



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

# GLOBAL ACTION FOR FALL ARMYWORM CONTROL

## GUIDANCE NOTE 8



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF  
**PLANT HEALTH**  
2020



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Director-General Qu Dongyu:

“ This is a global threat that requires a global perspective. ”

Fall armyworm (FAW), or *Spodoptera frugiperda*, is a plant pest originating in the tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas. Over the last few years, FAW has rapidly spread around Africa, Asia and and, most recently, Oceania. Concerted action is essential to prevent this pest from threatening the food security and livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers. FAO's new initiative, the Global Action for Fall Armyworm Control, aims to mobilize USD 500 million over three years, from 2020 to 2022, for radical, direct and coordinated measures to strengthen monitoring and pest control capacities at global level.

FAW can cause significant damage to crops in the absence of natural control, good agronomic practices or resistant plant varieties. FAW prefers maize but can also feed on more than 80 other crops. Once established in an area, FAW is almost impossible to eradicate, and it is very difficult to prevent the pest from spreading – an adult moth can fly over 100 km in a single night.

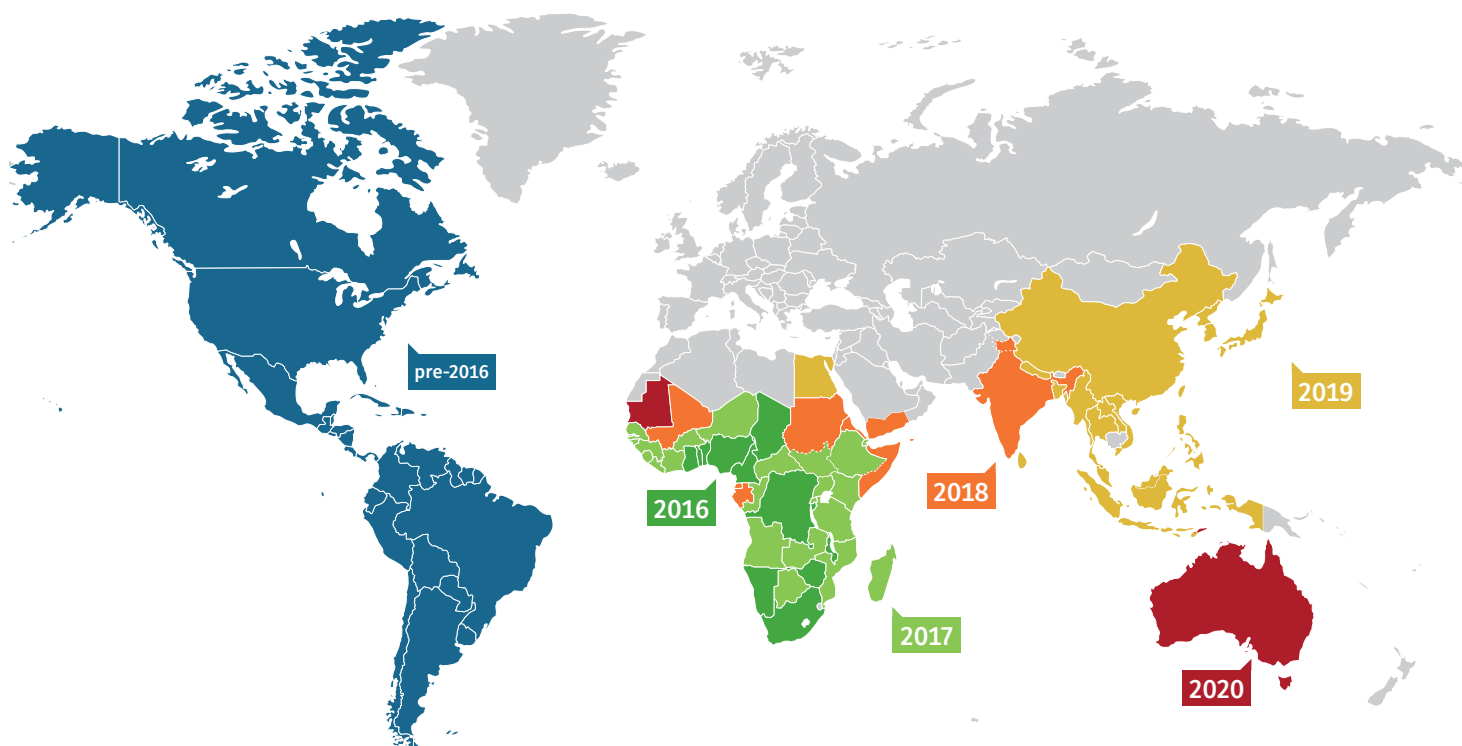
Its ability to spread and multiply quickly makes FAW a very serious threat to food security for hundreds of millions of people in Africa, Asia and the Near East. It is also anticipated that the pest will soon arrive in southern Europe. All of this has huge implications for global food security, poverty reduction, climate change resilience, and human and environmental health.

achieve this, the Global Action will ensure a strong, coordinated approach at country, regional and global levels to massively scale up current worldwide efforts against FAW through multiple mechanisms, such as Farmer Field Schools, partnerships with research institutions and the private sector, South-South Cooperation, regional and national plant protection organizations, and specific national FAW task forces.

## Global Action goals and objectives

FAO developed its Global Action to improve food security and the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers, and reduce environmental pollution through sustainable management and control of FAW. To





**Figure 1.** Spread trend of fall armyworm  
(November 2016–April 2020)

*Source: Adapted from United Nations World map, 2020  
Note: Dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines  
for which there may not yet be full agreement.*

## The Global Action has three key objectives:

1. enhance global, regional, national and farmer-level coordination and collaboration on FAW control, leading to implementation of ecosystem-friendly Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices and policies;
2. reduce crop yield losses caused by FAW; and
3. reduce the risk of further spread of FAW to new areas.

## The Global Action implementation

The Global Action activities are based on the following five implementation principles:

### 1. Awareness-raising

Awareness will be increased among all partners and stakeholders at global, regional and national levels to inspire their active engagement in the Global Action.

### 2. Coordination

The activities of the Global Action will be coordinated at the global level through steering and technical committees, and at the national level based on the establishment of FAW national task forces. The global partnership on FAW sustainable management will be strengthened to bring together all partners into a coordinated

and coherent structure, in which they can use their comparative advantages in complementary and synergistic ways, to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of the FAW response.

### 3. Technical support

Innovative approaches and technologies, including new digital tools, have been developed and are available for area-specific strategies. These can also be applied for monitoring and early warning; prevention and control; plus surveillance and diagnoses. Technical support will be guided by a Technical Steering Committee and assisted by six Technical Working Groups (TWGs).

### 4. Resource mobilization

Funds will be mobilized from all relevant sources, national budgets, private sector, development partners, development banks and FAO contributions.

### 5. Communication

Outreach strategies at all levels and dissemination of knowledge materials to increase visibility and impact will complement the Global Action. Technical information will be transferred to smallholder farmers.



## The Global Action activities

The Global Action will coordinate and harmonize all efforts by the international community to control and sustainably manage FAW in three regions: Africa, the Near East and the Asia-Pacific. Most of the total budget must be secured at the national level and support the priority countries identified through FAO's new, data-driven Hand-in-Hand Initiative. This initiative pairs the world's most developed countries with some of those with the highest poverty and hunger rates. In this way, it supports the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Global Action reinforces efforts to discourage the widespread use of highly hazardous pesticides, and emphasizes prevention and science-based, sustainable management options. It advocates a combination of robust monitoring and early warning systems using innovative technologies – such as FAO's [Fall Armyworm Monitoring and Early Warning System \(FAMEWS\)](#) tool – along with IPM as the basis for supporting farmers in managing FAW. Additionally, the global action will facilitate the establishment of a FAW phytosanitary network and develop relevant guidelines to limit the risk of FAW spread through international trade.

Through the Global Action, an international coordination mechanism was established to foster an open and collaborative dialogue towards finding solutions to common challenges. It will also support the establishment and scaling up of national FAW task forces, and the mobilization of resources for applied research geared towards innovative, practical and efficient solutions.

Advocacy and communication is another essential pillar of the Global Action, to ensure coordinated and well-founded messages that reach all stakeholders.

These new coordinated efforts will bolster ongoing FAO activities on FAW. From 2016 to 2019, FAO has already spearheaded 63 FAW-related projects, mostly in Africa, establishing good practices and accumulating valuable knowledge. The Global Action will support further dissemination and application of these knowledge resources in a targeted and extensive manner, so that NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND.





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