as a feasible and viable pathway to speeding up authorisation, aligning with step 2 of the proposed IBMA regulatory changes.

Throughout 2023 and 2024, IBMA's Advisory Regulatory Working Group has been developing an outline for a new framework for biocontrol regulation, representing step 3 of the proposed regulatory changes. A draft of this framework was shared with and endorsed by the Council in September 2024 and is now being refined into a more politically focused document by the IBMA Advocacy Working Group before use externally to IBMA.

The key elements of the proposed regulatory framework include:

Establishing a single biocontrol agency that takes decisions on both active substance and products, eliminating the need for national requirements or a zonal approach. Instead implementing a master label approach, which allows use of efficacy data from outside the EU. The aim would be to deliver authorisations within 2 years and to ensure a pool of expert evaluators through the single agency to streamline the process.

## 2. Biocontrol at the Centre of the Debate

### (i) High Level Political Support for Biocontrol

Following the cross-party political support for biocontrol within the SUR and its subsequent withdrawal, IBMA has actively advocated for continued support for biocontrol in the new Commission Work Programme. In particular, the Council of Ministers of Member States, during the Belgium Presidency was highly supportive of biocontrol with significant contributions. Targeted advocacy work of IBMA Belgium and IBMA member companies in Belgium was instrumental in achieving the prominent position of biocontrol in this phase of the political debate, once again demonstrating the strength of well-coordinated action at EU and national level.

In March 2024, IBMA organised an event, under the auspices of the Belgium Presidency, bringing together policy makers, NGOs and farmer stakeholders to discuss how to accelerate authorisation of biocontrol and emphasise the urgent need for alternatives for farmers to control pests and diseases. In July, IBMA met with the Secretariat General of the EU Commission which co-ordinates the new work programme. The discussion focused and emphasised on the need for inclusion of the fast track authorisation process for biocontrol to ensure immediate availability of tools in the farmer's toolbox and ultimately the need for a dedicated biocontrol regulation. IBMA has widely communicated to the EU Institutions the IBMA requests for the new EU Work Programme which include an EU wide definition for biocontrol as the base upon which the following are built:

- Fast track authorisation for biocontrol
- A new biocontrol regulation
- The inclusion of more tools for the farmers toolbox to support sustainable agricultural practices.

Throughout the spring and summer, IBMA collaborated with the stakeholders directly involved in the Strategic Dialogue for Agriculture to encourage a deeper understanding of the role of biocontrol in providing solutions. In particular, IBMA worked with the farmer associations COPA COGECA, CEJA, ELO and IFOAM who were part of the Strategic Dialogue for Agriculture, to discuss and explain the potential and the benefits of biocontrol for farmers, providing examples from Brazil as well as Europe. It was encouraging to see the conclusions of the Strategic Dialogue of Agriculture include a recommendation to accelerate biocontrol authorisations by the end of 2025.

Additionally, the Mission letter for the Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare included, for the first time, a mandate to accelerate the authorisation of biocontrol. This marks a significant milestone, as biocontrol's inclusion in the Mission letters establishes a clear priority and mandate for the Commissioners over the upcoming five-year Parliamentary term.

### (ii) Demonstrating and raising awareness on biocontrol

IBMA organised two field trips for policymakers and farmer associations on 12 and 13 September 2024, visiting two farms in Belgium and two in The Netherlands to demonstrate the use of biocontrol on their farms. Special thanks to our members who arranged farmer contacts and to Artemis, the IBMA National Association in The Netherlands who helped create an engaging visit programme. The visits were well received by the 50 attendees, and due to their success, similar events are planned for next year. A journalist was also commissioned to document the visits and to discuss the



benefits of biocontrol with policy makers, farmers and politicians The videos are planned for release at the end of 2024.

### 3. Industry Information Provision

#### Industry Survey

The annual industry survey of biocontrol was launched at ABIM 2023, the results of which were shared at the Annual Assembly in May 2024. We received a 65% response, which is a 20% increase on the previous year, and we look forward to an even higher response rate in the 2024 survey which will be released in ABIM 2024. The European market in 2022 for biocontrol was valued at 1.6bn Euro, representing approximately 10% of the overall crop protection market. The market has doubled since 2016, although growth slowed between 2019-2022. All four biocontrol categories experienced growth, with invertebrate biocontrol showing the highest increase with an estimated 65% increase in sales volume since 2019. This higher growth rate reflects the significantly shorter authorisation process compared to traditional plant protection products PPPs.

### 4. New Technology – peptides

IBMA's biocontrol definition document states it is a living definition and so is open to periodic review in light of new technological developments. In March 2020, the IBMA Scoping Committee (= IBMA Council + Regulatory Affairs Director (2020)/Technical Project Manager (2023)) made an initial review on peptides and, as a result, included a specific reference to peptides in the IBMA definition of biocontrol which more generally refers to natural substances **sourced from nature or nature-identical if synthesized**.

In response to requests from EU authorities and member companies, in 2023 the IBMA Council agreed to further review engineered peptides/proteins and enzymes, for potential inclusion in the IBMA biocontrol definition.

In November 2023, IBMA engaged Dr Andrea Chini from the National Biotechnology Centre in Spain to share insights into scientific advances in peptide research and nature-identity with the IBMA Scoping Committee. Dr Chini presented a summary of the scientific status of peptide science and research for crop protection. The discussion covered peptides, proteins, enzymes and antibodies. The paper highlighted challenges and grey areas in connection with applying the concept "nature-identical" to these product categories. In spite of an ever-increasing number of peptide- and protein sequences being available in databases, it is clear that only a small fraction of the total variation actually present in nature has already been identified. Chini also referred to the importance of protein structure as an important component that can be taken into consideration in the context of nature-identity.

The conclusion of the November 2023 scoping committee was that peptides and proteins for which the amino-acid sequence is demonstrated to be present in nature fall within the scope of "nature-identical". In addition, it was concluded necessary to further discuss peptides and proteins with limited variations in such amino-acid sequence whereby the peptide or protein is optimized while maintaining its overall 3-dimensional structure and biological function. The Natural Substances Professional Group was asked to develop further information as to whether such limited variations could lead to any unintended consequences in terms of risk profile.

Between January and June 2024, the definition working group within the Natural Substances group reviewed the peptide case with case studies from members and prepared a background paper which was discussed in the Natural Substances Workshop in Brussels in June 2024. The Natural Substances Professional Group agreed on a document with technical background and recommendations to the Scoping Committee in June 2024.

This document was discussed at length in the Scoping Committee and in September 2024, the Scoping Committee agreed on the following amendment to the natural substances section of the IBMA Biocontrol definition, adding the text in bold to the existing text (in italics).

*Natural substances consist of one or more components that originate from nature, including but not limited to: plants, algae/microalgae, animals, minerals, bacteria, fungi, protozoans, peptides, proteins (e.g. enzymes, antibodies), viruses, viroids, and mycoplasmas. They can either be sourced from nature or are nature identical if synthesized. This definition excludes semiochemicals and microbials, **which have their own definition.***

***Among natural substances, IBMA considers that peptides and proteins containing sequence modifications of a peptide/protein sourced from nature are deemed nature-identical provided all of the following conditions are met (1) they contain only naturally occurring amino-acids (2) such modifications do not change the 3-dimensional structure (3) such modifications do not change the biological function and (4) the biological breakdown occurs in a predicted way according to a natural pathway.***

IBMA anticipates to conduct a detailed review of other categories of natural substances for which additional clarification of the IBMA biocontrol definition in the light of technological developments may be required.

## 5. National Associations

The Council of the Ministers of Member States are co-legislators with the European Parliament for any piece of proposed legislation from the European Commission. The role of Member States and their Ministries is therefore key in agreeing any final text of a legislative proposal, which in turn means the role of IBMA National Associations is key to ensuring the IBMA messages are heard in the Member State Ministries. Joint working between IBMA Global and the IBMA National Associations will be crucial as the new Commission progresses to a legislative proposal for the acceleration of authorisations of biocontrol and the eventual Parliamentary and Council adoption of the final negotiated text.

During 2023 and 2024 the IBMA Council has had extensive discussions on the membership model which outlines the requirements of an IBMA National Association, drafting a proposal which was then extensively discussed with the National Groups to reach a consensus. The final model was agreed by IBMA Council in April 2024. In September, IBMA is particularly pleased to have welcomed BioCrop as the tenth IBMA National Association. BioCrop was established in Greece in April 2024 and following BioCrop's General Assembly and a review against the new membership model, the IBMA Council voted to accept BioCrop as the IBMA National Association in Greece. Discussions are ongoing with two other country National Associations who are considering joining the IBMA network. In addition, there are early-stage discussions on two regional IBMA Associations.

The IBMA National Associations meet online monthly on the second Tuesday of the month. In addition to a meeting to discuss the membership model, nine monthly meetings of the National Associations have been held online during 2024 and two at the end of 2023. During these meetings, information around advocacy and technical consultations was shared and discussed. The annual in person meeting was held in September 2024. Each National Group discussed their strategy and their requirements for input and support from IBMA Global.

## 6. Global Policy Input

### OECD Expert Group on Biopesticides – IBMA has Observer Status

The OECD Expert Group on Biopesticides (EGBP) is a group of representatives of pesticide regulatory authorities from the OECD countries who discuss and agree OECD policy and guidelines for biopesticides. IBMA and two other crop protection industry associations have observer status in the EGBP. These observers can comment on documents and policies but are not part of the decision making and voting, which is the domain of the governments represented at the meeting, which include the EU Commission. The mission of OECD in the five years of 2025-2029 is to work towards a cooperative global approach on the regulation of pesticides. The proposed goals for the period include: (i) mutual recognition of pesticide reviews to become the basis for international cooperation of pesticide regulatory bodies (ii) work sharing among regulatory authorities of OECD countries to lead to resource savings and mutual trust (iii) IPM to become the accepted approach in all OECD countries. These goals are consistent with IBMA's goals on improving and accelerating authorisations of biocontrol, highlighting the strategic relevance of IBMA's role in OECD EGBP.

Since March 2023, IBMA has contributed and/or commented on the following OECD documents:

- Innovating Microbial Pesticide Testing: Conference Proceedings. Series on Pesticides No. **109**
- Second Edition released in 2023. OECD Issue Paper on Microbial Contaminant Limits for Microbial Pest Control Products. Series on Pesticides No. **65**
- Guidance document on Baculoviruses as plant protection products. Series on Pesticides No. **111**
- Overview of approaches used by member countries to handle the issue of antimicrobial resistance potentially related to application of microbial pesticides. Series on Pesticides No. **112**
- OECD Guidance Document on addressing minor uses. Series on Pesticides No. **113**
- Consensus documents on *Bacillus amyloliquefaciens* and *Beauveria bassiana*.

In addition, IBMA is actively contributing to several OECD projects and discussions including:

- Leading the project on the “Review and applicability of the calculation method presented in OECD ENV/JM/MONO(2017)33 for the determination of the natural background levels of semiochemicals”. This project is also of great interest to the EU Commission and updates are given by IBMA at the EU Commission biopesticide working group.
- Follow up ‘EGBP Conference on Innovating Microbial Pesticide Testing’ (September 2022): IBMA has submitted comments on the project proposal from EPA/PMRA to establish new OECD testing Guidelines for Microbials based on the existing OPPTS Guidelines (*Test Guideline for testing oral, dermal, inhalation and injection toxicity, pathogenicity, and infectivity of microbial pesticides*).
- OECD Harmonised Templates (OHTs) and IUCLID for biopesticides: IBMA continues to participate in the EFSA Working Group developing IUCLID for microbials.
- OECD seminar on “Problem formulation for the risk assessment of biopesticides” (26 February 2024) included a presentation from IBMA on peptides as a case study. The

regulation of peptides will be further discussed at the February 2025 OECD EGBP, to which IBMA will contribute.

### **FAO/WHO Joint Management of Pesticides Meeting: IBMA Observer Status**

The FAO/WHO Joint Management of Pesticides Meeting is an advisory body to FAO and WHO on the lifecycle management and use of pesticides and new developments such as alternatives. The group is mandated to develop guidelines on pesticides, including biocontrol, which then provide a basis for Low and Middle Income Countries (LMIC) to develop appropriate and effective guidelines at regional and/or national level. Panel members are experts in their own right on life cycle management of pesticides. IBMA, Crop Life International and Pesticide Action Network are Observers. Observers can attend meetings and discussions, comment on documents and guidelines but do not make the final decisions on the documents, which are made by the panellists. Many of the guidelines are focussed on minimising harm from chemical pesticides and only have limited consideration of the needs for regulating and promoting biological alternatives. The role of IBMA is to bring the biocontrol expertise into the discussions.

FAO aims to reduce the reliance on pesticides by promoting IPM and agroecological practices. In 2024, IBMA has attended two intersessional meetings and one in person meeting. In October 2024, IBMA Kenya and a Kenyan farmer were invited to present biocontrol examples at the meeting to demonstrate the successful implementation of biocontrol on farm in Kenya.

IBMA is involved in the Kenyan pilot programme of the **FARM Global Project**. The FARM programme is a five-year 37 million USD programme managed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) within UNEP, aiming to catalyse a framework for regulatory and financial investment in the agriculture sector to reduce the use of harmful pesticides and plastics in agricultural production and encourage the adoption of low and non-chemical alternatives including biocontrol. IBMA, with the Indian biocontrol Association PMFRA, who represented Bioprotection Global, attended the kick-off in March 2024. IBMA is working with FAO and IBMA Kenya to input biocontrol practices and demonstration into the Kenyan project.

## **7. Organic Regulation**

Since Q4 2022, the IBMA Secretariat has been working with IBMA Members and stakeholders to understand the extent of biocontrol products impacted, so we can work with DG AGRI Organics Unit to ensure that organic products grown using biocontrol products exclusively authorized in third countries can be readily imported after the end of the transition period on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024.

To ensure this happens the Secretariat issued multiple calls to IBMA members to look at their portfolio and report to the Secretariat any microorganism and natural substance that could require an annex VI dossier. IBMA communicated a list of the reported substances and products to the Commission. This list allowed the EGTOP (Expert Group for Technical advice on Organic Production) and DG AGRI to understand the potential impact of the regulatory change and work on a solution to mitigate its impact. The IBMA Secretariat provided assistance to members on how to build an Annex VI dossier. This included help with contacting control bodies and COLEAD so they could help in building and submitting the dossiers. Two webinars and regular updates to members were made.

It became clear that for natural substances, an application would still need to be submitted to the EGTOP by a control body, using a specific application template provided by the European Commission. The microorganism dossier, however, evolved positively with DG AGRI working on a proposal allowing straightforward authorisation for microorganisms

including viruses in Annex VI (with potential limitations). Although IBMA can be satisfied with the positive evolution of this dossier, the proposal still needs to be discussed in the Committee on Organic Production, go through an interservice consultation and a public consultation. The final endorsement is expected to happen after the end of the transition period. As timelines remain a challenge, IBMA is committed to keep a close dialogue with DG AGRI and explore solutions in collaboration with its partner stakeholders to ensure no trade disruption will occur after the transition period.

## 8. Professional Groups – other activities

Professional Groups have continued to address regular consultations and actions from the EU Commission. In particular, the EU Biopesticide Working Group provides a forum within which IBMA has a strong voice in front of all MS and EU COM regulators and is able to present the views of the Professional Group and progress matters important to the industry.

### Biopesticides Working Group

IBMA participated in the Biopesticides Working Group meeting organised by DG SANTE on 10-11 June 2024. Six presentations were given, sharing IBMA positions and contributions to various topics of concern for the industry. IBMA responded to DG SANTE initiatives such as the new provisions on microbial consortia, presented ZAPID outcomes and results of recent questionnaires. We thank members for their input to the questionnaires.

### Labelling Regulation (Regulation (EU) No, 547/2011)

IBMA has met with and formally written to the Commission to explain that the proposed labelling requirements which include a colour scheme that does not differentiate biocontrol, if implemented would be damaging of the industry. The scheme is now under further review within the EU Commission and IBMA is following closely on this point. Under the same regulation particular attention has been given to removing unnecessary wording on sensitisation potential for microbials and removing negative bee labelling. This discussion is ongoing.

### Central Zone Steering Committee Working Document on Ecotoxicology

A new Working Document (WD) on ecotoxicology applicable to the Central Zone from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 was issued, with no opportunity for stakeholder comment and an unworkable implementation date. The document included profound changes to data requirements specific to one regulatory zone, which is not within the spirit of Regulation (EU) No 1107/2009. IBMA raised this at the Central Zone Steering Committee meeting in June and the Biopesticide Working Group. It was agreed that IBMA should provide comments within two months and the IBMA Professional Groups worked together to review the document and submit multiple comments. The overriding conclusion was that many points across the Working Document were inappropriate and meaningless for biocontrol ecotoxicology risk assessment, demonstrating it was written for single entity synthetic chemicals. Considering this, IBMA recommended that a clear exclusion should be made for biocontrol to avoid misinterpretation when conducting risk assessments for biocontrol and to avoid misalignment with the other two zones. Comments will be examined at a Central Zone Member State Ecotoxicology meeting in January 2025.

In addition, during the year **IBMA Professional Groups** have worked on:

- **Semiochemicals**
  - OECD study on background levels of semiochemicals for use in risk assessments.
  - RATION background document on the biology and use of semiochemicals



- Organic status of semiochemicals with possible removal of restrictions to traps and dispensers only
- **Microbials**
  - Microbial sensitisation and how to address this
  - Initial thoughts on the boundary between biocontrol and biostimulants so that the microbial list is expanded within the Fertilizer Product Regulation (FPR) without causing problems for biocontrol. In June 2024, at the request of Austrian Institute of Technology who are conducting the study on the addition of microbials to the positive list of the FPR, IBMA joined an online workshop on the addition of microbials to the positive list on biostimulants to communicate their support of innovation but to point out that any additions should be without causing problems for biocontrol. Prior to the meeting IBMA reached out to EBIC to ask for a discussion to share thoughts but this request was declined.
  - Follow up on the studies and lists of actions from the OECD seminar on microbial testing in 2022, including pathogenicity and infectivity guidelines; aquatic testing and consensus documents on *Beauveria bassiana* and *Bacillus amyloliquifaciens*.
  - Mid-year workshop with joint session on fermentation products (eg dead microbial cells) and a discussion on best regulatory practice for these products. This was held jointly with the natural substances PG.
- **Natural Substances**
  - Peptides have been reviewed and presented to the Scoping Committee (see above)
  - Survey of members to share regulatory challenges in ecotox and e-fate for natural substances. These have been shared with the EU Commission for priority resolution and with partners of the RATION project.
  - A training course on natural substances is under discussion for development.
  - Mid-year workshop to review case studies in natural substances and the likely data requirements for different types of natural substances.
- **Macrobials**
  - Scientific paper on the relevance of native versus non-native species presented at the Costa Rica IOBC conference which the IBMA macrobials PG co-chaired.
  - Mid-year workshop reviewing key topics including native species and a discussion on transport challenges for beneficials.

## 9. Working Parties

Five of the seven IBMA Working Parties have been active during 2024

- **Advisory Regulatory Working Group (ARWG)** works on horizontal regulatory matters that cross all Professional Groups. The ARWG held 10 meetings during the year, including a two day workshop and with wide member consultation on the workshop output (three calls in May and June) to discuss the draft of the “Framework Document”. Following these discussions, the final version, entitled “IBMA Vision on a New Regulatory Framework for Biocontrol in the European Union”, was completed and reviewed by the Council. The Council thanked the working group for the extensive work and very much appreciated the paper content and ideas. The next step is for these to



be summarised and put into the political context by the Advocacy Working Group in a shorter paper for use outside the organisation

- **Finance Committee** The Board requested input from the Finance Committee in relation to the necessary funds to support the 2025 proposed activities of the Association. Finance Committee members met on the 20<sup>th</sup> August and 17<sup>th</sup> September to discuss proposals from the Board and Secretariat in relation to the funds needed for 2025 activities. The views and input from Associate members was sought during the 17<sup>th</sup> September meeting.
- The **Amateur Use Group** was formed in 2023 with 8 members to provide a voice for the amateur use of biocontrol in the EU policy debate. The group met twice prior to the demise of the SUR to agree a way to ensure home and garden use is not excluded in the SUR. Since the SUR the working group has not been active.
- The **Advocacy Working Group** was set up with 12 members to ensure wider visibility and ownership of the IBMA advocacy work by the members. The working group was regularly informed of IBMA key work and met to discuss some key advocacy news, both for biocontrol and in general at EU level. More regular meetings are planned post European Elections, both online and in person to discuss messaging and advocacy actions in the new political and institutional landscapes. The group recently reviewed the messaging for the new Parliament and the various nuances needed for different political parties, institutions and stakeholders. In September, the Advocacy Working group was mandated to summarise and review the output from the Advisory Regulatory Working Group to propose a more political position paper on the subject.
- The **Bumble Bee group** has met twice and been involved in
  - Follow up on compliance issues with transport regulations.
  - Develop a producer's best practice commitment to ecologically sound practices.
- Biostimulant and Communications working group have not been active in 2024

#### 10. RATION – Horizon project on Risk Assessment Innovation for Low Risk Pesticides ([Website Link](#))

This is the second year of the RATION project in which IBMA receives funding as a partner in the Horizon Project reviewing risk assessment approaches for microbials, semiochemicals, natural substances and RNAi. Several member companies are also partners in the project. IBMA is working with other partners to frame the work and has provided insights into the potential risk assessment. IBMA has responsibilities in the Work Packages (1) Setting the scene through development of a questionnaire for authorities (2) Risk assessment for microbial pesticides and microbiomes (3) Risk assessment for plant extracts, pheromones and other semiochemicals (5) Harmonized RA for LRPs and assessment of associated socioeconomic impacts (6) Dissemination, communication and exploitation of project findings.

The project's third stakeholder's forum was held on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and the annual review of the project was held from 25-27<sup>th</sup> September 2024 in Madrid, where a status update on the development of the project was made and a series of presentations were delivered by project partners on various topics. Detailed presentations on the RATION project will be made in ABIM workshops where all interested delegates can attend.

## 11. Other activities and consultations

IBMA initiated new stakeholder collaborations, presented at multiple stakeholder meetings and responded to multiple consultations during the year. Some of these included:

### Technical Consultations – in addition to those listed above

- Zonal Authorisation Procedure Improvements and Developments (ZAPID) Dec 2023, IBMA joined a ZAPID workshop along with 80 representatives from Member States, the European Commission, the European Food Safety Authority, CroLife Europe and the European Crop Care Association. We ensured the perspectives we gathered from IBMA members helped shape IBMA positions presented in various discussions.
- IBMA Contribution on EFSA evaluation performance 2017-2024. On April 8th, IBMA delivered feedback from biocontrol applicants regarding EFSA's performance from 2017 to 2024. The IBMA contribution was derived from input provided by a range of IBMA members, who shared their views based on their experience with EFSA.
- IBMA has an expert seat in the Commission expert group on fertilising products and attended the meeting in March 2024. The next meeting is in autumn 2024.
- DG AGRI - Civil Dialogues Groups and EU Food Chain Observatory: IBMA has been selected and is actively participating to these key platforms of discussion on broader sustainable agriculture topics with the European Commission
- Minor use coordination facility – Spring meeting - The IBMA Secretariat attended the Horizontal Expert Group (HEG) meeting of the Minor Use Coordination Facility on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Discussions were held on the possible formation of a sub-group within the HEG to develop a common European definition of minor crops based on specific criteria, the drafting of a dRR Part A template and prioritisation between the two projects.
- Global Minor Use Summit (GMUS IV), Madrid : The Secretariat participated in this summit where for the first time, the GMUS IV addressed biocontrol comprehensively, featuring a breakout group discussion, a panel session and field visit. Key takeaways include a rapid increase in registration approvals for biological control, signifying an increasing shift from chemical solutions and the evolution of crop protection with the integration of products into IPM programs.

### Stakeholder Events

IBMA Board, Council members, Secretariat and supporting members participated and presented in multiple stakeholder events and conferences, including but not limited to the following:

- FARM Global Project | Kick-off Meeting in Kenya, March 12, 2024
- Belgian Presidency – Flanders Region Open Food Conference Trade offs and small steps: Food security vs. sustainable food transition, March 12, 2024
- Hosting High-level Discussion under the Auspices of the Belgian Presidency | Speed-up Biocontrol Authorisation | Knowledge, Know-how & Biocontrol for Farmers Now, March 19, 2024
- ELO, the European Landowners Organization dinner debate, Improving time-to-market for biocontrol, April 23

- 5<sup>th</sup> Bio Agtech World Congress – North Carolina, USA, Industry Perspective: EU Biopesticide Regulation and SUR update, April 24
- IFOAM EU lead TP Organics event “Soil health and global food security: Research & innovation for productive and sustainable agriculture”, April 25
- IPMWORKS European Policy Seminar “Boosting IPM implementation in the EU” at COPA COGECA premises, Biocontrol solutions for plant protection, May 13
- IPM Conference 2024 - Holistic IPM: Reducing Pesticide Use, organised By IPMWORKS & IPM Decisions, Biocontrol session, May 14
- Hosting meeting including Farmer organisations Copa- Cogeca, IFOAM Organics Europe and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Brazil. - What Europe can learn from Brazil, a biocontrol powerhouse, May 30
- Salinas Biologicals Summit (California, USA), Regulatory Panel: June 24-25
- Farming Without Harming: Policy Action for Resilient Agriculture (NGOs Symposium to make the transition between Belgian Presidency and Hungarian Presidency), June 26
- European Commission DG Agri Civil Dialogue Group on International Aspects of Agriculture, Biocontrol and International aspects presentation, October 9

#### **Press Articles, Joint Statements and Political Comments**

- MEP Irène Tolleret, Renew, and other cross-party MEPS, sent a written question to the European Commission on the subject of Biological Pest Control, February 2024 .
- Biocontrol solutions included in Renew Europe Action plan for a sustainable, competitive and fairly rewarded EU agriculture, April 2024 .
- Copa-Cogeca and IBMA – Joint letter to the EU Commission asking to ensure biocontrol solutions are made available to farmers without unnecessary delays, April 25<sup>th</sup> 2024.
- IBMA and IFOAM Organics Europe Call for Policies to Promote the Uptake of Biocontrol, April 25<sup>th</sup> 2024.
- Biocontrol featured in POLITICO Pro Morning Agri and Food, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Politico highlighted the joint asks to speed up the approval of biocontrol solutions and how current EU authorisation process are slowing sector growth. This included the joint statement from Copa-Cogeca and the results of the member survey on biocontrol.
- Subsequent to the SCOPAFF (Standing Committee of Plants and Animals, Food and Feed meeting information that Member States were asked to comment on the placing of a biocontrol definition in the Uniform Principles for the evaluation of Plant Protection Products, Euractiv contacted IBMA and published: EU seeks tweaks to pesticide rules to fast-track sustainable solutions, September 2024.

## Annex 5.1

### IBMA 2025 Budget Proposal and Fee Review

#### Background

The political landscape for biocontrol is increasingly favorable, as evidenced by several recent key political initiatives and documents:

- **Global Initiatives:** The FAO is actively promoting alternatives such as biocontrol and supporting their implementation on farms and within regulatory frameworks.
- **EU Strategic Dialogue:** The EU Strategic Dialogue for the future of Agriculture report is pushing for faster biocontrol authorisations, with a target to accelerate the process by the end of 2025. Additionally, the Mission letter for the Commissioner designate for Health and Animal Welfare (linked to DG Sante) mandates prioritizing this acceleration.
- **Biotech Strategy:** The EU Commission is currently planning to use the Biotech Strategy as a legal vehicle for change for biocontrol. This is expected to be confirmed after the Commissioners' European Parliament hearings are complete, likely by January 2025.

In response to this favorable environment, the IBMA Board, with the support of the Council, has agreed on a range of decisive actions to ensure a clear biocontrol definition and an acceleration of authorisations through legislative proposals over the next 12-24 months. These activities include:

- New regulatory expert to assist the Technical Project Manager in navigating and influencing regulatory changes.
- Recruiting a new advocacy professional to focus on the National Ministries and the Council of Ministers of the EU Member States driving legislation through the Council and facilitating links and common ground between MS for biocontrol.
- Organising events in Parliament jointly with COPA COGECA and other farmer associations.
- Expanding publicity efforts to highlight the benefits of biocontrol in EU media (including paid media)
- Developing evidence-based reports to present to Parliament emphasizing the sustainability benefits of biocontrol.
- Leveraging milestone anniversaries – 30 years of IBMA, 20 years of ABIM and 10 years of the Bernard Blum Award –to enhance communication efforts and celebrate the achievements of the biocontrol industry.

The Finance Committee was briefed on these priorities and expressed support for a clear explanation of current opportunities and requirements to achieve these IBMA actions. It was agreed that this should be the main driver for the 2025 budget.

#### Budget Overview

The primary additional expenses for Budget 2025 are related to the hiring of two new staff members;

- a regulatory expert to support the Technical Project Manager with technical and regulatory matters
- a European policy officer to engage with Member States and the EU Council of Ministers, advancing the biocontrol agenda.

At the same time IBMA's Senior Advocacy and Outreach Manager and the public affairs agency SPA will continue to focus on EU institutions and key stakeholders.

Other additional expenses include increased investment for IBMA's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, an event in Parliament and the development of a new website and member area. These additional costs, amounting to approximately €120,000 Euro, combined with the 2024 deficit bring the required increase in income to € 200,000 Euro in order to reach breakeven by the end of 2025. See table 2 below for further details.

### **Financing Plan**

Sources of funding:

- Membership fees.
- ABIM dividends and recharges.
- Other income including licence fees, Horizon funds and charging for non-member participation in webinars.

### **3-year Financial Strategy**

- 2024 – Deficit covered by reserves to fund essential activities.
- 2025 – Break even by introducing new income streams.
- 2026 – Start to replenish reserves while continuing to build new revenue sources.
- 2027 – Further replenish reserves.

### **Membership Fee Proposal**

To fund activities in 2025 a new fee structure was proposed and discussed during Finance Committee meetings on 20 August and 17 September 2024. Based on simulations with current membership data, this proposal could generate an estimated €250,000 in additional revenue for 2025. The proposed fee increase is based on 4 key elements:

- General increase across all fee categories.
- Splitting the 10-50M fee category to create more specific tiers.
- Introducing a new large active member category for companies with revenues exceeding 250 million Euro.
- Raising fees for larger Associate members in the >2M and > 10M categories.

It was highlighted to the Finance Committee that continuous consolidation in the biocontrol industry (combined with the current provision for free IBMA Global membership of daughter companies) has had a negative impact on potential fee revenue in recent years. While the

introduction of a new large Active member category will help to partially address this issue, the further impact of industry consolidation on fee revenue is considered likely.

The Finance Committee acknowledged the proposed changes in fee structure. Consequences for particular member categories were discussed and certain concerns were expressed. However, the Finance Committee was generally supportive of the four above-mentioned components to update the 2025 fee structure with a view to achieving a budget in financial equilibrium. See Table 1 for the fee proposal for 2025.

**Table 1: 2025 Fee Proposal**

Active Members		
	Current Fees	New fee proposal
<0.5 M€	€1,040	€1,130
0.5 – 1 M€	€1,390	€1,510
1 – 2 M€	€2,080	€2,260
2 – 5 M€	€5,550	€6,030
5 – 10 M€	€8,320	€9,030
10 – 25 M€		€12,040
25 – 50 M€	€11,090	€17,300
50 – 100 M€	€20,790	€22,570
>100 M€	€27,720	€30,090
>250 M€	-	€38,000

Associate Members		
	Current Fees	New Fee Proposal
<1 M€	€770	€840
1 – 2 M€	€1,050	€1,140
2 – 10M€	€1,370	€2,970
>10 M€	€2,630	€5,710
NFP	€390	€420



**Table 2: Summary budget for fee review**

	Budget 2024	LE 2024	Budget 2025	Diff. LE vs 2025	Comment
	€	€	€	€	
<b>Income statement</b>					
<b>I. Operating income</b>	<b>1,320,049</b>	<b>1,294,452</b>	<b>1,512,000</b>		
1. Membership Fees	1,290,049	1,206,000	1,400,000	194,000	Fee increase
2. ABIM Income	-	55,000	60,000		
3. Other Income	30,000	33,452	52,000	18,548	Task Force for technical studies
<b>II. Financial Income</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>22,550</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>-2,550</b>	Interest rate reduction
1. Interest on investments	15,000	13,000	10,000		
2. Dividends	10,000	9,550	10,000		
3. Other	-	-	-		
<b>III. Operating charges</b>	<b>1,462,278</b>	<b>1,407,221</b>	<b>1,524,454</b>	<b>117,233</b>	
1. Staff Secretariat	756,298	739,952	885,574	145,622	2 new hires: 1 x regulatory, 1 x policy officer (MS and EU Council of Ministers)
2. Travel Costs	68,700	74,024	94,860	20,836	Travel of new member of staff for MS; 2 x intercontinental travel - global interest
3. Meetings	14,000	26,049	3,162	-22,887	Savings by meetings held in new offices
4. Marketing & communication	150,600	137,197	163,370	26,173	New work for 30 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of IBMA, new website, member area, event in new EP
5. Advocacy	250,000	236,000	210,000	-26,000	Savings on SPA as MS work completed by new policy staff member
6. Technical & Regulatory	75,680	80,000	20,000	-60,000	Savings as previously outsourced tech work replaced by new reg staff member; technical studies by a member task force approach
7. PGs	-	-	4,216	4,216	
8. Membership & Contributions	24,000	3,000	4,216	1,216	
9. Operations	123,000	111,000	139,056	28,056	New offices where rent is higher
<b>Surplus/Loss</b>	<b>-117,229</b>	<b>-90,219</b>	<b>7,546</b>		

## IBMA Budget 2025

	Jan-Aug YTD	Budget 2024	LE 2024	Budget 2025
	€	€	€	€
<b>Income statement</b>				
<b>I. Operating income</b>	<b>1,217,700</b>	<b>1,320,049</b>	<b>1,294,452</b>	<b>1,512,000</b>
1. Membership Fees	1,214,425	1,290,049	1,206,000	1,400,000
2. ABIM Income	0	0	55,000	60,000
3. Other Income	3,275	30,000	33,452	52,000
<b>II. Financial Income</b>	<b>8,111</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>22,550</b>	<b>20,000</b>
1. Interest on investments	8,111	15,000	13,000	10,000
2. Dividends	-	10,000	9,550	10,000
<b>III. Operating charges</b>	<b>848,081</b>	<b>1,462,278</b>	<b>1,407,221</b>	<b>1,524,454</b>
1. Staff Secretariat	438,122	756,298	739,952	885,574
2. Travel Costs	45,524	68,700	74,024	94,860
3. Meetings	22,049	14,000	26,049	3,162
4. Marketing & communication	56,830	150,600	137,197	163,370
5. Advocacy	165,625	250,000	236,000	210,000
6. Technical & Regulatory	45,430	75,680	80,000	20,000
7. PGs	-	-	-	4,216
8. Membership & Contributions	5,843	24,000	3,000	4,216
9. Operations	68,657	123,000	111,000	139,056
<b>Surplus/Loss</b>		<b>-117,229</b>	<b>-90,219</b>	<b>7,546</b>

## Budget 2025 – Extended version

	Jan-Aug YTD	Budget 2024	LE 2024	Budget 2025
<b>Income statement</b>	€	€	€	€
<b>I. Operating income</b>	<b>1,217,700</b>	<b>1,320,049</b>	<b>1,294,452</b>	<b>1,512,000</b>
1. Membership Fees	1,214,425	1,290,049	1,206,000	1,400,000
2. ABIM Income	0	0	55,000	60,000
3. Other Income	3,275	30,000	33,452	52,000
3.1. Other operating income	-	5,000	5,000	26,000
3.2. Ration	-	25,000	25,000	25,000
3.3. Finance related income	-	0	-	-
3.4. Exchange results	475	0	652	1,000
3.5. Activa Bxl	2,800	0	2,800	-
3.6. Employment allowance	-	0	-	-
<b>II. Financial Income</b>	<b>8,111</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>22,550</b>	<b>20,000</b>
1. Interest on investments	8,111	15,000	13,000	10,000
2. Dividends	-	10,000	9,550	10,000
<b>III. Operating charges</b>	<b>848,081</b>	<b>1,462,278</b>	<b>1,407,221</b>	<b>1,524,454</b>
<b>1. Staff Secretariat</b>	<b>438,122</b>	<b>756,298</b>	<b>739,952</b>	<b>885,574</b>
1.1. Employees	353,478	633,328	597,952	609,440
1.2. Secretariat Consultants	81,940	102,970	137,000	120,000
1.3. Staff related costs	2,704	20,000	5,000	11,440
1.4. New Staff - regulatory project officer	-	-	0	71,894
1.5. New Staff - policy officer	-	-	0	72,800
1.6. New Staff - project manager				
<b>2. Travel Costs</b>	<b>45,524</b>	<b>68,700</b>	<b>74,024</b>	<b>94,860</b>
<b>3. Meetings</b>	<b>22,049</b>	<b>14,000</b>	<b>26,049</b>	<b>3,162</b>
3.1. Board meetings	1,073	1,000	1,073	
3.2. Council meetings	4,817	7,000	6,817	
3.3. General Assemblies	5,404	4,000	5,404	
3.4. National Group Meetings	-	2,000	2,000	
3.5. Other Meetings	10,755		10,755	
<b>4. Marketing &amp; communication</b>	<b>56,830</b>	<b>150,600</b>	<b>137,197</b>	<b>163,370</b>
4.1. Digital Marketing and Social media	33,497	60,000	18,497	12,648
4.2. Membership Directory	2,843	7,000	3,000	3,162
4.3. Publication (1 open access + 1	-	23,000	28,000	10,540

	Jan-Aug YTD	Budget 2024	LE 2024	Budget 2025
evidence report for MEPs)				
4.4. Promotional material for 30 year anniversary	-	1,000	1,000	1,054
4.5. ABIM stand	-	0	4,000	4,216
4.6. Parliamentary event	-	500	500	5,270
4.7. Bernard Blum Award	-	100	100	1,054
4.8. IBMA webinars	890	1,000	2,000	4,216
4.9. Marketing Communications Consultants or Politico 30 yr	19,600	18,000	19,600	10,540
4.10. Industry Survey	-	40,000	36,000	42,160
4.11. Website	-	0	-	21,080
4.12. CRM - member engagement and info sharing platform	-	0	-	15,810
4.13. Field Visit - (annual event)	-	0	24,500	31,620
<b>5. Advocacy</b>	<b>165,625</b>	<b>250,000</b>	<b>236,000</b>	<b>210,000</b>
5.1. SPA	-	240,000		210,000
5.2. EU issue tracker		10,000		0
<b>6. Technical &amp; Regulatory</b>	<b>45,430</b>	<b>75,680</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>
<b>7. PGs</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,216</b>
<b>8. Membership &amp; Contributions</b>	<b>5,843</b>	<b>24,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>4,216</b>
8.1. Memberships		12,000	2,883	
8.2. Contributions		12,000		
<b>9. Operations</b>	<b>68,657</b>	<b>123,000</b>	<b>111,000</b>	<b>139,056</b>
9.1. Rent	14,565	48,000	30,000	58,883
9.2. Accounting	19,825	29,000	33,000	33,728
9.3. Other professional Services	1,338	1,000	2,000	1,054
9.4. Telecoms	2,341	5,000	5,000	6,000
9.5. IT	8,182	10,000	16,000	15,283
9.6. Legal Services	17,427	17,000	17,000	15,000
9.7. Finance related Fees	3,800	8,000	6,000	7,000
9.8. Depreciation	0	0	0	0
9.8. Other Costs	1,179	5,000	2,000	2,108
<b>Surplus/Loss</b>		<b>-117,229</b>	<b>-90,219</b>	<b>7,546</b>



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Jennifer Lewis

[jennifer.lewis@ibma-global.org](mailto:jennifer.lewis@ibma-global.org)



**SENIOR ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH  
MANAGER**

Isabelle Pinzauti Babrzyński

[isabelle.pinzauti@ibma-global.org](mailto:isabelle.pinzauti@ibma-global.org)



**TECHNICAL PROJECT MANAGER**

Jérémy Belzunces

[jeremy.belzunces@ibma-global.org](mailto:jeremy.belzunces@ibma-global.org)



**REGULATORY ADVISER**

Jeroen Meussen

[jeroen.meeussen@ibma-global.org](mailto:jeroen.meeussen@ibma-global.org)



**COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER**

Niamh Holland-Essoh

[niamh.holland@ibma-global.org](mailto:niamh.holland@ibma-global.org)



**PROJECT MANAGER**

Britta Schnittger

[britta.schnittger@ibma-global.org](mailto:britta.schnittger@ibma-global.org)



**OFFICE MANAGER**

Soizick Menais

[soizick.menais@ibma-global.org](mailto:soizick.menais@ibma-global.org)



**IBMA**  
INTERNATIONAL BIOCONTROL  
MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

The future is biocontrol  
[www.ibma-global.org](http://www.ibma-global.org)