IOBC-O-5. THE ROLE OF BIOPROSPECTION FOR PEST CONTROL: THE CASE OF MICROORGANISMS

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Latinamerican countries have important actions regarding biocontrol programs against agricultural pests. Some effective and practical examples, like the baculovirus program for control of *Anticarsia gemmatilis* in Brazil and the program for local production (CREEs) developed in Cuba, are well known and have been used since the seventies' past century. Even though there are many areas that still need attention and research development in order to have even more effective agents for biocontrol purposes, like screening, mode of action and quality control, to name a few. The effort in bioprospecting for new microorganisms and or their metabolites is the focus of our discussion. Its importance is expressed, for instance, in one Brazilian initiative (Biota), which includes not only discovering, mapping and analyzing the origins, diversity and distribution of the flora and fauna of the State of São Paulo, but also evaluating the possibilities of sustainable exploitation of plants, microorganisms or animals with economic potential. This kind of research' funds initiative is mainly important when it is considered the climate changes that will require in the very new future, greater vigilance for changes in the populations of insects and new diseases epidemics. Examples like this, from Brazil and Cuba will be presented and will include other examples in the search for active compounds of importance for other agricultural and human application. Latinamerican countries, with their preserved areas and their biodiversity must recognize that they are important players and that they have an active role in the search for new environmentally-friend products.

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