Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

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MEETING DOCUMENT

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Working Party on Food and Food Systems (Pesticide Residues) Working Party on Plants and Plant Health Questions (Pesticides/Plant Protection Products)
Subject:	Working Party on Plants and Plant Health Questions (Pesticides/Plant Protection Products) on 7 December 2022 - Agenda item 1: Invertebrate Biological Control Agents (IBCAs)

Following the Working Party on Plants and Plant Health Questions (Pesticides/Plant Protection Products) on 7 December 2022, delegations will find in annex the presentation given by the Commission services, on the above subject.

Invertebrate Biological Control Agents (IBCAs)

7 December 2022

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DG Health and Food Safety

Plant Health

Study background

- Initiative of the Portuguese Council Presidency, first semester 2021
- Subject: Invertebrate biological control agents (IBCAs) used to protect plants, including sterile insect technique (SIT)
- Scope: Introduction, evaluation, production, marketing and use
- Request: Describe the situation and identify options for improving it
- Focus on options related to harmonisation (of criteria, procedures and decision-making)
- At the same time, the safety of humans, animals, plants, the environment and food security must be ensured
- Request under Art. 241 TFEU from Council to the Commission to submit a study; deadline: 31 December 2022
- Council Decision (EU) 2021/1102 of 28 June 2021

Data collection

TYPE OF STAKEHOLDERS	SURVEYS	INTERVIEWS
27 Member State National Competent Authorities, e.g. contact points identified within each national authority in charge of IBCA in their respective country.	√ Additional and complementary questions were asked in the form of interviews and emails	Interviews were led with Belgium (Brussels region), Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden
Intergovernmental organisations: IPPC / EPPO, IAEA-FAO, CABI	√ EPPO	√ EPPO, IAEA-FAO, CABI Europe
Industry associations: IBMA, Crop Life Europe	√ IBMA	√ IBMA
Farmers', forestry and home gardener's associations: COPA COGECA, IFOAM, and EUSTAFOR	All stakeholders opted for interviews	√ COPA-COGECA, EUSTAFOR
Civil Society Organisations: EEB, IUCN and PAN		√ PAN Europe
Scientific organisations: EFSA, IOBC-WPRS	√ IOBC-WPRS	√ EFSA
National competent authorities from New Zealand and the USA	√ New Zealand, the USA	√ New Zealand, the USA

- The Commission was supported by an external consultant in collecting the necessary data
- Beside desk research, a thorough stakeholder consultation was carried out

Types of IBCA use considered

Classical Biocontrol

- Non-native species
- Establish population
- Mainly used against exotic pests

Augmentative Biocontrol

- Native or non-native species
- Periodic release

Sterile Insect Technique (SIT)

- Release of sterilised males of the targeted pest

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An alternative to pesticides?!

- IBCAs successfully control animal pests (insect, mites, snails)
- They also control unwanted plants in specific situations
- A potential being explored: many microarthropods consume fungi
- IBCAs are biological systems; application and mode of action differ from chemical pesticides
- Replacing one pesticide by one IBCA will usually not work
- IBCAs may serve as a backbone in integrated pest control systems

A sneak peek…

- IBCA have a modest market share, growing strongly
- Use of IBCAs is well-established in protected and in high value crops (e.g. orchards, vineyards, vegetables)
- Use of IBCAs is not restricted to organic agriculture
- Differences in the regulatory approach between MS are considerable; they are described in the study
- Classical and augmentative biological control as well as SIT deserve specific approaches
- The study will be submitted to Council as a Commission staff working document
- It is under finalisation
- The contractor‘s report will be published through the EU Bookshop and annexed to the Commission staff working document

Thank you for your attention

European Commission