

### Newsletter to Participants No. 6: December 2008

#### **STIMBR now incorporated society**

STIMBR was incorporated under the Incorporated Societies Act on 5 November, 2008.

This is a significant milestone for an organisation which, up until this time, has operated as a loose group with a common interest in reducing the use of methyl bromide - irrespective of application. From an informal open forum of 40 individuals held in Wellington in May 2006, we have progressed to a legal entity with a constitution, an elected management committee, a voluntary levy as a primary funding source, and a current annual research investment (including leveraged government funds) of over \$500,000.

The hard work of establishing a functioning administrative structure is almost complete and the focus will soon shift to prioritised new research initiatives.

#### **Membership**

Membership currently stands at 18 organisational members and 10 associate members, including government departments, research organisations, ports, log exporters, wood processors, fumigators, and chemical manufacturers . The informal communication list will soon be revised to include only members, so you are urged to sign up if you have not already done so, to ensure you stay in the information loop and have the ability to influence funding priorities.

#### **Methyl bromide users' voluntary levy**

The levy on methyl bromide use has already provided leverage of over \$400,000 in research funding for a cash investment by industry of only \$60,000. While 95% of users support the levy, it is disappointing two key players, Ecolab and Boracure, have declined to participate. STIMBR's strength is its wide and independent representation of all groups affected by the inevitable future constraints on methyl bromide use. It is already clear the nominal levy of just \$1 per kg of fumigant used is an outstanding investment which allows significant leverage of funds from other sources to address issues directly relevant to industry's interests.

#### **Phosphine users contribute to levy**

Phosphine users have recognised they are direct beneficiaries of STIMBR's research strategy and have agreed, with the support of the Forest Owners Association, to contribute 5 cents per cubic metre of ship's bale capacity to the levy fund. This is welcome support and is estimated to contribute a further \$90,000 annually, creating a funding pool in excess of \$300,000.

## Methyl bromide fate following fumigation

STIMBR has identified the nature of methyl bromide release and dispersion following fumigation as a high priority for its research investment. Extensive monitoring following log stack, container and hold fumigations has already been undertaken at CentrePort in Wellington.

Based on this experience, and advice from specialist modelling and monitoring consultants, STIMBR plans to develop standard recommendations and strategies which it is hoped will be applied at all major fumigation sites. This will provide assurance to both the public and regulators as to the fate of the released fumigant.

Any strategy introduced must be consistent across sites and the information delivered must be relevant to actual risk.

Research will also be commissioned into the pattern of release of fumigant following treatment of logs. This will identify the proportion of fumigant retained or destroyed within the logs, and assist in understanding of emissions and dispersal.

## Levy funding for key projects

Levy funds are held independently from STIMBR by an industry levy group to ensure industry contributed funding is directed at projects of high priority to the sector.

The first three project funding applications have been approved and involve leverage from the Sustainable Farming Fund.

Projects approved are:

- Review of methyl bromide recapture/ destruction technologies (\$6,000 of \$12,000 cost).
- Review and consolidation of all phosphine research (\$10,000 of \$20,000 cost).
- Development of phosphine toxicity data for Sirex eggs and larvae (\$15,000 of \$30,000 cost).

This group of projects aim to consolidate and extend the use of phosphine for the treatment of export logs, and to identify the most promising way forward with methyl bromide recapture/destruction technologies.



## Containerised log shipments increase methyl bromide use

The recent increase in the shipping of logs in containers to China prompted STIMBR to survey all key ports to determine the likely effect on methyl bromide use.

Logs in containers are all required to be fumigated with MeBr, whereas if they were going in bulk shipments approximately 66% would be treated with phosphine.

For our estimate we have used the lowest rate of MeBr (80g/m<sup>3</sup> over 15°C) and annualised the 9 months data collection period for TEU equivalents. A treatment volume of 816,000 m<sup>3</sup> gives additional methyl bromide use of over 65 tonnes.

We recognise that recent downward movement in bulk freight rates may induce a move away from containers, however the exercise highlights the need for awareness of changes in the operational environment if estimates of methyl bromide use are to be accurate.

## Expressions of interest in STIMBR research proposals.

With the accumulation of levy generated funds, STIMBR will be identifying high priority research initiatives and seeking expressions of interest and project proposals from research providers.

While a number of such providers are known to us through past work, STIMBR is keen to hear from any organisations that would like to be added to our list to receive information on proposed projects.

STIMBR will reserve the exclusive right to award research contracts accountable only to its membership.

### Financial Report

The indicative financial position from the inception of STIMBR to 30 June 2008 is:

<b>Income</b>	
Subscriptions	\$ 13 000
Member contributions	\$ 15 000
Levy - Brimark	\$ 160 000
Levy - Agricultural Fumigations	\$ 9 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 197 000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
STIMBR establishment/ management	\$ 28 000
Agreed funding support	\$ 110 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 138 000</b>
<b>Current Funds</b>	<b>\$ 59 000</b>

## Montreal Protocol Decision on QPS use of Methyl Bromide

At the last meeting of the Parties to the Protocol in Doha in November, a decision was passed to fill in current data gaps. The need was identified for better information to monitor and analyse trends in quarantine and pre-shipment (QPS) use of methyl bromide. Parties all recognise the need to identify opportunities for reducing global amounts of methyl bromide required for quarantine and pre-shipment applications.

The decision requested that by July 2009 the technical panel review all relevant, currently available information on the use of methyl bromide for quarantine and pre-shipment applications and the related emissions. They were asked to assess trends in the major uses, identify available alternatives and other mitigation options.

Barriers to the adoption of alternative strategies needed to be identified along with what additional information or action may be required. It also requested projects to be brought forward demonstrating technically and economically feasible alternatives, including technologies for recapture and destruction of methyl bromide.

The parties encouraged the implementation of national strategies that describe the actions that will help to reduce the use of methyl bromide for phytosanitary measures and/or reduce emissions of methyl bromide as recommended by the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures under the International Phytosanitary Plant Convention.

## Stakeholders in Methyl Bromide Reduction (STIMBR)

STIMBR brings together industry, government and research organisations and individuals with the aim of:

*providing a united voice in support of initiatives aimed at enhancing market access and biosecurity clearances for goods and products while reducing the release of methyl bromide into the atmosphere and seeking the long term reduction in its use.*

The group provides an interface between users of methyl bromide, fumigators applying treatments, government departments concerned with reducing the use of ozone depleting substances, researchers seeking alternative treatments and strategies, and other affected parties.

There are two classes of membership:

- **Organisational membership.** New Zealand-based organisations with aims and objectives that are consistent with the aims and objectives of STIMBR.
- **Associate membership.** Individuals and overseas organisations that have an interest in furthering the aim of STIMBR.

A copy of STIMBR's constitution is available from [gordon.hosking@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gordon.hosking@xtra.co.nz)

<http://stimbr.nzfoa.co.nz>

## IUFRO INTERNATIONAL FOREST BIOSECURITY CONFERENCE



March 16-20, 2009,

Rotorua, New Zealand

Exploring the latest thinking on forest biosecurity: from protecting our borders to managing insect pests, weeds and diseases.

For more information or to register see [www.forestbiosecurity.com](http://www.forestbiosecurity.com)

**This event is hosted by Scion and is proudly supported by STIMBR.**

**A session will be dedicated to the discussion of quarantine treatments on Monday, 16 March.**

**Day rates for registration to attend this session are available.**

