Meeting with IBMA – 18/01/2023

- European Commission: Giorgos Rossides, Roberto Reig Rodrigo, [redacted],
- IBMA: [redacted], [redacted]

The Commission outlined the key provisions of the SUR, how biocontrol can promote its key objectives and the recent progress in the interinstitutional negotiations.

IBMA welcomes SUR, in particular its definition on biocontrol and the possible positive indicative targets at MS level.

Meetings with DG SANTE on biocontrol and SUR. IBMA working with its members to gather information on the pipeline for new biocontrol products becoming available as alternatives to chemical pesticides. IBMA aims to share this information with DG SANTE by mid/end-February.

IBMA considers the current regulatory process to be too slow to bring biocontrol products to the market. It argues in favour of 1) Provisional authorisation, 2) Label extensions, 3) Unlimited timescale of registrations.

IBMA explained that in the US it takes 2-3 years to reach the market. Some companies are not even coming to the EU due to the long regulatory pathway. For example, a provisional authorisation could work on a temporary basis once an RMS opinion is ready and if the product could cover a specific need considering their average “lower” risk profile. Label extensions without additional information could be a useful approach to be considered (e.g. extend to whole crop groups).

The Commission explained the importance of providing clear and robust evidence on the successful use of biocontrol products and the upcoming products. Promoting alternatives to
chemical pesticides is key, regulatory changes could be envisaged if evidence shows there is a need to adapt existing rules.

IBMA enquired about farmer incentives to use biocontrol/IPM practices. The Commission explained the CAP process and the derogation to access CAP funding introduced in the SUR proposal.

IBMA confirmed that the possibility to introduce positive targets on biocontrol was welcome.

IBMA undertook to provide examples of ‘success stories’ of farmers successfully converting to biocontrol. They also explained the work they were doing in engagement with MEPS and Member State authorities which was encouraged.