



## Briefing Note on FAO actions on Fall Armyworm (FAW) in Africa

FAO

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### BACKGROUND

**Fall Armyworm** (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) is a moth native to tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas, whose caterpillar or larva (photo) causes damage. It is mainly a pest of maize, with potential hosts from 26 plant families. During infestation plant damage results in total yield loss or reduced grain quality and quantity. FAW has several generations per year and the moth can fly up to 100 km per night.

FAW was first detected in Central and Western Africa in early 2016 (Benin, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, and Togo) and in late 2016, in Southern Africa. In 2017 it has been detected in the whole of mainland Southern Africa (except Lesotho and the Island States), in Cameroon, Ghana, Niger and Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, and it is expected to go further. For the time being, its modality of introduction and its spread to Africa and adjustments of its bio-ecology are still speculative. A map on page 4 shows the spread of the pest to-date.

FAW is a dangerous transboundary pest with a high potential of spreading due to bioecological and trade aspects. The only way to manage FAW in the long term is through Integrated Pest Management.



Figure 1- FAW feeding on a maize leaf, Zimbabwe. ©FAO/Edward Ogolla

### FAO COORDINATION ROLE IN FAW MANAGEMENT

1. **Consultative meeting** in Harare (14-16 February 2017) with governments and stakeholders from Southern Africa, which addressed pest awareness, situational update, emergency preparedness and rapid response for management of plant pests and animal diseases. This meeting recommended actions on pest management options, advocacy, development of technical guides and protocols, support coherent response through the development of action plans at country level, and engagement with REC (SADC).
2. FAO organized and co-organized two back to back meetings in Nairobi: FAO Southern Africa Technical meeting 25-26 April 2017, and All Africa consultative meeting AGRA/CIMMYT/FAO 27-28 April 2017:
  - a. **FAO Southern Africa FAW Technical Meeting (25-26 April 2017)** was held to review and update current status of the pest as well as to assess its impact on production and livelihoods with extended participation of all FAO sub-regional offices in Africa.
  - b. **All Africa Stakeholders Consultation meeting (27-28 April 2017)** main objectives were to review the status of the pest incidence and impact in Africa and discuss the technological options for minimizing damage caused by the FAW including provision of

concrete recommendations to effectively manage the pest in the continent. The meeting also identified appropriate partnerships to develop and deploy short-, medium- and long-term solutions to the African farming communities. Participants in the All Africa meeting included CIMMYT and other CGIAR Centers, National Governments Plant Protection Officers and Extension Staff, CABI (Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International), AGRA (Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa), Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA), International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE), Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), donor agencies, and world renowned experts on fall armyworm research mainly from the Americas and the private sector/ service providers.

- c. The above meeting identified Action points/recommendations to be carried out by partners to manage FAW in the short-, medium- and long-term, including FAO's actions.
- d. It has been agreed in the above meeting with partners that FAO takes the lead coordination role in FAW response in Africa.
- e. To take action on the above point, FAO organized a technical meeting in Rome, 12-16 June, gathering regional and sub-regional FAO crop production and protection officers and other relevant experts in HQ to brainstorm and produce a framework for FAW management.
- f. The above FAO meeting resulted in a draft framework titled "A Framework for the Coordinated Management of Fall Armyworm in Africa."

## **FAO ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO FAW**

FAO has taken and is taking several actions in response to FAW:

1. **A Framework for the Coordinated Management of Fall Armyworm in Africa:** Based on the actions points and recommendations identified in the All Africa Consultation meeting in Nairobi, FAO has formulated a region-wide multi-stakeholder Framework for the Coordinated Management of FAW. The Framework consists of four components, Surveillance and early warning, Impact assessment, Sustainable Management, and Coordination. This Framework is intended as a guide for the development of projects and programmes by the various stakeholders in the in the areas of their mandates.
2. **FAW impact monitoring:** FAO is working closely with CIMMYT and CABI, and has taken a leading role in formulating initial actions for impact monitoring and has been supporting assessment processes in Southern Africa (more details below). FAO is now working to deepen coordination and partnership on impact monitoring with CABI and CIMMYT at the continental level.
3. **FAW early warning system development:** FAO will be identifying with farmers and stakeholders standard set of data to be collected and recorded in the field for monitoring of FAW. This will allow the same data to be collected in all countries and facilitates comparative analysis as well as training. It is also a requirement before field tools such as a mobile phone app, databases and geographic information systems can be developed.
4. **A side event** on FAW status and way forward including FAO's Framework for the Coordinated Management of the Fall Armyworm in Africa will take place during FAO Conference on 4 July 2017.
5. **An Advisory Note and Q&A** were prepared in addition to two notes on FAO position on the use of pesticides and Genetically Modified (GM) maize and widely shared within FAO HQ and Decentralized offices in Africa. All notes are posted on the FAO Food Chain Crisis website (<http://www.fao.org/food-chain-crisis/how-we-work/plant-protection/fall-armyworm/en/>).
6. **Technical extension leaflets** targeting farmers and extension workers on FAW management decisions specifically on identification, prevention, monitoring and direct control are being finalized by FAO and CABI.

7. **FAO projects:** Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) projects on FAW management are ongoing in Central Africa (Sao Tome and Principe, 2016, and Democratic Republic of Congo, early 2017). Several other TCP projects and other projects will be implemented soon in several African countries.

**Specific actions at sub-regional level:**

**Central Africa:** TCP projects on FAW management are ongoing in Sao Tome and Principe (started in 2016), and in Democratic Republic of Congo (started early 2017). FAO is preparing a workshop with stakeholders in Central Africa namely NPPO's, IAPSC, IITA, the RECs (ECCAS and CEMAC), PRASAC and CPAC, to be held in Kinshasa, DRC, 11 to 13 July 2017.

**Southern Africa:** FAO is working with national Vulnerability Assessment Committees (VACs) in conducting household level FAW food security and livelihood impact assessments in six countries (Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe). The results of these assessments should be ready by mid-July. In addition FAO is developing qualitative case study tools for dissemination at the regional level. FAO will be undertaking a regional FAW training in South Africa in collaboration with the Agricultural Research Council of South Africa, 26-31 June 2017 in addition to a FAW regional surveillance grid to be set up by a service provider. FAO has negotiated with the South African Agricultural Research Council free service to Southern African countries in FAW DNA mapping of present strains, data storage, development of tools including economic thresholds and modelling to serve farmers, as well as provision of training on various management options. FAO is procuring 2500 FAW traps and lures which will be distributed to countries before the end of June.

**Eastern Africa:** Affected countries in that sub-region have already started interventions by implementing their national action plans facilitated by FAO. Most of the countries have so far managed to control FAW through regular monitoring, pesticide application, and hand picking of FAW larvae. Some countries have already prepared their action plans on FAW prevention and control (e.g. Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda) while others (Burundi, Djibouti, Somalia, South Sudan) are yet to do so. Support is being provided to Burundi to prepare its action plan and discussions are on-going with the other three countries to support their preparedness (the pest is yet to be reported in Somalia, South Sudan and Djibouti). FAO has been facilitating information and knowledge exchange among countries within Eastern Africa and between the various sub-regions and enhancing South-South Cooperation, e.g. facilitation of the visit of Sudanese experts to Ethiopia. FAO has prepared a project "Establishing an emergency community-based Fall Armyworm monitoring, forecasting, early warning and management system in eastern Africa" in collaboration with the Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO-EA), CABI, ICIPE, and Ministries of Agriculture of Eastern African countries. The project has been submitted to USAID/OFDA and a decision on funding is awaited.

**Western Africa:** Ghana has put in place a task force for FAW management. FAO is member of that task force and is providing advice on management measures. A rapid assessment of the situation has started on 5 June 2017. A request for a TCPE has been submitted.

## Map of areas affected by Fall Armyworms (as of 15 June 2017)

