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**REPORT**

**EMERGENCY PREVENTION SYSTEM**

**FOR TRANSBOUNDARY ANIMAL AND PLANT PESTS AND DISEASES**

**(EMPRES)**

**(DESERT LOCUST COMPONENT)**

**1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the**

**“Joint CRC / EMPRES / DLCO-EA / FAO Technical Forum**

**for the Central Region” (TFCR)**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**12 – 13 December 2001**

**Plant Protection Service**  
**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**  
**2002**

1. Mr. Odiyo (Director of DLCO-EA), Mr. Hafraoui (FAO AGPP), Mr. Butrous (CRC), Mr. Tessema (DLCO-EA) and Mr. Pantenius (EMPRES/CR) attended the 1<sup>st</sup> FAO / CRC / EMPRES / DLCO Meeting to discuss matters of mutual concern of the two regional organizations in order to harmonize and standardize relevant components of locust control in the regional context. The meeting took place at the DLCO-EA HQ in Addis Ababa from 12 – 13 December 2001. The following subjects were tabled for discussion:
  - Development of standard training curricula and methodologies, emphasizing practical field exercises, to strengthen the capacities of the national agencies for regular training of new staff and retraining mechanisms.
  - Promotion of environmentally safer and effective technologies for controlling the Desert Locust, with emphasis on bio-pesticides and barrier treatment.
  - Strengthening the Desert Locust information management capacities of the member countries and their international networking systems.
  - Implementation of common standard Desert Locust reporting schemes.
  - Development of standard campaign monitoring mechanisms.
  - Strengthening the survey capacities in northern Somalia.
  - Development of a common approach towards improved preventive control strategies.
2. The participants agreed on the relevance of the outlined topics and decided to meet at least once a year alternately in Addis Ababa and Cairo in order to harmonize the technical approaches of the two regional structures (DLCO-EA and CRC), to avoid duplication and to strengthen regional cooperation for the benefit of member countries. It has been agreed that the meeting should provide a forum for mutual consultation on matters of common interests with the aim of accommodating and maintaining components of improved Desert Locust management developed under the EMPRES programme as provided in the conventions of the two Organizations.
3. The title of the meeting has been discussed and suggested to call the meeting “Joint Technical Forum for the Central Region” (TFCR) instead of “Technical Advisory Committee” in order to avoid misunderstanding with the Technical Advisory Meeting already existing at AGPP.
4. Regarding training on locust matters carried out under the EMPRES/CR programme, the CRC and DLCO-EA reached a common understanding that the training efforts should ultimately achieve significant commitments of the member countries to sustain training of Desert Locust subjects as part of their own national training programmes. For that purpose it was discussed how to develop a framework within the Central Region for short-, mid- and long-term training programmes. While short-term and medium-term training have been understood as primarily an obligation of the concerned governments, long-term training on special aspects of locust management may require donor support. It was agreed to adopt the training approach developed and introduced by the EMPRES/CR programme which focuses on practical field exercises instead of class room lectures and provides opportunities for all target groups at various levels. However, it was also suggested to give special attention to handling outbreak situations as part of a standardized training curriculum.
5. In the context of promoting safer control technologies in the Central Region and the DLCO-EA mandated countries, DLCO-EA pointed out that the support provided by EMPRES/CR to obtain DGPS equipment for one of their aircraft would enhance the

operational capacity of DLCO-EA significantly. It was agreed that EMPRES/CR and the CRC will give support in introducing this technology for more accurate aerial pesticides application during a first demonstration for Saudi and Omani experts. Pilots from private air companies should be invited to a proposed second demonstration in order to gain experience and to foster the introduction of the technology. It was suggested that the CRC and DLCO-EA member countries should be encouraged to tender only for aerial operators that provide DGPS equipment in their spray aircraft when aerial intervention is needed.

6. As a prerequisite for the registration requirements in member countries of bio-control agents such as "Green Muscle" it was pointed out that is essential to field-test such products according to "Good Laboratory Practices" (GLP). Considering the support been given to DLCO-EA by the Virginia Tech University in GLP procedures it was agreed to collaborate closely in the process of introducing bio-pesticides, whereby CRC and EMPRES/CR support field trials in Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, while DLCO-EA will look into the possibilities for conducting similar trials in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Instead of undergoing endless investigations on screening for potential "indigenous" bio-agents, both Organizations agreed to promote such bio-pesticides as are already commercially available. However, because concerns still exist regarding secondary effects of bio-pesticides on non-target organisms, it was agreed to investigate the possibility of introducing bio-products case-by-case in collaboration with the concerned national authorities, following the recommendations formulated during the VT-Pan-African Workshop and by the FAO Experts Consultation.
7. The FAO standard locust survey reporting form has been adopted by DLCO-EA and distributed to their partner institutions. DLCO-EA explained that the Organization is providing monthly summary reports on locust, armyworm and quelea birds to IGAD and DLIS at the FAO HQ. It was suggested to put also CRC and EMPRES/CR on the mailing list but these reports should be limited to locusts and grasshoppers only. With regard to the special case in Eritrea it was discussed that DLCO-EA could assist in sensitising the Plant Protection Section in making more appropriate use of the FAO survey form and to support more timely transfer of the survey reports to the DLIS in order to be included into the monthly FAO Desert Locust Bulletins.
8. Both Organizations underlined the importance of joint cross-border surveys between neighbouring countries where locust breeding areas are divided by political borders. DLCO-EA and CRC agreed to evaluate the possibilities for such surveys and should mediate between the concerned national authorities to sort out the prerequisites and modalities.
9. DLCO-EA showed high interest in introducing the "Reconnaissance and Monitoring System of the Environment of Schistocerca" (RAMSES) as a data management and forecasting tool into their organization and requested support in this aspect. But due to the financial constraints and the difficulties EMPRES/CR is facing after NRI retrenched its RAMSES experts, no concrete commitment is likely in the near future. It was agreed to review the situation and that all parties should make efforts to access alternative funding sources.
10. The difficulties in communicating with DLCO-EA by email, fax or telephone have been addressed. It was agreed that it is essential for a regional organization to have modern communication systems operating in order to keep close contact with the different partners and to be in the position to respond without delay in case of urgency. DLCO-EA explained the difficulties the Organization is facing with the

national telecommunication company and the fact that the switchboard at the Head Office is outdated and needs urgent replacement by a modern one. DLCO-EA is aware of the possible negative consequences for the Organization and has initiated steps with a donor to improve the internal office network as well as its capacity to link-up in the regional information network as appropriate.

11. The consequences for the regional locust survey and information system after the EMPRES UNV left northern Somalia and the sudden death of the DLCO-EA caretaker in Hargeisa were discussed. It has already been decided earlier that the DLCO-EA Forecasting Officer based in Nairobi should supervise the activities of the newly appointed DLCO-EA caretaker and should work out survey plans and schedules together with the EMPRES NPO(Survey). It also has been agreed that EMPRES/CR would fund the survey operations. As additional measures it was suggested to discuss with AGPP the possibility of recruiting a NPO in Hargeisa under the EMPRES/CR programme. In any case DLCO-EA underlined that it is in its capacity and mandate closely to follow up the developments and survey operations in northern Somalia and to keep CRC, EMPRES/CR and DLIS informed. Also other possibilities such as hiring the EMPRES Liaison Officer from Djibouti to backstop the DLCO-EA caretaker in Hargeisa and the MoA staff were discussed.
12. DLCO-EA accepted to introduce the revised spray monitoring form also for monitoring of aerial control operations and to transmit copies of the completed forms to CRC and EMPRES/CR whenever aerial interventions are carried out.
13. The need was felt to develop a standard "Code of Good Campaign Conduct" based on the FAO guidelines for control operations, which should also be translated into local languages as reference for the national field operators. CRC and EMPRES/CR will work out a draft to be submitted to DLCO-EA for approval and distribution to its member countries. In addition, DLCO-EA, CRC and EMPRES/CR agreed to develop and introduce a campaign-reporting format in the DLCO-EA and CRC Regions in order to develop a more precise picture of the resources used, the impact of locust control campaigns and their cost.
14. With regard to the development of a common understanding of the current status of preventive control in the member countries and the definition of improved preventive locust management strategies taking into account regional outreach, it was decided to hire a consultant to review the relevant papers developed under EMPRES/CR.

#### **Recommendations:**

- DLCO-EA should provide CRC and EMPRES/CR with its training programme and curricula.
- The member countries should actively be approached to introduce the EMPRES/CR training curriculum into their national training programmes.
- CRC and EMPRES/CR should support DGPS demonstrations carried out by DLCO-EA and favour the participation of private air operators.
- CRC, EMPRES/CR and DLCO-EA should assess the possibilities for conducting metarhizium trials in their member countries.
- In support of the registration process of bio-pesticides in the member countries, CRC, EMPRES/CR and DLCO-EA should follow up the recommendations formulated by the participants of the Pan-African workshop and the FAO Experts Consultation.

- DLCO-EA should put CRC and EMPRES/CR on the mailing list of their monthly locust reports.
- CRC, EMPRES/CR and DLCO-EA should coordinate joint cross border surveys with the interested countries.
- Efforts should be undertaken to access funding for installing the RAMSES data management system at the DLCO-EA HQ.
- Mr. Charles Mushi should be requested to produce a confidential report on his mission in northern Somalia.
- The UNDP Office in Djibouti should be requested to assess the possibility of Djiboutian staff entering Somaliland to carry out locust surveys.
- DLCO-EA HQ should closely monitor the joint efforts in re-structuring the survey system in northern Somalia
- DLCO-EA should make regular use of the standard FAO spray monitoring form.
- Mr. Zelazny should be hired to review the EMPRES/CR baseline study and the strategy paper.
- Follow up the recommendations during the next meeting of the “Joint Technical Forum for the Central Region” by end of 2002.