

Copa-Cogeca – IBMA

# Roadmap 2025-2030

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# Introduction

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The future of **sustainable agriculture** and **plant protection** in the EU should be built on **adapting to farms' realities, targeted research, and accelerating the adoption of biocontrol and other innovative plant protection tools**. The goal is to **enhance farmers' toolboxes** by ensuring **effective, sustainable pest control solutions** are readily available. Achieving this will require **clear regulatory frameworks, efficient approval processes, robust training, and targeted financial support**.

This document outlines key priorities and actions that will enable **biocontrol plant protection products (PPPs) to be better integrated into Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in all agricultural systems** in the coming 5 years, offering farmers more sustainable and effective crop protection options.



# 1

## Establish a clear and harmonised definition of biocontrol PPPs at EU level

A robust and harmonized definition of biocontrol plant protection products (PPPs) at the EU level is essential for ensuring regulatory clarity and consistency across Member States.

This would provide a clear framework for identifying these products, facilitating their approval, and ensuring their appropriate treatment under Regulation 1107/2009. A well-defined category will help stakeholders, including regulators, farmers, and industry, to navigate the approval and market access process more efficiently.

By adopting a clear EU-wide definition, the approval and use of biocontrol PPPs can be made more efficient, supporting sustainable agriculture across the EU. Besides, this will facilitate the inclusion of biocontrol in plant protection schemes, supporting its integration into farmers' tool-boxes alongside other pest management tools.

### Key Actions

- **Defining Biocontrol at the EU Level:**
  - Establish an official and harmonized definition of biocontrol PPPs within an EU legislative instrument.
  - Ensure the definition differentiates biocontrol from conventional chemical PPPs to enable tailored regulatory treatment.
- **Facilitating Regulatory Adaptation:**
  - Modify and amend the regulatory framework under Regulation 1107/2009 to reflect the new definition.
- **Supporting Implementation and Awareness:**
  - Engage with stakeholders (regulators, industry, and farmers) to facilitate understanding and compliance with the new definition.



# 2 Ensure efficient and transparent approval of low-risk and biocontrol PPPs

Clear, transparent, and accelerated approval procedures are essential for **ensuring biocontrol tools are available quickly** and integrated into IPM. Farmers need rapid access to more biocontrol solutions to enhance their pest control options and manage crops effectively.

The fastest route is through targeted amendments to Regulation 1107/2009 via any immediate legislative initiatives such as the BioTech Act. Providing Regulatory certainty is crucial for the biocontrol industry, as well as for agricultural and forestry producers and cooperatives.

## Key Actions

### A. Urgent regulatory improvements to be initiated in 2025<sup>1</sup>:

- Introduce targeted amendments to Regulation 1107/2009 to facilitate the approval of biocontrol PPPs. These should include:
  - Re-instatement of Article 30 to allow provisional authorisation of biocontrol PPPs.
  - Rationalise and simplify the risk-based assessment system for the authorisation of active substances for plant protection products, including low-risk and biocontrol tools, while maintaining the existing high level of food safety and ensuring the efficiency and availability of these tools to the market in a short timeframe.
  - To promote access to sustainable plant protection products and ensure farmers have a complete range of options, including biocontrol and low-risk conventional products, the renewal process should allow unlimited approval after the first renewal. This lets authorities focus on evaluating new substances and products while keeping safety standards strong. Facilitate the expansion of the uses of existing products registered in speciality crops into other agricultural productions, including arable crops.

### B. Strengthening the European Single Market for crop protection:

- Develop a dedicated regulatory framework with a one-step, streamlined authorisation process (1.5–2 years) for new active substances.
- Implement a faster approval procedure for biocontrol PPPs based on active substances already approved in the EU.

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission's "Vision for Agriculture and Food: Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations", February 2025

# 3

## Enhance EU-Wide Mutual Recognition and Prioritization of Biocontrol Solutions

A more efficient and pragmatic approach to EU-wide mutual recognition is crucial to accelerating the availability of biocontrol and low-risk plant protection products (PPPs). Regulation 1107/2009 already allows for mutual recognition between Member States, offering a rapid solution where farmers struggle to find alternatives as chemical options are phased out. These measures require no regulatory changes and can be implemented immediately at the Member State level. Mutual recognition offers a **rapid route for further integrating biocontrol into farmers' crop protection systems**.

### Key Actions

#### A. Prioritization of Biocontrol and Low-Risk Substances:

- Establish priority lanes for the approval of biocontrol and low-risk PPPs.
- Prioritise biocontrol solutions where emergency authorisations are needed
- Enforce streamlined label expansion by allowing modifications during the renewal process of biocontrol and low-risk PPPs.

#### B. Strengthening mutual recognition:

- Improve implementation of Regulation 1107/2009 by ensuring consistent and transparent mutual recognition of PPPs, including biocontrol.
- Facilitate mutual recognition processes for companies and third parties (e.g., farmer groups) to accelerate market access.

#### C. Supporting implementation:

- Develop a country-specific list of authorization opportunities for pest and disease control for key crops.
- Communicate the economic value of key crops by country to highlight the benefits of mutual recognition
- Engage with Member States to identify and implement mutual recognition opportunities where there is interest.

# 4 Strengthen resources and expertise for biocontrol

To accelerate the availability and effective use of biocontrol plant protection products (PPPs) into IPM, it is essential to enhance dedicated resources and expertise across all relevant stakeholders. This includes ensuring that all competent authorities at EFSA and Member State level have the necessary training to evaluate biocontrol products effectively.

Additionally, knowledge transfer and training must be expanded to farmers, researchers, applicants and advisors to optimise the implementation and use of biocontrol solutions. Investing in these resources will be key to fostering a more efficient and science-based regulatory environment for biocontrol, both now and in the future.

By strengthening expertise, knowledge sharing, and institutional support, the EU can ensure a faster, more effective transition toward sustainable crop protection solutions.

## Key Actions

### Building Expertise and Capacity:

- Train competent authorities at EFSA and MS levels to ensure a deep understanding of biocontrol product evaluation.
- Ensure sufficient resources and dedicated expertise to assess biological plant protection products efficiently.

### Enhancing Knowledge Transfer and Training:

- Organize annual joint workshops to provide knowledge transfer and guidance to farmers and advisors on the effective use of biocontrol.
- Facilitate structured knowledge exchange between researchers, applicants, and regulatory bodies to improve biocontrol implementation.

### Securing Financial and Institutional Support:

- Collaborate to secure funding for knowledge transfer initiatives.
- Develop long-term capacity-building programs to sustain expertise in biocontrol at all levels.

# 5

## Support the uptake of biocontrol tools by farmers through financial incentives

To encourage farmers to adopt biocontrol solutions and precision farming, targeted financial incentives and knowledge-sharing initiatives should be leveraged within existing funding frameworks including those outside the CAP. EIP-AGRI and EU CAP Network grants should be utilized to fund farmer-led projects, demonstration activities, and advisory services.

By combining financial incentives with knowledge-sharing initiatives, farmers will have both the resources and expertise needed to further apply IPM while combining the use of biocontrol and low-risk tools with conventional products.

### Key Actions

- **Provide targeted financial incentives** at the national level (e.g., through eco-schemes or rural development programs) to support farmers adopting biocontrol solutions and precision farming.
- **Leverage EIP-AGRI and EU CAP Network grants** to fund farmer networks, demonstration projects, and knowledge-sharing initiatives.
- **Encourage national initiatives** that combine financial and technical support, making biocontrol adoption more accessible and practical for farmers.



**Paula de Vera**

Senior Policy Advisor

Plant Health // Animal Health & Welfare

**Copa and Cogeca**

Rue de Trèves 61, 1040 Brussels

Landline +32 (0) 2 287 27 45

Mobile +32 (0) 478 18 99 06

paula.devera@copa-cogeca.eu

www.copa-cogeca.eu

**Isabelle Pinzauti Babrzyński**

Senior Advocacy and Outreach Manager

**IBMA Global**

(International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association) AISBL

Square de Meeûs 35, 1000 Bruxelles

Mobile + 32 (0)497 69 58 42

isabelle.pinzauti@ibma-global.org

www.ibma-global.org

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