



Main features, obligations and benefits under the *Agreement for the Establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region*

OVERVIEW

The Desert Locust (*Schistocerca gregaria*) is a major threat to agriculture and food security in the western region of Africa. The locust swarms, which can span vast areas, cause extensive crop destruction. The region is particularly vulnerable due to its arid and semi-arid climate, ideal for locust breeding. Desert locusts can devastate food production, leading to severe consequences for vulnerable communities reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods and result in severe economic losses.

In response to this persistent threat, the [Agreement for the Establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region](#) (the Agreement) was created. Adopted by the FAO Council in 2000, the Agreement aims to reduce desert locust emergency through the implementation of a sustainable preventive control strategy and by enhancing preparedness to control locust outbreaks across the western region of Africa, supporting regional food security and economic stability.

The current Members of the Commission are Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, The Gambia and Tunisia.

OBJECTIVES

The Agreement aims to enhance regional cooperation and coordination among affected countries in managing desert locust outbreaks. Key objectives include:

1. **Surveillance and Monitoring:** Establishing systems for early warning, including monitoring of locust populations in the desert locust breeding areas.
2. **Control and Mitigation:** Coordinating effective control measures to control outbreaks and development of upsurge aiming to minimize crop damage and protect food security.
3. **Regional Cooperation:** Fostering collaboration between Member States to share resources, information, and technical expertise.
4. **Capacity Building:** Strengthening the capacities of national locust control units for locust surveillance/control and management.
5. **Rapid Response:** Ensuring timely and coordinated responses to locust threats.

MAIN ELEMENTS

The Agreement is designed to foster regional cooperation and coordinated action to control outbreaks and reduce the risk of development of locust upsurge in the region, including through:

1. **Establishment of the Commission:** The Agreement establishes a regional body, the Commission, responsible for coordinating all locust control efforts among the Member States. This body is tasked with overseeing surveillance, monitoring, and management of locust infestations.
2. **Surveillance and Monitoring:** The Commission is tasked with establishing systems for continuous surveillance to detect locust populations and predict outbreaks, enabling early intervention.
3. **Coordination of Control Measures:** The Commission coordinates efforts for locust control, ensuring that Member states use standardized and effective methods for combating locusts, minimizing crop damage and loss.
4. **Technical Assistance and Information Sharing:** The Agreement facilitates the exchange of technical expertise, information, and research on locust control, improving national capacities.



5. **Capacity Building and Training:** The Agreement also emphasizes the development of local skills and expertise for effective locust management, ensuring long-term sustainability.
6. **Emergency Response Mechanisms:** The Agreement outlines protocols for rapid response to locust infestations, ensuring timely and coordinated actions to limit damage.
7. **Resource Mobilization:** It provides a framework for securing and mobilizing resources, including funding, to support locust control activities.

By addressing these elements, the Agreement strengthens regional collaboration and provides a comprehensive approach to controlling desert locust in the northern and western Africa.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS FOR PARTIES

The Agreement offers a wide range of benefits to Member States, clustered into three main areas: sustainability, economic, and governance:

A. SUSTAINABILITY

From a **sustainability** perspective, the Agreement enhances the long-term management of locust control through the development of sustainable strategies and access to technical expertise and resources. This **collaborative effort helps countries improve their capacities to manage the development of outbreaks, while minimizing environmental impacts**. Furthermore, coordinated pest management measures promote a more effective and environmentally responsible approach across the region.

B. ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Economically, the Agreement provides **significant protection by reducing the potential damage locusts can cause to agriculture, thus safeguarding food security and the livelihoods of farmers**. Member States also benefit from rapid response mechanisms that minimize economic losses during outbreaks. In addition, the Agreement opens doors to international funding and partnerships, bolstering resources for locust control and agricultural development projects.

C. GOVERNANCE

In terms of **governance**, the Agreement fosters regional cooperation and ensures a unified approach to locust monitoring and control. Through standardized measures, the Agreement enhances governance by promoting shared responsibility, improving decision-making processes, and providing a platform for knowledge exchange. This **strengthens the overall effectiveness and efficiency of locust management efforts across Member States**.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the Agreement, model instruments for adherence to the Agreement and treaty processes in FAO, please contact: treaties@fao.org



365 days of action