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THE 24TH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF INSECT SCIENTISTS (AAIS) CONFERENCE

The 24th AAIS Conference was hosted by the Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, from 21-25 March 2022 under the theme of “*Migratory Pests and Invasive Species: Early Warning System, Monitoring, Control and their Impact on Food Security, Environment and Livelihoods during COVID-19 pandemic*”. The conference was conducted both face-to-face and virtually (hybrid), and was attended by over 280 participants from more than 50 African countries, Europe and America. During the conference, 212 oral presentations, 50 virtual and 20 poster presentations were made, while 5 different commercial bio-pesticides from the International Center for Insect Physiology and Ecology *icipe* and the private sector were displayed in the booths.



Sub-themes included:

- Desert Locusts: Monitoring Surveillance and Control
- Invasive species in Africa: Monitoring Surveillance and Control
- Commercial and Edible insects for improved livelihood
- Impacts of climate change on insects in Africa: opportunities and threats
- Insect biodiversity and Taxonomy
- Biological control for a sustainable environment and food security in Africa
- Beneficial insects (bees, silk) in pollination and sustainable livelihoods in Africa
- Human Health including Medical entomology and Public Health
- Veterinary Entomology: Study of animal diseases and acarology
- Socio-economic impact of insects on food security and livelihood
- Technology Transfer and Capacity Building
- Regional Policies on the production of safe food

AAIS was founded on December 1, 1978, with the mission to promote Insect Science and its

application in Africa. AAIS continues to enhance communication amongst African entomologists through sharing knowledge resources; organize conferences in an African country once every two years; promote the science of entomology in graduate programs and advancement of careers related to entomology; notify entomologists of current fellowships, scholarships and any other useful information to early career scientists; and organize international symposiums on biological control of arthropods.

Dr. Tadele Tefera

IAPPS Coordinator Region V: East Africa

E-mail: t.tefera@icipe.org

IBMA HOSTS ONLINE EVENT ‘UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF BIOCONTROL’

The International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association IBMA, the voice of the biological control sector, had the pleasure to co-host on March 29 an enriching online event entitled “Unlocking the Potential of Biocontrol” together with IEEP, the Institute for European Environmental Policy and IBMA France. Discussions looked into facilitating a widespread use of biocontrol, essential to achieving the EU Green Deal’s objectives for nature, climate and sustainable food systems. The debate offered in-depth insights on barriers to biocontrol that are slowing down its adoption and the role of EU policy instruments to unlock the agroecological transition.

As shown by the current crisis, the resilience of the food system requires a fundamental re-orientation of EU agriculture towards more sustainable practices and a reduction of dependence on inputs, including pesticides. The Biodiversity and the Farm to Fork strategies have paved the way to these changes, but to reach the targets of reduced pesticides use and increased organic farming, farmers need effective and easy-to-access solutions. Even though the reform of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive was postponed last week, it is the right time to boost the uptake of alternatives to chemical pesticides, such as biocontrol, and enable farmers to access them easily and without further delays.

As highlighted by IBMA Executive Director Jennifer Lewis: “A harmonised definition of biocontrol and a positive target are the first much-needed steps in this direction since they will bring regulatory clarity and pave the way for simplified approval procedure. A 75% target by 2030 for biocontrol use is the right level of ambition to underpin a successful transition towards agroecological farming, while reducing concerns over risks to food security.”

Furthermore, co-organizer IEEP External Impact Director Faustine Bas- Defosse underlined: “The Green Deal is our unique compass today and even more so in these highly turbulent times. Biocontrol is a key enabler for the European Green Deal implementation and in particular Farm to Fork”. The value of biocontrol has been recognized by the European Commission in its Communication on Safeguarding food security and reinforcing the resilience of food security and its indication to come up with new rules to facilitate placing on the market of plant protection products containing biological active substances.

As declared by European Commission, DG Santé, Health and food audits and analysis Director Ms Maria Pilar Aguar Fernandez on their ambition for biocontrol to enable agri-system change “For the European Commission, the aim is to make chemical and hazardous pesticides the last resort option. The availability on the market of biological controls is a critical element, and we rely on the industry to develop new and safer products to meet the challenge of pest resistance. We are willing to play our part.”

The sector is ready to play its part too, providing farmers with the necessary tools to secure production, ecosystems and long-term food security. IBMA hopes the reform of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive will be published before the Summer, as anticipated by the Commission, so that all stakeholders can work together for a successful transition towards agroecological farming.

Dr. Roma Gwynn

IAPPS Biopesticide Industry Representative

Director of BioRationale

E-mail: rgwynn@biorationale.co.uk

22ND MEETING OF THE EPPO PANEL ON GENERAL STANDARDS ON EFFICACY EVALUATION

The 22nd meeting of the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) Panel on General Standards on Efficacy Evaluation took place by teleconference on March 9-11 2022. The Panel continued its work on the preparation of General Standards on efficacy evaluation. The meeting focused on development of new General Standards and discussion on the yield requirements in EPPO Standards.

The Panel worked to develop new PP1 *General Standards* on the following topics:

- Principles of extrapolation in major uses. The Standard will describe the general principles to be considered in making extrapolations for major uses, as well as how to reduce the need for trial data, while maintaining appropriate robust data sets.
- Resistance monitoring. The Panel agreed to first work on a general Standard describing how to perform monitoring of the sensitivity of pests to plant protection products. Once this Standard has been finalized, more specific Standards describing monitoring of pest sensitivity in particular crops may be developed.

The Panel agreed to work further on these Standards and discuss new versions during its meeting next year.

The Panel discussed *Yield Requirements* in EPPO Standards based on the previous work of the Panel on Efficacy Evaluation of Fungicides and Insecticides. Development of a General Standard focused on yield requirements in efficacy evaluation of plant protection products may be considered in the future.

The Panel was updated concerning the activities of the three *Expert Working Groups* working under its guidance: the EWG on plant protection product Resistance, the EWG on Harmonization of data for plant protection products and the EWG to develop an Extrapolation database. The

Panel appreciated the effort of these EWGs, noting in particular the launch of the [EPPO Resistance database](#).

The Panel acknowledged improvements of the tool for conversion of different dose expressions. The tool is intended to support users of the Standard [PP 1/239 Dose expression for plant protection products](#). The Panel recommended making the tool available on the [EPPO website](#).

Possible EPPO work on integrated pest management (IPM) was discussed. A group of Panel experts agreed to continue work on the topic of plant protection products with low and variable efficacy. The discussion will continue next year.

Dr. Roma Gwynn

IAPPS Biopesticide Industry Representative

Director of BioRationale

E-mail: rgwynn@biorationale.co.uk

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IAPPS Mission: to provide a global forum for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, integrating, and promoting plant protection concepts, technologies, and policies that are economically, environmentally, and socially acceptable.

It seeks to provide a global umbrella for the plant protection sciences to facilitate and promote the application of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to the world's crop and forest ecosystems.

Membership Information: IAPPS has four classes of membership (individual, affiliate, associate, and corporate) which are described in the IAPPS Web Site www.plantprotection.org.

The *IAPPS Newsletter* welcomes news, letters, and other items of interest from individuals and organizations. Address correspondence and information to:

**Manuele Tamò
Editor, IAPPS Newsletter
IITA-Benin
08 B.P. 0932 Tri Postal, Cotonou, Republic of Benin
E-mail: m.tamo@cgiar.org**