

ABIM 2020 — the daily blog

Powered by New Ag International (official media partner) and kindly sponsored by BASF

21 October 2020

Daily round-up

The third, and final day, of ABIM 2020 got off to a lively start with questions flying in on the session “Innovations and emerging technologies for bioprotection”, chaired by **Sylvia Plak** (President IBMA).

Five speakers covered a range of innovations – from an online resource, a new product, new application methods via drones, a decision support tool, and remote monitoring of traps.

Ulrich Kuhlman from **CABI** spoke about the bioprotection portal. When talking to **2BMonthly** in April 2020, Kuhlman said: “In 2016, CABI undertook a research study in six countries across Africa and Asia as part of its global Plantwise programme, which revealed that extension officers have a lack of awareness and knowledge about biocontrol and biopesticide products and their use. Through consultation with CABI member countries, it also became evident that this situation is not uncommon in more developed countries. CABI, therefore, decided to investigate building a tool to enhance the awareness and uptake of biocontrol and biopesticide products among growers and advisors around the world.” The result is CABI’s Bioprotection portal, which can be accessed on CABI’s website. In the interests of fairness, we won’t put links in the blog!

Dr Caroline Reid from **Bioline Agroscience** presented on a new mechanically applied Trichogramma product for use on all crops.

From **Voaline**, a company in Brazil, **Nicole Engels** talked through the company’s range of drones and its services. The company does not manufacture drones, but provides a range of services, such as the application of macro-organisms in capsules. A farmer can program the flight path of the drone before the drone arrives on flight – one important regulation in place in Brazil (and other countries too) is that the drone must be visible at all times to the operator, which is known as the line of sight rule.

Thomas Pressecq from INRA (Avignon, France) outlined a decision support tool (DST) – giving an example of an unheated greenhouse receiving an assessment of a high risk of botrytis. The tool would provide the biocontrol options to the grower, with the various advantages and limits, according to the slide. Prompted by a question after Pressecq’s

presentation, Sylvia Plak emphasised the importance of finding the right tool, at the right moment.

Christina Pilz from **Metos** spoke on the *Remote monitoring of pest insects*. Pilz reminded the audience that monitoring is the first action in pest management. Pilz gave insights on how to optimise the photographic image for species recognition.

Keynote address

The title for this year's Keynote address was: *The role of biocontrol in delivering sustainable development and food system transformation*.

Dr Sally Uren OBE

Dr Uren highlighted how the biocontrol industry was already making a significant contribution to sustainability by, for example, promoting biodiversity, promoting quality nutritious food production, minimising freshwater consumption, and urged the biocontrol industry put more back into the environment and society than it takes out with shared goals on productive, viable, and profitable food safety.

Questions from the floor, included: "If you were sitting in our industry, what would be your first step?" Uren answered that in many ways the industry should carry on doing what is doing, while encouraging it to learn from other industries.

A number of case studies were also presented during the session that reflected current pest control issues in the world, such as Fall Army Worm (FAW) and locust outbreaks.

Closing remarks - the wrap-up

A number of firsts – obviously, the first virtual event. First joint winners of the Bernard Blum award. The first speaker the Forum for the Future in the keynote speaker Dr Sally Uren, and the first time for a speaker from PMRA the Canadian Regulatory Agency.

Here are the conference stats:

Delegates registered: 500

Companies or organisations represented: 232

Countries represented: 30

Bernard Blum award

We caught up with Prof. Dr. Ralf-Udo Ehlers from e-nema and asked him for his reaction to the company becoming a recipient of the Bernard Blum Award 2020 (jointly with Biobest):

"The award is a recognition of our six years breeding programme, many years of field work and a continuous scaling-up of production capacity at e-nema. dianem® is another milestone for biocontrol targeting arable crops. The award will support our efforts to translate the biocontrol technology into agricultural practice," Prof Ehlers told the ABIM blog.

Biobest's new addition to its aphid control strategy - Eupeodes-System – was the other joint winner of this year's Bernard Blum Award.

“A naturally occurring hoverfly, Eupeodes corollae is indigenous throughout Europe and further afield,” according to R&D Senior Scientist Apostolos Pekas – Biobest's Team Leader for Beneficials in Belgium. *“While the larvae are voracious aphid predators, Biobest has shown the adults simultaneously aid crop pollination — making it the first proven case of a beneficial insect providing two ecosystem services. This puts Eupeodes-System in a category of its own,”* said Biobest in its statement acknowledging the award.

Panel discussions from yesterday

Ulf Heilig (IBMA regulatory affairs director) chaired a workshop on IUCLID and its use in biocontrol regulation.

Just to give you the background:

If you go to the OECD website, this is what it says:

“IUCLID is a software application designed to record, store, maintain and exchange data on the intrinsic and hazard properties of chemical substances or mixtures, as well as the uses of these substances and the associated exposure levels. It is a key software application for both regulatory bodies and the chemical industry where it is used in the implementation of various regulatory programmes. Its principal function is to capture and make available data on chemicals, in a structured and harmonised way.”

Who is involved? European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)

Again, from the OECD website: *ECHA develops and maintains the IUCLID software and the underlying format in collaboration with the OECD. This collaboration allows the management of the IUCLID format with the aim to reach, to the extent possible, harmonisation of the way data on chemicals are collected and exchanged in regulatory settings. The current version is IUCLID 6. ECHA distributes IUCLID free of charge.*

Marc Teiwes, (BASF): Talked through IUCLID key drivers and its implementation steps: The EU Commission is aiming to implement IUCLID by next year in 2021.

Christin Cramm and Katarzyna Bucior (Knoell) presented on the Knoell/EFSA project and its proof of concept pesticides dossier in IUCLID format.

Adi Cornolese (APIS) and Willemien Wieland (CRC): Complemented both previous talks by going through the practical considerations using IUCLID for microbials.

Questions that followed to the above talks included: What about transition period and delay? There is no transition period for IUCLID the audience learned. The industry proposed a template for UCLID to start in 2022 instead of 2021; this proposal was reportedly not accepted by the Commission.

ABIM 2021?

The ABIM executive committee are currently anticipating a return to the face-to-face format for 2021.

ABIM 2021 will run 18-20 October 2021 at the Congress Center Basel in Basel, Switzerland.

And finally, the thank-you board

Maggie Rodriguez, Senior Regulatory Affairs Manager, **Marrone Bio Innovations**

“This event was organized very well and in the absence of live interaction, having virtual avatars allows for an opportunity to network and interact with other attendees.”

Thank you for all your contributions. Look forward to seeing you all next year at ABIM 2021.



Meet the BASF team: Pavillion 2, booth number 2