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DESERT LOCUST CONTROL COMMITTEE

Thirty-eighth Session

Rome, 11-15 September 2006

THE WORLD BANK AND LOCUST CONTROL (Agenda Item 8a)

This paper describes the World Bank's support during and after the 2003-2005 locust invasions.

The World Bank has been active with investment operations and analytical work related to locust outbreaks for several years. This includes investment projects in Algeria and Madagascar, and analytical work that produced the provocative report "Desert Locust Management – a Time for Change" published in 1994. The Bank is also involved in other areas of pest management, and has a specific safeguard policy on Pest Management.

In response to the 2003 invasion, the World Bank committed more than US\$ 60 million to address the problem. This was a reaction to requests from UEMOA, FAO and countries, to fill in the short fall in necessary funds and to complement commitments from other donors. The Bank – as a lender of last resort – decided to make US\$ 60 million in IDA Credits available to several Sub-Saharan countries for the Africa Emergency Locust Project (AELP). On September 22, two weeks after the Bank's decision to engage, an advance of US\$ 12.3 million was made available to the seven Sub-Saharan countries. In addition, a budget of US\$ 3.7 million was reallocated from existing IDA Credit for the Agriculture Producer Organization Project in Mali.

The Africa Emergency Locust Project aims to assist the governments in preventing present and future locust invasions. The project was designed in a participatory fashion with beneficiary countries. The project includes four components: 1) Emergency Locust Management, 2) Emergency Agriculture Investments, 3) Prevention and Early Warning, and 4) Project Management. Beneficiary countries include: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and The Gambia.

The Bank reached out to other donors and the FAO to ensure that Bank financing was complementary and not overlapping with other planned financing. The Bank met with donors at several occasions. This donor coordination culminated at the 2004 DLCC meeting at which donors agreed to address four key issues: 1) Coordination and joint planning framework for EMPRES, 2) Pesticides, including investigations for feasibility of a "Pesticide Bank", 3) Contingency planning, including identification of a long-term financing mechanism, and 4) Monitoring, review and evaluation, including an independent multi-lateral evaluation of the 2003-2005 locust control campaign.

National level leadership is required to ensure long-term sustainability and ownership of the technical support and investments provided by donors and technical agencies. For this reason, the Bank supports the building of national level capacity and political commitment to national locust control units to which donors and technical agencies would play a supporting role.

Regional Integration and Coordination of locust operations are key a successful management of locust outbreaks. The Bank is very committed to making this work and believes that the CLCPRO, 'owned' by Sahelian and Maghreb countries, should be the coordinating body. EMPRES, co-financed by several donors, including parallel activities financed by the Bank, should be the vehicle for specific technical support.

Collaboration with technical agencies such as FAO is important. The Bank recognizes the unique role of the FAO in monitoring of the Desert Locust situation across all regions and providing the necessary technical support. The regional commissions like CLCPRO should coordinate regional activities such as contingency planning, prevention system, pesticide management issues, opportunities for bio-pesticides, etc. Presently, however, it isn't entirely evident that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined among the various entities. The Bank favors a sound analysis of the current institutional set-up and is keen to provide support to undertake an assessment of the institutional framework for regional locust operations.

The Bank supported the Multilateral Evaluation financially along with many other donors. The Bank hopes that countries, donors and technical agencies will examine the recommendations emerging from this work carefully, and support their implementation. A large portion of the recommendations can be implemented through the existing Bank financed country projects under the Africa Emergency Locust Project.

Chemical pesticides are at times necessary, and when they are, countries and partners must adhere to the FAO Code of Conduct on pesticide distribution and use to prevent overstock or misuse of pesticides. For the Bank's locust project, the Bank put in place the necessary procedures to ascertain that all requests for procurement of pesticides were based on technical needs and capacity to use and store. At several occasions, the Bank objected to procurement of pesticides. We believe that this "extra screening procedure" is needed to prevent overstock of pesticides, and had hoped that countries and donors would have applied the same level of rigor. That could have prevented a portion of the current overstock of pesticides available in the western region.

Biological pesticides could constitute an excellent tool in the countries' preventive strategy to minimize effects of locust control on sensitive ecosystems. Together with partners, countries supported by the Bank have started to collaborate with FAO and others to promote alternatives to chemical pesticides. It is the Bank's expectation that viable options are identified, and that these alternative biological pesticides are used where it is warranted from an ecological and cost-effective point of view.

It is too costly to ignore the risk of pesticides becoming obsolete. Countries and donors are both responsible for ensuring that build up of obsolete stocks is prevented. Along with many partners, the Bank is engaged in the Africa Stockpiles Program, which is providing grant financing to eliminate obsolete stocks. The Africa Emergency Locust Project is prepared to contribute to managing obsolete stocks. The Bank is keen to ensure that the best possible safeguard measures are applied to prevent risks to humans and the environment.

Early on, the Bank recognized the need to establish a financing mechanism (a 'Locust Emergency Fund') that would be available to immediately provide the cash money needed in case of an invasion. The UN appeals system did not work satisfactory in 2002-2003, which is illustrated by the slow donor response. The Bank fully supports the development of a new way to finance locust emergencies, and recommends that a working group be put together to flesh out what options exist for a financing or insurance mechanism. Such a group should include technical experts on locust,

operations, donors, regional organizations, finance, insurance, as well as representatives from countries that would manage and use such a fund.

The World Bank sees the following issues as immediate priorities to advance the preparedness of countries and the international community to prevent future invasions of Desert Locust:

1. Implementation of recommendations emerging from the Independent Multi-Lateral Evaluation of the 2003-2005 campaign.
2. Emergency Fund for Locust Control. All options for such a fund should be evaluated against a set of criteria determined by key stakeholders (countries, donors, FAO). The purpose of the fund, the triggers determining how countries could access the funds and the host of the fund should be examined as well.
3. Pesticide Bank. While some concepts exist, there is a need to examine options for setting up a virtual 'Pesticide Bank'. The study should be carried out in a setting including key stakeholder (Industry, countries, donors, and technical agencies)
4. Bio-Pesticides. A review of the state of existing knowledge on the matter (building on results of previous experiences and tests), and preparation of concrete action plans at the country and regional levels are needed to operationalize the efficient use of bio-pesticides.
5. Management of Surplus / Obsolete Pesticides. A meeting on this topic took place in May 2006 and resulted in recommendations for how to manage the situation. However, inevitably, a large portion of the stocks will soon become obsolete. An overall assessment of viable alternative uses as well as the cost of disposal of obsolete stocks emerging after the locust invasion should take place.
6. Method for Evaluating Socio-Economic Effects of Locust Infestation. Countries will be invaded by locusts in the future. It would be useful to prepare a methodology for rapidly assessing any compensation needs of affected populations following an invasion. This would enable donors or the new "financing mechanism" to respond much sooner to restore livelihoods of affected populations.
7. Research Agenda on Locusts. Representatives of countries, technical agencies, International research centers, and scientists should get together to establish a common agenda for applied research on topics relevant to improving locust control in the future.
8. Institutional Assessment. The institutional assessment is described in greater detail above. In order to create full ownership of this study by the involved stakeholders, it is proposed that the terms of reference be available for review by the DLCC meeting in September 2006, and that the study be completed by the CLCPRO meeting of ministers in May 2007.

The Bank has experienced exceptionally good collaboration with countries, FAO, and donors on issues related to locusts. We consider it to be best practice. We hope that all partners will continue this good collaboration, and that the 38th session of the DLCC results in specific and implementable recommendations.