National Councillor Maya Graf (BL) elected to Biovision Board

Zurich, 29 November 2018 – **Maya Graf, Green National Councillor for Basel Land and an organic farmer has been elected to the Biovision Foundation Board. The election of Maya Graf provides us with the services of a highly qualified, well-connected and committed colleague," said Biovision President Dr Hans Rudolf Herren with obvious pleasure.**

Maya Graf, National Councillor and organic farmer has been elected to the Biovision Foundation Board. Dr Hans Rudolf Herren, President of Biovision welcomed the new appointment: "Maya Graf is a politician with a particular interest in agricultural policies and is also an organic farmer. For many years, she has been a consistent and effective advocate of an urgent change in the course of global agriculture. Support for agro-ecological methods of cultivation is an imperative not just in Switzerland but globally as well. Without this support, we cannot prevent global hunger, poverty, climate change or the loss of biodiversity. Through her political work over many years, Maya Graf has built up an enviable network of contacts and has the experience required to set a new course for the future. We look forward to having her on board".

Biovision and Hans Herren first came into contact with Maya Graf when she demonstrated her commitment to the World Agricultural Report (IAASTD) and its implementation. The report, of which Switzerland is also a signatory, was published in 2009 and is the most comprehensive inventory to date of the state of global food systems. It was compiled under the co-chairmanship of Judi Wakhungu and Hans Herren with input from 400 international scientists. This exchange of ideas and experience of mutual interest intensified after she spoke at the Biovision Symposium 2013, when we celebrated our 15th Anniversary. Maya Graf's election to the new seven-member Board is based, therefore, on shared values, at both the thematic and personal level. Our new Board Member is equally enthusiastic about her new role: "If we want to feed the global population with healthy food produced sustainably, we must invest in ecological, GM-free, non-industrial farming. Biovision is providing concrete evidence at the local level that smallholders in the Global South can produce more, better and more diverse food by using organic farming methods".

Maya Graf was born on 28.2.1962 in Sissach (Basel Land) and grew up on her parents' farm. She is still involved in the running of the family's organic farm. She is married to Niggi Bärtschi and has two grown-up children. Maya Graf has been a National Councillor since 2001: She is a member of the Green Group in parliament and was its president in 2009-2010. In 2013, Maya Graf became the first Green politician to hold the office of President of the National Council. For many years, she was a member of its Committee for Science and Culture (CSEC) and is now a member of the Committee for Social Security and Health (CSSH) as well as the National Council's Control Committee and Control Delegation. For many years, she has campaigned successfully for GM-free, sustainable agriculture in Switzerland (from 2001 to 2016 she was President of SAG, the Swiss Alliance for GM-free foods) and for animal welfare. She is co-president of Hochstamm-Suisse, the association promoting standard fruit trees and also a member of the Foundation Board of ProSpecieRara. In November 2014, Maya Graf was appointed co-president of alliance F, the Federation of Women's Association in Switzerland.

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For 20 years, Biovision has encouraged the development, dissemination and application of sustainable, ecological farming methods designed to help people in developing countries to help themselves. A holistic approach is crucial here and healthy people, animals and plants together with an intact environment are an integral part of all projects. In Switzerland, Biovision is an active member of various networks designed to implement the global Sustainable Development Goals of the UN Agenda 2030 both in and by Switzerland.

In 2013, the Biovision Foundation and its founder Hans Rudolf Herren – one of the world's leading experts in sustainable agriculture – were awarded the Alternative Nobel Prize.