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BIOSECURITY PRACTICES AND BORDER CONTROL TO **STOP THE SPREAD OF AFRICAN SWINE FEVER**

African swine fever (ASF) is a devastating haemorrhagic viral disease affecting domestic and wild pigs.

Outbreaks of ASF result in massive losses of swine and pork products, and have economically catastrophic consequences in countries with a developed commercial pig farming sector.

The only means to control the disease is through the elimination of infected pig populations and strict control of the movement of animals and pork products.

ASF is endemic in most of sub-Saharan Africa. Since ASF's emergence in Georgia in 2007, the disease has spread to many countries in Europe.

In August 2018, ASF was first detected in Asia. The disease was reported in China, the country with the world's largest inventories of domestic pigs. China is also the world's leading consumer of pork meat.

In Europe and Asia, wild boar have become an epidemiological reservoir

for the virus, as the species can contract, carry and spread ASF. Similar to the situation in Europe, there is a heightened risk of ASF endemicity in East and Southeast Asia and further progressive global spread, with unpredictable consequences.

FAO supports member countries in ramping up prevention and preparedness efforts and response to outbreaks, to prevent further spreading of the disease.

AFRICAN SWINE FEVER AND ASIA

ASF has become a matter of utmost urgency in Asia.

The devastating impact of ASF in the region in 2018 has had serious global implications. Indeed, the region accounts for more than 50 percent of the world's domestic pig production and pork is one of the major sources of animal protein. In China, pork output in 2019 decreased by 21.3 percent compared to 2018. The average pork price in China in 2019 rose by 42.5 percent.

This threatens livelihoods – especially of the most vulnerable rural families – and food and nutritional security, and disrupts markets.

Today, ASF continues to spread across Asia and is present in 11 Asian countries: Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Timor Leste and Viet Nam. The outbreak affects vulnerable small-scale farmers particularly, who may lack the expertise or

KEY FACTS

AFRICAN SWINE FEVER (ASF)

ASF IS A VIRAL DISEASE THAT AFFECTS PIGS AND WILD BOAR WITH A FATALITY RATE OF UP TO 100 PERCENT. THE VIRUS CANNOT INFECT HUMANS.

INTRODUCED TO THE CAUCASUS IN 2007, ASF SPREAD TO SEVERAL EASTERN AND NORTHERN EUROPE COUNTRIES. IN 2018–2019, THE ASF CRISIS EXPANDED TO ASIA.

THERE IS CURRENTLY NO EFFECTIVE VACCINE AGAINST THE VIRUS.

ASF CAUSES ECONOMIC LOSSES THAT THREATEN FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY, AFFECT TRADE, AND PRESENT A SERIOUS CHALLENGE FOR SUSTAINED PIG PRODUCTION.

STRICT FARM BIOSECURITY MEASURES AND BORDER CONTROL PREVENT SPREAD OF THE DISEASE.

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Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



funds necessary to protect their animals from the disease.

FAO'S RESPONSE

Since the first reports of the disease in China, in August 2018, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and FAO have been working extensively to enhance regional cooperation and information-sharing that could help reduce the impact of this deadly pig disease.

To foster this cooperation, in April 2019, the Standing Group of Experts (SGE) for Asia was created to help build national and regional capacities for fighting ASF in Asia. Three meetings were organized, focusing on: (1) surveillance for early detection and outbreak management; (2) biosecurity; and (3) socioeconomic impact and risk communication.

In December, the first SGE ASF meeting for the Americas took place in Colombia. The meeting focused on border control and surveillance, to assist South and Central American countries in emergency preparedness to ASF.

FAO's Emergency Management Centre for Animal Health (EMC-AH) deployed several response teams to assist Asian countries in curbing the disease. The teams worked with veterinary services and government representatives to increase biosecurity measures in and around farms, and to advise on effective culling techniques.

In response to the ongoing ASF crisis, FAO launched three regional Technical Cooperation Programmes (TCPs), to assist countries in disease control in Europe and Asia and to support emergency preparedness in South and Central American countries.

FAO also provided guidance to neighbouring countries on how to protect against the disease, and activated an ASF Incident Command Group to streamline FAO's activities and key messages on the disease.

FAO delivered training sessions on ASF management in wild boar, conducted a rapid risk assessment of ASF introduction into China, shared good practices for biosecurity in the pig sector, and produced a manual on the preparation of ASF contingency plans. Additionally, a new joint publication on *African swine fever in wild boar ecology and biosecurity*, aiming at assisting veterinary services, wildlife management authorities and hunters, has been released.

THE WAY FORWARD

Since the incursion of this grave disease into Europe and Asia, FAO and its partners have been on the front line, supporting countries in responding to outbreaks, preventing the spread and building resilience, to ensure food security and livelihoods of farmers, as well as to support national sustainable production and trade.

To this end, and considering the unprecedented scale of the crisis, an ASF Call to Action meeting on the *African swine fever unprecedented global threat: a challenge to food security, wildlife management and conservation* is being organized by FAO in April 2020.

The objectives of this Call to Action are to:

- issue a political declaration on the ASF pandemic threat on the part of governments, industry, academia and stakeholders;
- review existing and recently developed tools, mechanisms and practices to address ASF; and
- release a global call for action.



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