IFA convenes in Berlin
The rise of precision agriculture
Nigeria’s nitrogen industry
Advances in potash technology
In recognition of your outstanding contribution to the understanding, exploitation and application of phosphate resources, the directors and staff of Fertilizer International magazine honour Mohamed Takhim. Your long standing commitment to the practical application of innovative phosphate technology globally has justly earned you the lasting admiration of many colleagues and friends in the fertilizer world."

This is the citation on the 2018 Pierre Becker Memorial Award presented to Mohamed Takhim in Madrid in April by Simon Inglethorpe, the editor of Fertilizer International magazine. Mohamed is a highly deserving recipient of this valued, long-established award. During a meteoric career, he has worked with great energy and imagination to advance sustainability in the phosphates sector through innovative yet practical engineering.

The untimely death of Pierre Becker in 2001 was widely mourned by the international fertilizer industry. This was not simply because Pierre was a renowned world authority on the phosphoric acid process and phosphate fertilizer production technology. In addition to these unique talents he was also a person who inspired great affection, loyalty and friendship.

To perpetuate Pierre’s memory, Fertilizer International launched the Pierre Becker Memorial Award in 2004 to celebrate originality and excellence in the phosphates sector. This year, the International Fertilizer Association (IFA) kindly hosted the presentation ceremony at their Global Technical Symposium on 10 April. This spring conference, held at the Madrid InterContinental Hotel, was the perfect backdrop to present the 2018 Pierre Becker Memorial Award to Mohamed in person.

Mohamed Takhim, the CEO of EcoPhos, received the 2018 Pierre Becker Memorial Award on 10 April. His career was celebrated during the presentation ceremony at the International Fertilizer Association’s Global Technical Symposium in Madrid.

Luc Maene, the former director general of IFA and current president of the International Fertiliser Society, knew Pierre Becker personally, and was kind enough to make some opening remarks explaining the history of the award and why Pierre was so widely admired.

Congratulations to Mohamed Takhim
Simon Inglethorpe, editor of Fertilizer International, celebrated and paid tribute to Mohamed Takhim and his career in the following short speech at the presentation ceremony on 10 April:

“I’d like to thank the International Fertilizer Association for allowing us to present this award as part of its Global Technical Symposium here in Madrid.

The Pierre Becker Memorial Award itself dates back to 2004. Over the years, the award has been presented to nine individuals, including the 2018 recipient who we are announcing today.

The award is about celebrating originality and excellence in the field of phosphates. This year’s award recognises a very talented, highly-respected and well-regarded entrepreneur and innovator, an individual who hopefully will be familiar to many of you – by reputation alone if not personally.

His career in the industry goes back to the mid-1990s. What is so striking and remarkable about this person is that he is doubly gifted. Not only an exceptional scientist – this individual is also a natural born businessman.

It is no exaggeration to say that this person’s rise has been meteoric. He filed his very first patent in 1994, as a young researcher at the tender age of 18. Two years later, in 1996, while still a twenty year old student, he founded his fledgling start-up business, somehow managing to attract more than three million euros of venture capital – a remarkable achievement.

20 years later, this still-growing company now employs some 300 people and has an annual turnover of €133 million. Its business success is based on ground-breaking production technology that allows low-quality phosphate rock, and secondary phosphate resources, to be transformed into high-quality products. Investments to date of more than €45 million in ten international patents exemplify the unswerving commitment to innovation by this business.

The company currently operates three feed phosphates production plants in the Netherlands, France and Bulgaria. As part of ambitious growth plans, two new production plants – one for Evergow in Egypt and the other a joint venture with GNFC in India – are due to enter operation this year and next.

BCInsight wishes to celebrate the achievements of a unique entrepreneur and innovator. He is the remarkable founder of an equally remarkable company. Ladies and gentlemen, with great pleasure, on behalf of Fertilizer International magazine, I announce that the 2018 Pierre Becker Memorial Award goes to Mohamed Takhim, the CEO of EcoPhos.”

BCInsight would like to thank the International Fertilizer Association (IFA), particularly Volker Andresen and its director general Charlotte Hebebrand, for hosting and helping organise this year’s awards ceremony. Luc Maene, president of the IFS, is also kindly thanked for his participation.