

# IBMA: Challenges and Opportunities

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# What does political science say about the political agenda?

- The political agenda can only deal with so many issues at one time
- There are cyclical fluctuations in attention
- How an issue is 'framed' is important – the language that is used to label topics – 'hurrah' and 'boo' words

# The changing nature of the policy agenda

- Emphasis placed on expertise and evidence
- Yet rise of single issue interest groups has led to a more emotive form of politics
- 24 hour media has a key role here
- A good case is not enough

# Biocontrol: some challenges

- The language – differentiating biologicals from synthetics
- Lack of public profile
- Generally unsympathetic attitude of environmental groups
- SMEs have limited resources to devote to representation

# Biocontrol: some positives

- Fact that they are largely produced by SMEs is helpful
- Profile in policy-making circles is increasing
- Academic research has focused on registration problems
- Opportunities provided by restrictions of synthetics

# Development of IBMA

- Continuing progress in organisational development
- Appointment of executive director from 2010
- Language contained in EU package (sensitisation issue and also potential for a new regulation to be developed for biopesticides)

# Why firms need to devote some time to representation

- Very constrained in time available because of product development, registration, marketing etc.
- But if you take part you have to chance to shape what happens rather than having something unpleasant imposed on you
- We live in the 'Regulatory State'

# Implications of the Regulatory State

- The pressure for greater regulation is not going to go away
- There are many societal drivers of that including attitudes to risk
- Tendency for process to displace goals in regulatory agencies
- Need to foster innovation (Greaves)



# How to lobby (in Europe)

- Be clear about your objectives – and their priority ordering
- Have objectives that are realistic and feasible
- Ensure that your message can be communicated in an interesting way to a wider audience

# How to lobby in Europe (nationally)

- It is helpful to have member states and their representatives pushing your cause – helped by formation of new IBMA national groups
- Do not overlook Perm Rep

# How to lobby in Europe (the Commission)

- What does the Commission want?
- Easily digestible information
- Legitimacy through consultation
- Bodies to interact with that realise that what is achievable and what is not
- A negative example is the REBECA demand to transfer resources from the CAP

# How to lobby the Parliament

- One is dealing with politicians
- They have limited attention span and many demands on their time
- They have career ambitions
- They have ideologies
- (Usually) they are not scientists

# Identify sympathetic MEPs

- Interests – are they interested in sustainability and environmentally friendly solutions?
- Are they interested in small hi tech firms?
- Is there a biorational products firm in their constituency?

# Comment by a British MP

- ‘Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand.’
- Also relevant at EU level

# Conclusions

- Have confidence in your message
- Biorational products can contribute to the economic and environmental sustainability of food production
- The European Union level is likely to become more important to their future
- Niche actors need to build coalitions