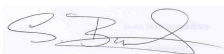


## Forword

Dear colleagues,

This fourth issue will introduce you to a new project OPERA is involved in and will give you some background and outcomes of various conferences, and workshops attended or partly organised by OPERA. If you have any comments or would like to share your point of view with us please email us [info@opera-indicators.eu](mailto:info@opera-indicators.eu)

Regards



## What is the BROWSE Project?

**(Bystanders, Residents, Operators and WorkerS Exposure models for plant protection products )**



BROWSE is a multi-institutional project between eight different institutions funded by European Commission under the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme and will commence its work in January 2011.

***Its main objective is to improve the assessment of risks to operators, workers, residents and bystanders by delivering new and improved models of exposure, thus improving the basis for targeting of risk reduction policy***

Evaluation and Authorisation Authorities for Plant Protection products in EU are daily confronted with exposure models for operator, bystander and worker. The exposure models currently applied were developed many years ago and need urgent updates and refinements, due to

- bad quality of data (e.g. sometimes too old)
- Data gaps
- Non-validated ways if parameter normalisation
- Not sufficient exposure routes

At present, there is no harmonised approach to pesticide exposure assessment and in some cases (e.g. operator) there are several models which give somewhat different estimates for the same scenario. Additionally, no well-standardised methods are available to assess the exposures of bystanders and residents and different Member States follow different approaches. Thus the models don't incorporate regional, social and gender differences in activities and exposure.

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Improved indicators enabling better informed decisions on future implementation and adjustments to risk reduction policy and strategies (contribution to implementation of Sustainable Use Directive 2009/128/EC) concerning:

- National Action Plan (art.4).
- Training (art.5)
- Information and awareness (art. 7)
- Reduction of PPPs or risks (art.12)
- Handling and Storage (art. 13)
- Integrated Pesticide Management (art. 14)
- Indicators (art. 15).

## OPERA'S ROLE IN BROWSE

***OPERA will contribute significantly to stakeholder surveys, the development of risk indicators and the development of communication material. I***

In particular this will entail:

- Using improved exposure models developed in BROWSE as the basis for developing new and improved risk indicators for operators, workers, residents and bystanders (subject to consultation with EC and other relevant parties);
- Undertaking additional tasks contributing to the development of harmonised indicators at EU level, e.g., implementing new indicators from BROWSE as software compatible with other EU harmonised indicators, contributing to harmonisation of supporting databases, etc (subject to consultation with EC and other relevant parties).
- Ensuring that IPM practices (e.g., worker activities in crops) are taken into account when defining scenarios for exposure modelling (*responsible: UCSC, WP6*).
- Using the new exposure models produced by BROWSE to develop new types of training and awareness-raising material . This will contribute to improved training of operators and awareness of workers and public, and hence to improved practices and reduced risks (*responsible: UCSC, WP6*);
- Taking account of gender differences when developing communication materials for training and awareness raising
- Cooperating with key actors and networks in the delivery of training and awareness raising (e.g., EC, National Action Plans, ECPA and TOPPS) to disseminate materials produced by BROWSE to the target audiences.

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***BROWSE's main objective is to improve the assessment of risks to operators, workers, residents and bystanders by delivering new and improved models of exposure, thus improving the basis for targeting of risk reduction policy***

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OPERA through its network in all 27 Member States will lead the dissemination of training and communication materials and risk indicators developed in support of the Sustainable Use Directive. The information will be disseminated to the EU and national authorities responsible for implementation of the Directive, to be further distributed by those authorities in execution of training and communication initiatives in their National Action Plan and via the agencies established for training in each MS. They will also be disseminated via the established training initiatives of ECPA and networks of trades unions and NGOs.

## OTHER NEWS ON OPERA

### REPORT ON 3<sup>RD</sup> EUROPEAN BIOBED WORKSHOP

#### **31.08.-01.09.2010 in Piacenza**

The 2nd European Biobed workshop was jointly organized by the Università Cattolica Del Sacre Cuore (UCSC), Ghent University and Bayer Crop Science. The main aim of the Workshop was to bring together scientists, industry and policy makers working in the field of biopurification systems (BPS), providing them the opportunity to share and discuss the latest scientific results, views and developments.

3rd European Biobed Workshop  
August 31<sup>st</sup> – September 1<sup>st</sup> in Piacenza



The workshop was opened by **Prof. Ettore Capri from UCSC** and **Jens Husby from Bayer Crop Science**. They welcomed 47 participants from 15 countries. The workshop was divided into four sessions spread over two days. The sessions covered the following topics:

- *Degradation of pesticides in BPS*
- *Composition of the biomix*
- *Efficiency of the system and its use in practice*
- *Approved systems/ Construction and dimensions of the system*

After the oral presentations, a final discussion was held with all participants. This discussion was expanded by sending a questionnaire with remarks and questions on views, concerns and perspectives on the use of biopurification systems.

The following summary from this questionnaire was made:

- The majority of the participants preferred to keep the workshop as it is and not to expand it to a conference
- The biopurification system should be considered as a preventive measure of groundwater contamination, however, farmers should prevent bringing contaminated water to the farm
- The biopurification system should be made accessible for the National Action Plan by intensifying communication with the national authorities, by setting up general advices in a brochure
- The main routes on processing the waste material are composting and/or spreading on the field and re-use part of the biomixture. However, further research is necessary on the risk associated with these practices

Gaps in the research on biopurification systems are:

- the formation of metabolites in the system
- fate of mobile pesticides
- behavior of pesticides for high chemical and hydraulic load

The final discussion document as well as all presentation can be downloaded at <http://www.opera-indicators.eu/eng/guests-area/BEST-AGRICULTURAL-PRACTICE.html>

# REPORT ON GRIFA COLLOQUIUM 'SUSTAINABLE USE OF PESTICIDE DIRECTIVE: IMPACT; OPPORTUNITY & PROBLEMS



## **05.09.-10.09.2010 in Matera**

During the Summer School GRIFA 2010 a seminar was organised in order to continue OPERA's vision to stimulate debates on some topics related to SUD. This time the debate was mainly between the scientific community (compare debate during SUD meeting in Brussels). A comparison of results from interactive questionnaires during the two events regarding implementation of SUD is published on our webpage (see link below)

The congress was opened by two presentations from Dott. Tiziano Galassi (responsible of the Plant Protection Service of Emilia-Romagna Region) and by Prof. Ettore Capri (Director of OPERA Research Centre)

**Dott. Tiziano Galassi** gave some insight on the issues around the implementation of the Italian National Action Plan. Among other things he suggested two levels of implementation: (1) a compulsory level, implementing basic IPM criteria, which has to be adopted by all farmers and (2) a voluntary level allows each country to draft national or regional guidelines for integrated production and their promotion through education programs.

The second presentation by **Professor Ettore Capri** suggested that the term sustainability still need to be defined in order to implement SUD. He brought to mind that sustainability has to be seen as the sum of the interactions between three pillars (economy, social and environmental) that need to gain the same importance and priority. Furthermore he put forward the main objectives and the critical parts Members States need to focus on during the transposition process. Finally,



he briefly introduced some ideas and examples to reduce the risk deriving from the application of Plant Protection Products and to improve the quality of the ecosystem like field margins, biofilters, wetlands, application technologies, Integrated Pest Management, indicators.

The entire report can be downloaded at <http://www.opera-indicators.eu/eng/guests-area/Up-to-date-document-produced-by-OPERA/Opera-documents-on-Sustainable-Use-Directive.html>

# REPORT ON ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION REFLECTED IN CAP

## ***17.09.2010 in Madrid***

The conference in Madrid has brought together numerous stakeholders in the agricultural and related sectors together with administration officials from the relevant authorities in Spain.

Presentations covered the economic situation of European agriculture and its prospects, efforts by European Commission to reduce administrative burden and examples of policies to promote innovation and modern administrative management of the regulatory aspects on agriculture from Denmark, Austria and France.



Opera had the opportunity to present its ideas and arguments on the need to ensure competitiveness of agriculture through the promotion of a European model for a sustainable intensive agriculture. This model would reply to the present and future needs of the society to produce more food, feed and fiber with less resource and in a sustainable way.

Some arguments were:

- European producers have to comply with an important number of production standards,
- producers outside Europe afford to avoid supplementary costs on the expense of environment and biodiversity, food safety, animal welfare and unsustainable use of natural resources,
- in 2007/2008, the EU imported virtual agricultural land equivalent to the territory of Germany (ca. 35 million hectares) through agricultural products from other countries. Only a 0.3% annual increase in land productivity in the EU would lower arable land demand outside Europe by approximately 5 million hectares,
- CAP should include an instrument to promote research and to support private-public partnerships to create innovative solutions for agriculture,
- research and innovation facilitate continuously the delivery of public goods,
- promoting new technology has to be part of a policy system to ensure also economic and social sustainability of the production.

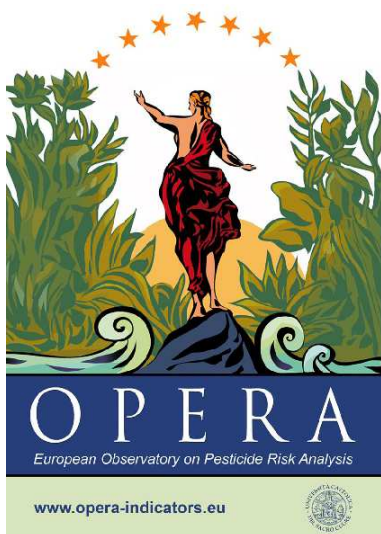
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*Policy options have to be integrated in a European production model which aims at creating a sustainable and intensive agriculture meant to reply to the immediate needs of the society for good quality and enough food quantity-while protecting the environment and resources.*

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# REPORT ON OPERA SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEETING

## 01.10.2010 in Milan



The first meeting of the Scientific Committee took place in order to develop the scientific priorities of the research activity within OPERA for 2010/2011.

Members of the Scientific Committee have appreciated the content and scope of the activities undertaken until now (organisation of various events and development of various documents) and have subscribed to the general approach to combine and create the link between scientific work- stakeholder consultation and public decision making bodies.

The approach used in building up the planning of activities for 2010-2011 has gathered the support of the members of the Scientific Committee. The plan of activities is structured in two major pillars completed with three very specific research activities generated in the framework of specific projects.

**Pillar A: Common Agricultural Policy** reform includes the following activities:

- Addressing market instability and income risks for farmers - This initiative would like to review the possible policy and technological options to address agricultural income instability.
- CAP networking

**Pillar B: Activities related to Directive for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides** are aiming to:

- Provide guidance and assistance to MSs in the transposition and implementation of the Sustainable Use Directive. Provide visibility on the current status in MSs by:
- SUD network

**Pillar C: various research projects**

- BROWSE project , SOStain (a project to develop a pragmatic guide to ensure sustainability at farm level), Sustainable water management

Furthermore it was decided that OPERA will improve its **transparency and communication strategy**:

- more clarity has to be brought in all communication instruments (papers, e-mails, website) on the scope and mission of OPERA with special emphasis on the support given to decision making processes;
- communicate more the active involvement of OPERA in disseminating the results of different studies/analysis/good practices around EU.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 10TH INTERNATIONAL FRESENIUS "AQUATIC AND TERRESTRIAL ECOTOXICOLOGY AND RISK MANAGEMENT" CONFERENCE

#### **02.-03.12.2010 in Frankfurt am Main/ Germany**

Learn about new subjects of discussion in ecotoxicology in the agrochemical industry with topics including general policies (productivity and biodiversity), risk assessment (e.g. EFSA guidance document for birds and mammals) and risk mitigation (Sustainable use, best management practices).

*Programme can be downloaded at <http://www.opera-indicators.eu/eng/info/Upcoming-conferences-and-debates.html>*

### ENDURE CONFERENCE

#### **24.-25.11.2010 in Paris**

ENDURE will this year host its second major international conference when it stages 'Integrated Pest Management in Europe - The ENDURE Network of Excellence shares the fruits of four years' research with the crop protection community' at the Eurosites George V centre in Paris, France.

The event, which is being held on November 24 and 25, will reveal the new knowledge, new strategies and new tools generated by ENDURE researchers since the launch of the Network of Excellence in 2007.

For more information please visit [http://www.endure-network.eu/about\\_endure/all\\_the\\_news/newsflash\\_endure\\_conference\\_in\\_november](http://www.endure-network.eu/about_endure/all_the_news/newsflash_endure_conference_in_november)