

Subject: Conference “Overcoming the barriers to adoption of microbial bioherbicides” -

Bari, Italy, 26-28 September 2022

Dear Colleague,

First of all, we hope that the COVID-19 pandemic has not severely affected you, your collaborators, your family, or other loved ones.

We are very pleased to invite you to the Conference “Overcoming the barriers to adoption of microbial bioherbicides”, which will be held in Bari, Italy, and will last three days (from 26 to 28 September - Mon-Wed), with arrivals on the 25th and departures on 29th.

The main intent of the proposed Conference is to enable the major members of the scientific community working with different microbial biological control agents having various backgrounds to meet and interact also with scientists working on the same types of microorganisms but with different purposes. Breaking the impasse to the adoption of microbial bioherbicides is needed more than ever, as agriculture is losing synthetic herbicides because of their banning and loss of utility because of rapidly evolving resistance. This multi-disciplinary group will be expected to give lectures covering the latest and most advanced research, followed by long periods of discussions. The group will discuss how the newest ideas, approaches, solutions, or methodologies coming from different fields of application may solve the biological, technical, and regulatory issues that have limited the success of microbial bioherbicides compared to other microbial biopesticides. Moreover, discussions with appropriate stakeholders will give new insights into regulatory aspects and technology transfer.

We applied for funding from the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) Co-operative Research Programme: Sustainable Agricultural and Food Systems (CRP), within the Research Theme 1 “Managing Natural Capital for the Future” for our event and are very pleased to have been granted the funding award. A number of selected invited speakers will be fully and directly supported by OECD for accommodation and travel costs. Other attendees can be admitted, on condition they are completely self-supporting.

The venue is the Excelsior Hotel (<https://excelsiorbari.it/en/>), a beautiful, modern, and comfortable hotel, centrally located, offering all the facilities and adopting all the required anti-Covid safety precautions and protocols to assure the success of the event. Bari is the capital of the Apulia Region, in Southern Italy, a very beautiful city facing the Adriatic Sea, with an ancient and beautiful historical center, rich in beautiful churches and buildings. Visit the official website for full information about Bari (<https://www.viaggiareinpuglia.it/at/144/localita/4126/en/Bari>)

We have kept the attendance costs to a minimum by offering an all-inclusive hotel package. The total cost of attending the conference will be 900.00 Euro. Details for registration, reservation, and payment will be posted soon on the website. The cost will include:

- Accommodation at the Excelsior Hotel, in a single room (double room to be used as single), for four nights, inclusive of breakfast.

- Attendance to the 3-full-day conference in a modern and well-equipped conference room
- Morning and afternoon coffee breaks for the three days of the conference
- Lunch each day of the conference
- One afternoon/evening excursion by bus visiting some beautiful villages around Bari, inclusive of the dinner in a very good restaurant
- Conference gadgets

The publication of a book or a special issue of an international journal on the chosen topic is required by the OECD and mandatory for the invited OECD participants, with draft chapters or papers prepared by the attendees prior to the conference and used as a basis of discussion at the congress. A final version must be submitted shortly after the congress. One of the organizers is Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Pest Management Science* (Impact Factor = 4.485). He has obtained approval from the Editorial Board to publish contributions (subject to peer review) to the conference as a special issue of the journal. All participants will have the opportunity to submit articles related to their presentations.

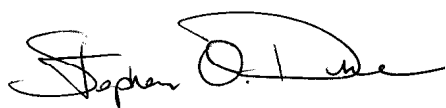
The meeting will be relatively small and relaxed, so that the participants will have the time and inclination for considerable conversation and brainstorming to formulate new approaches for improving the quality and acceptance of microbial bioherbicides.

We consider you to be one of the scientists who can make a considerable contribution to this meeting. If you are interested in taking part in this endeavour, we ask you to confirm soon your interest and to send us a tentative title of your proposed lecture. Unfortunately, we cannot offer you any economic support.

We look forward to hearing from you. Further information will be sent in the near future if you reply positively, and will soon be available on the congress official website (<http://bioherbicides2021.wordpress.com>).

Best regards

Stephen O. Duke



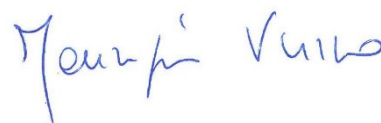
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