

## DESERT LOCUST TECHNICAL GROUP

## Third Session

Rome, Italy, 11-13 January 1995

## REPORT

**1) Opening of the Session**

The session was opened by Mr. Van der Graaff, Chief, Plant Protection Service, who welcomed the members of the Group. He underlined the importance of the proposed agenda and stressed the need to deal with some of the agenda items in great detail.

He underscored the role of the Technical Group and the mandate entrusted to it by the DLCC, and wished the Group every success in its deliberations.

The outgoing Chairman, Mr. Y. Ashour, also extended a warm welcome to the participants and invited them to put forward concrete proposals for the subsequent 33rd Session of the DLCC, which was particularly important in view of the substantive nature of its proposed agenda.

**2) Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

Mr. M. Shafi was elected Chairman and Mr. L. Soumaré Vice-Chairman. FAO provided the Secretariat services.

**The following persons participated:**

Members: Y. Ashour  
T. Benhalima  
L. Soumaré  
M. Shafi  
A. Karrar (with apologies for absence)

FAO officials: N.A. Van der Graaff  
A. Hafraoui  
H. Niggemann  
M. de Montaigne  
K. Cressman  
B. Zelazny  
M. Mahjoub  
M. Taher

**3) Adoption of the Agenda**

The following agenda was adopted:

1. Opening of the Session
2. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Election of the Drafting Committee
5. Review of the information system
6. Existing control potential
7. Follow-up to recommendations of the 32nd Session of the DLCC
8. Preventive control strategies (EMPRES, reorganization of the Desert Locust control regional structures)
9. Desert Locust research activities

10. Environmental aspects of Desert Locust control
11. Obsolete pesticides
12. Training
13. Trust Fund 9161: contributions, expenditures, plan of work 95/96
14. Agenda of the 33rd Session of the DLCC
15. Criteria for Technical Group membership
16. Matters to be examined at the next Technical Group session
17. Date and place of the next session
18. Adoption of the report

#### **4) Election of the Drafting Committee**

The Drafting Committee was made up of Mr. Ben Halima, Mr. Soumaré and the Secretariat.

#### **5) Review of the Desert Locust information and forecasting system**

This item was introduced by the Secretariat, which emphasized the importance of information for reliable forecasting.

With a view to harmonizing and simplifying information gathering and transmittal, the Secretariat presented a summary table of all the required field information and suggested that the same format be used by all countries.

The Technical Group examined and refined the table, which will be submitted to the DLCC for adoption.

However, the Group stressed that if individual countries are to be able to gather and relay information properly, national Desert Locust control structures need to be sufficiently staffed and resourced, and able to employ new technologies that will enhance information quality.

#### **6) Existing control potential**

The Group felt that detailed inventories of available means should be resumed in individual countries and organizations so that FAO could assess the control potential more accurately, at least once a year, and put this potential to better use. The Secretariat would ask the DLCC member countries to send the appropriate data to Rome.

#### **7) Follow-up to the recommendations of the 32nd Session of the DLCC**

The Technical Group welcomed the manner in which this agenda item had been presented.

The Group noted that most of the recommendations had been put into effect. It also learnt of the Secretariat's difficulties in implementing some of the recommendations and urged perseverance.

#### **8) Preventive control strategies (Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases, reorganization of the Desert Locust control regional structures)**

Following examination of the documents<sup>1</sup> presented by the Secretariat on the EMPRES programme and its six objectives, the Technical Group stressed the relevance of establishing a preventive control strategy in the Central Region. It indicated, however, that this strategy should be rapidly extended to the two other regions affected by the Desert Locust.

The Technical Group noted that the documents in question amounted to a general programme that needed to be urgently broken down into a plan of work for effective preventive control in the Central Region.

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<sup>1</sup> Background paper, Resolution of the 106th Session of the FAO Council, Report of formulation mission I and II, Donor meeting, Report of Cairo Workshop

It also indicated that the programme's administrative structures needed to be as light and transparent as possible, and should be based on existing capacities.

The Technical Group was pleased to note that FAO would provide financial assistance for this programme and hoped that sufficient additional financial support would be forthcoming from donors and the countries concerned.

The Technical Group called for a review of the organization of the structures coordinating and implementing Desert Locust control so that realization of the global preventive control strategy could be facilitated.

## **9) Research activities**

The Technical Group was informed of the various research activities under way in the different regions.

In this connection, it noted:

- a wide dispersal of effort
- a duplication of research
- a lack of coordination among the various partners
- research in non-priority topic areas

While in favour of promoting Desert Locust research at all times, the Technical Group suggested that FAO should resume responsibility for coordinating research efforts, closely involving the countries and regional commissions and organizations.

It also proposed that the field research stations be revitalized to ensure their continuity.

## **10) Environmental aspects of Desert Locust control**

The Group reviewed current studies on assessing the risks to human health and the environment of using pesticides for Desert Locust control, focusing particularly on the studies carried out under the Locustox project in Senegal.

Given that research findings cannot be extrapolated, the Technical Group suggested that similar studies be conducted in other affected countries and regions.

It also proposed that training in environmental protection and safe pesticide use be stepped up.

## **11) Obsolete pesticides**

The Technical Group again concluded that the problem of obsolete pesticides posed a serious threat to the environment and human health. It suggested that the DLCC reiterated the recommendation it had made on this subject at its 32nd Session (Chapter XIV, para. 70 to 76).

Given the considerable importance attached by countries to this matter, the Technical Group suggested that the attention of FAO's governing bodies be drawn to this serious problem.

## **12) Training**

The Technical Group noted that the two fellowships under Trust Fund 9161 for the Western and Central Regions had not been used. It requested that these be awarded for the 1995-1996 academic year.

It also suggested that a third fellowship be made available for the Eastern Region of the Desert Locust invasion area for the same period.

The Technical Group called for the organization of inter-regional and specific training courses.

13) **Trust Fund 9161: contributions, expenditures, plan of work 95/96**

**PLAN OF WORK 95/96**

Budgetary proposal for the year 95/96 for examination by the DLCC Technical Group.

Based on approval of an annual budget of US\$ 206 000 and a current balance of US\$ 518 000, the following plan of work and budget is envisaged for the year 95/96:

	Budget 95 US\$	Budget 96 US\$
1) 3 fellowships starting summer 95	30 000	75 000
2) 3 fellowships 96		
2) Publication and distribution of The Desert Locust Bulletin	20 000	20 000
3) Financial assistance to regional commissions/and organizations for fax		
3) Translation/publication of Desert Locust Guidelines	10 000	
4) Desert Locust surveys in core areas	40 000	35 000
5) Cost of DLCC 95 meeting	20 000	
6) Training	20 000	10 000
7) DLCC 95/96 Technical Group	15 000	25 000
8) Expert technical meetings	15 000	15 000
9) Non-allocated balance	10 000	
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Total	180 000	180 000
FAO service costs 13%	23 400	23 400
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	203 400	203 400
Non-allocated balance	2 600	2 600
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Total budget	206 000	206 000
9) Reserve fund (emergency)		100 000

**N.B.**

- 1) The above budget is based on the present annual budget approved by the Committee amounting to US\$ 206 000. Implementation of the budget is conditional upon the money being available in the Trust Fund. The present sum of US\$ 518 000 is sufficient to cover the budget for 95 and 96, including a reserve appropriation of US\$ 100 000 exclusively for emergency situations.
- 2) Further contributions should be received during the course of 95/96, to add to the sum currently available. The Committee should therefore charge the FAO Secretariat to increase budget expenditure to reflect incremental sums received. Additional funds should be used in the following areas, in descending order of priority:
  - 1 - Technical assistance (consultations)
  - 2 - Control and survey equipment

#### **14) Criteria for Technical Group membership**

After discussion and examination of its mandate as determined by the DLCC, the Technical Group proposed the following amendments:

- 1) That Group members be chosen on the basis of individual ability and expertise.
- 2) That membership be as geographically representative as possible.
- 3) That the regional commissions and organizations be associated with the Technical Group as observers.
- 4) That the Technical Group be permanent unless the DLCC considers that its membership needs to be modified.

#### **15) Agenda of the 33rd Session of the DLCC**

The following agenda was agreed:

- 1) Opening of the Session
- 2) Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman
- 3) Adoption of the Agenda
- 4) Election of the Drafting Committee
- 5) The Desert Locust situation from October 1992 to January 1995
  - (a) The Desert Locust
  - (b) Other species
- 6) Control measures
- 7) Examination of existing control potential
- 8) Assistance provided to countries and regional organizations
- 9) Reports of the Desert Locust Technical Group
- 10) Follow-up to the recommendations of the 32nd Session
- 11) Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) for the Desert Locust
- 12) Preventive control strategy
- 13) Research activities
- 14) Environmental aspects of Desert Locust control
- 15) Obsolete and expired pesticides
- 16) Training
- 17) Status of regional locust commissions and organizations, and recommendation follow-up
  - (a) Near East Commission
  - (b) Northwest Africa Commission
  - (c) Southwest Asia Commission
  - (d) DLCO-EA
  - (e) OCLALAV
  - (f) IRLCO-CSA
- 18) Trust Fund 9161: contributions, expenditures and plan of work 1995-1996
- 19) Any other business
- 20) Date and place of next session
- 21) Adoption of report

#### **16) Matters to be examined at the next Technical Group session**

The Technical Group would like to use its meeting time to look closely into certain features of the Desert Locust problem as suggested by the DLCC, the Secretariat or determined by itself.

The Technical Group suggests that the following topic areas be examined at its next meeting:

- Strategy
- Reorganization of regional structures
- Information

The Technical Group asks that the Secretariat provide the relevant documentation in good time.

**17) Date and place of the next meeting of the Technical Group**

The next Technical Group meeting will depend on the date of the next DLCC session. The Group, which is supposed to meet twice a year, requests that the Secretariat make the necessary arrangements.

**18) Adoption of report**

This report was adopted unanimously and will be submitted to the next session of the DLCC for appraisal and approval.