



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
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Agriculture
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Продовольственная и
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организация
Объединенных
Наций

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

DESERT LOCUST CONTROL COMMITTEE

Thirty-ninth Session

Rome, 10-13 March 2009

**Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the
Western Region (CLCPRO)**
(Agenda Item 22a)

Introduction

The Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region (CLCPRO) has ten member countries: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal and Tunisia. Its purpose is "*to promote, at national, regional and international level, action, research and training to ensure the preventive control of and appropriate response to the invasions of the Desert Locust in the Western Region of its distribution area, encompassing West Africa and North-West Africa*". It thus serves to ensure continuity of the preventive control strategy that is being developed in the region in the framework of the EMPRES Western Region Programme (EMPRES-WR).

The CLCPRO's mandate is not limited to technical matters as it also has a policy and institutional dimension. The Commission plays a key role in sensitizing the policy-makers of its ten member countries to the need to implement a sustainable preventive control strategy against the Desert Locust in its operational area and to deal with external populations that may come from the Central Region. The ultimate objective of the CLCPRO's programmes and actions is for its member countries to take on the continuing and effective management of the Desert Locust problem, both individually and in the form of regional collaboration.

This paper reports the main actions undertaken by the CLCPRO since the 38th Session of the DLCC held in Rome from 11 to 15 September 2006.

Strengthening the CLCPRO Secretariat

In order to carry out its activities more effectively, the CLCPRO Secretariat, which also ensures the Coordination of EMPRES-WR, was significantly bolstered in terms of human capacity in late 2006 and early 2007. A consultant not remunerated by FAO was made available by France in November 2006 and two new international officers funded by the AFDB joined the CLCPRO Secretariat in Algiers in July 2007.

This incremental support is fundamental in strengthening capacity to manage the Desert Locust problem at regional and national level.

Organization of the 4th Meeting of the Executive Committee and 4th Session of the CLCPRO

The Fourth Meeting of the Executive Committee and the Fourth Session of the CLCPRO were held back-to-back in Bamako, Mali, from 18 to 26 October 2007. The following areas received special attention:

Implementation of the preventive control strategy in unsafe areas

Given the inability to conduct surveys in Mali and Niger because of unsafe conditions in their Desert Locust breeding areas, the delegates at the Fourth Session of the CLCPRO recommended that surveillance and control operations be stepped up in neighbouring countries and that all possible measures be taken by Mali and Niger to offset the lack of surveys.

In follow-up to those recommendations, the following remedial measures were taken:

- reinforcement of survey teams in Algeria, Libya and Mauritania;
- involvement of populations living in the unsafe areas to pass on information. To that end, Mali organized an awareness-raising workshop for decentralized officials using a special poster it had developed for that purpose. Niger used similar networks to transmit information.

In addition, research is under way in Algeria and Mauritania to make better use of satellite imagery under EMPRES-WR and with support from the project of the French Fund for the World Environment (FFEM) and CLCPRO's own funds.

Follow-up to Recommendation 22 of the Independent Evaluation Mission for the 2003-05 campaign on a review of the CLCPRO's roles and responsibilities

The delegates at the Fourth Session of the CLCPRO recommended that the review of its roles and responsibilities be conducted in collaboration with the member countries and FAO's Agriculture Department (AG) and Legal Office. The President and Secretariat of the CLCPRO therefore met with senior officers from FAO's Agriculture Department and Legal Office in January 2008. It emerged that all interlocutors are, in principle, in favour of reinforcing the institutional profile of the CLCPRO. However, implementation of this recommendation raises a juridical issue that also applies to several other commissions and requires revision of Article XIV of the FAO Constitution governing their creation. The process will therefore be lengthy, as the issue extends beyond the realm of the CLCPRO and needs to be addressed as part of current FAO reform.

Meeting of ministers responsible for locust control in the Western Region

The aim of such a meeting is to determine policy orientations to decide and install sustainable funding mechanisms for preventive control and to institutionalize regional cooperation, with the CLCPRO playing a key role in ensuring continuity of the regional approach.

The delegates at the Fourth Session of the CLCPRO thus recommended that the Secretariat of the CLCPRO requested the minister of his country to invite his Western Region counterparts to hold a ministerial meeting as soon as possible. A first invitation was sent by Mali's

Minister of Agriculture to hold such a meeting in October 2008, but this was postponed as most ministers were unable to attend. Mali's Minister then issued a second invitation to a meeting on 27 March 2009, which will be preceded by a meeting of experts on 25 and 26 March.

Impact of stronger national capacities and successful handling of upsurges in Mauritania

The locust situation remained quiet for most of the time but was still closely monitored by the National Locust Control Units and the CLCPRO Secretariat, particularly during the outbreaks in Mauritania in October 2006 and December 2008. In both cases, Mauritania responded very rapidly to the outbreaks and was able to deploy sufficient survey and control teams within a few days and quickly bring the situation under control. This was confirmation that Mauritania had developed its preventive control mechanism thanks to the considerable progress it had made in building its institutional, human and material capacities. In 2008, within 24 hours the countries of the region offered their support to Mauritania through the dispatch of ground teams, aircraft and helicopters. FAO also reacted very rapidly by dispatching a survey and control helicopter in 2006 and making additional funds available in 2008.

Cooperation with other partners

The CLCPRO maintains very close relations with partners supporting the implementation of preventive control in the WR, namely the African Development Bank, France, USAID, IFAD and the World Bank. The Bank indirectly supports preventive control through its loans to the Sahel member countries of the CLCPRO, thereby ensuring ongoing consultation to harmonize actions, develop synergies and avoid duplication of efforts. Thus, besides the reciprocal attendance of each agency's meetings, joint supervisory missions were fielded to Mali, Mauritania and Niger in 2007 and 2008. Those missions served to examine progress in implementation of EMPRES-WR and the African Emergency Locust Project (AELP). They also served to further boost collaboration between the two partners in identifying strengths and weaknesses of national locust control mechanisms.

In addition, draft cooperation protocols between the CLCPRO and Cirad¹ on the one hand, and the CLCPRO and AGRHYMET² on the other, have been approved by the FAO Legal Office and will be submitted for endorsement to the Fifth Session of the CLCPRO in June 2009.

Close relations have been forged with other regional and international partners following participation of the CLCPRO Secretariat at a regional conference on the management of natural disasters and an international seminar on the use of biotechnology in locust control.

Cooperation with the Central Region

As regards cooperation between the Western Region (WR) and the Central Region (CR), 2007 and 2008 saw a considerable exchange of expertise enabled by financing from the USAID project and the trust funds of the CLCPRO and the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region (CRC).

¹ Cirad: International Cooperation Centre of Agricultural Research for Development.

² AGRHYMET: Regional Training Centre for Agrometeorology and Operational Hydrology and their Applications.

Several training courses for CR officers were organized at the National Locust Control Centre of Agadir, in Morocco. WR officers travelled to the CR to provide training support to the CR countries, while others visited selected CR countries to learn from their experiences in locust control.

Also of note is that the Secretaries of the two Commissions attend each other's regional meetings.

Such collaboration should be extended to the Eastern Region.

Other activities

The CLCPRO Secretariat, which also coordinates the activities of EMPRES-WR, has conducted several other activities reported in the working paper relating to the Programme.