

REPORT

**EMERGENCY PREVENTION SYSTEM
(EMPRES)**

For Transboundary Animal and Plant
Pests and Diseases

DESERT LOCUST COMPONENT

**SECOND MEETING
OF THE
CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

Rome
24 – 26 November 1999



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

OPENING

1. The Second Meeting of the EMPRES (Desert Locust) Consultative Committee for the Central Region was opened by Mr.Mahmud Duwayri, Director, Plant Production and Protection Division, in the presence of the Assistant Director-General, Agriculture Department, Mr.Abdoulaye Sawadogo. Mr.Duwayri welcomed participants to Rome and reminded them that EMPRES placed its main emphasis on strengthening the early warning and early reaction components of Desert Locust management, on searching for new ways to achieve preventive control, and on increasing collaboration among locust-affected countries. He said that it was hoped that the meeting would lead to an increased commitment from the locust-affected countries and he also thanked the donor countries for their generous support of the EMPRES First Phase. Mr.Duwayri drew attention to two important items on the Agenda, namely a review of the Evaluation Mission Report and discussion of the best approach to developing a Second Phase. He wished the meeting every success in its deliberations.
2. Mr. N. Van der Graaff, Chief, AGPP chaired the meeting and FAO provided the Secretariat, following the practice established at the First Consultative Committee Meeting.
3. A list of participants is given in Annex I.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

4. The agenda(Annex II), was adopted.

REVIEW OF EMPRES (CENTRAL REGION) PROGRESS AND CONSTRAINTS IN 1999

5. The acting Coordinator of the Central Region Programme, Mr. Pantenius presented the working paper. He pointed out that the format of the report had been changed to make it clearer what progress had been achieved against the Programme Outputs, the indicators that had been developed, the activities planned in the 1999 Workplan and the status of each activity. It was hoped that this would fit better with the requirements indicated by the Consultative Committee at its last meeting.
6. The acting Coordinator described progress with the Country Focus programmes now under way in Eritrea, Yemen and Sudan. He said that a special effort had been made to develop a better training programme which would make more use of resources in the Region. Regional workshops on training concepts, and on developing training skills, had been held, along with a number of national training events including the first one in Djibouti which had involved participants from Somalia. Progress on information exchange including the installation of RAMSES was mentioned. A number of initiatives had been taken to promote the use of biocontrol agents, in collaboration with locust-affected countries and outside institutions. In general, progress on research had been slow partly because of difficulties in obtaining general agreement on the best approach, but also because of lack of locust populations with which to work. Contingency planning workshops were conducted in Ethiopia and Yemen.

7. The meeting expressed its satisfaction with the progress report and the format in which it had been presented.

REPORT OF THE EMPRES CENTRAL REGION EVALUATION MISSION.

8. Participants had been provided, ahead of the meeting, with a copy of the Report together with a copy of FAO's comments on it. The Team Leader of the three-man mission Mr. Bultemeier summarized the highlights of the mission's findings. He noted that the mission had worked for one month and had visited six countries. In several of the countries, brainstorming sessions had been held with locust officials and other Government authorities to discuss their perceptions of the EMPRES Programme.

9. The mission Team Leader said that EMPRES Central Region (CR) Programme had been widely praised by participating countries and institutions for its contribution to improved Desert Locust management. The EMPRES concept was also generally supported. He said that the mission recognized that important results had been or were near to being achieved. Nevertheless it had been difficult to evaluate progress because of the lack of structure in the Programme Document, and the absence of an implementation plan and of benchmarks against which the mission could measure what should have been completed by July 1999. Mr. Bultemeier mentioned that the mission had also been concerned about the lack of clarity concerning the duties and responsibilities of staff in the field and backstoppers at FAO HQ. In the mission's opinion, it was essential that better planning be employed if it was decided to proceed to a Second Phase. The mission had felt that the issue of developing sustainability of EMPRES activities was an important one for the Consultative Committee to address.

10. In discussions that followed, various delegates expressed their appreciation of the impressive work done by the Evaluation Mission and the rapid reaction of FAO in correcting several of the problems to which the Mission had drawn attention.

11. The delegate from Germany raised the question of what steps FAO would take to deal with the personnel changes which the Programme had or would shortly incur. The Secretariat pointed out that the resignation of the Coordinator had only taken effect on 10 October 1999, and an acting Coordinator had immediately taken over. In the case of the APO, his departure was a normal end-of-contract with no automatic replacement. The Chairman said that FAO would very soon review the situation both in respect of replacing the Coordinator and in ensuring sufficient HQ backstopping during 2000. In respect of the latter, it was intended that as much of the administration as possible be devolved to the field.

12. The delegate from Yemen suggested that collaboration between EMPRES Central and EMPRES in the other two Regions should be improved, and that the experience gained in the Central Region should be shared with the others. The Secretariat informed the meeting that plans for such collaboration were in place, involving, *inter alia*, exchange visits of personnel.

13. The delegate from Sudan said that the problem of decentralizing locust management in the Sudan mentioned by the Mission had already been resolved. It had been decided that for migratory pests, a centralized authority was required.

14. Several delegates from the locust-affected countries pointed out that the Mission Report had been provided only in English. An Arabic version of this and other documentation would have been appreciated. The Secretariat pointed out that a number of EMPRES documents had been translated into Arabic, but that there had been time constraints because the Mission Report only became available very recently. It was hoped that the provision of Arabic interpretation during the meeting would to some extent offset the matter. It was intended to provide the Consultative Committee Report in Arabic and English.

15. The delegate from the Netherlands noted that the Mission had made little mention of national capacity building or of economic aspects. The Team Leader replied that the Mission recognized the importance of national capacity building but had focussed on regional capacity and regional sustainability because of the limited time available. The Mission had recognized the importance of further studies on locust economics.

16. The delegate from the United States raised questions about the Mission's comments that certain donors were engaging themselves in the management of the programme, that the approval system for funds from the USAID contribution was a serious impediment to workplanning, that of the 8 consultants fielded by the Programme only 4 had produced useful results and that the Report had appeared to include much summary of Programme activities and less evaluation of them. The Team Leader responded that it was FAO's Evaluation Service policy to make Evaluation Reports self-contained which required that a summary be made of a Programme's activities, but he did not accept that the report lacked evaluation as it contained numerous conclusions and recommendations for action. The Secretariat said that any issues of "micro-management" by donors were minor and could be dealt with through suitable discussion. The Secretariat further stated that the USAID approval system had had no effect on programme workplanning. The Secretariat also considered that all the consultants fielded had made useful contributions to the programme, though some had been more effective than others.

17. The delegate from the United Kingdom asked if the administrative/management problems raised by the Mission had been resolved by FAO. The Chairman said there had been some notable recent improvements and it was expected that these matters would proceed more smoothly in the future.

18. Several delegates mentioned the Mission's conclusion that progress in research had been limited. The Mission had suggested that the Programme should focus on simple research projects that might more easily achieve results. The lack of locusts had also been a constraint. The acting Coordinator explained that concrete steps had already been taken to start several research projects at the national and regional levels but that the concept of Cooperative Research Teams had been difficult to implement. Research activities had been reviewed at the recent Liaison Officers Meeting and it was intended to emphasise small projects using institutions in the

Region. If necessary, outside expertise would be used to help develop suitable projects.

19. In concluding the presentation, the Chairman thanked the Evaluation Mission team for its excellent and timely work. FAO had examined the recommendations made very closely and was taking whatever corrective action was necessary.

REVIEW OF THE EVALUATION MISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

20. The Committee decided to go through the Mission's conclusions and recommendations. Major points from the discussions are given below.

21. The Committee agreed that workplanning had already improved as shown in the presentation of the Progress Report. The Secretariat accepted the Mission's proposal to redraft the Programme Document to remove the vagueness and to reflect the expected 12-year span of EMPRES Central Region. It was noted that a separate Programme Document had been developed for the Western Region and donor-support was being sought.

22. It was recalled that the last Committee meeting had agreed on an Annual Report for EMPRES Central Region as a whole and a six-monthly report specifically for the NET project. It was concluded that the only change needed was that improvements would be introduced in the format of the Annual Report, along the lines of the Progress Report presented to the Committee, so that outputs, activities, indicators and status were recorded.

23. On the role of EMPRES Liaison Officers (ELOs), the Committee agreed that the responsibilities of ELOs had been clearly stated and that their contribution to EMPRES was a core element of the process of helping the locust-affected countries towards self-improvement of locust management. It was important that all EMPRES matters concerning their Governments should pass through them and the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that greater care be taken to follow this practice.

24. It was noted that past difficulties in collaboration between the CRC and EMPRES had largely been resolved, as reflected in the steps already taken to develop a joint workplan for 2000.

25. The Committee noted that locust surveys conducted jointly on borders or in-country but with neighbouring countries participating, helped to foster understanding and improvement. The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that EMPRES and the CRC should assist in their organization.

26. The current status of economic studies was discussed. It was noted that preparartions were underway to develop research projects in Egypt, Sudan and Yemen. They would build on the results of the preliminary economic analysis completed in 1998 and on a more recent complementary study done at the University of Hannover.

REVIEW OF THE WORKPLAN FOR 2000, AS DEVELOPED BY THE LIAISON OFFICERS WORKSHOP (6-10 NOVEMBER 1999)

27. The acting Coordinator, Mr.Pantenius, presented the working paper. He explained that the Workplan 2000 had been developed at the 7th ELO Meeting in Sana'a held two weeks earlier. It had followed a participatory format in which all participants had had an equal opportunity to contribute to the plan's development. Preliminary estimates suggested that the Workplan activities would cost somewhat more than the funds available at this point and some prioritisation would have to be made. Furthermore the CRC Secretary and he would sit together early in 2000 to fill in the details of the joint-workplan and the activities which would be carried out jointly. Individual workplans for each EMPRES staff member would be developed at a staff meeting early in January. It was intended to circulate the fully developed workplan to all the countries for final comments as soon as it was ready.

28. The delegate from Ethiopia asked for details of the Information Officers mentioned in the Workplan. It was explained that these would be Government staff. Their responsibilities would be restricted to the collection and analysis of locust data, in contrast to the ELOs who were responsible for the overall management of EMPRES activities in their countries.

29. On e-mail communications between countries, it was noted that Djibouti//Sudan/Yemen still lacked their own Locust Centre or PPD e-mail. The rectification of this situation had been included in the 2000 Workplan.

30. The Committee agreed that good progress had been achieved both in the method of workplan development and in its format and it was expected that the final version would achieve the necessary standard.

REVIEW OF 1999 EXPENDITURES, THE BUDGET FOR 2000 AND THE FINANCIAL SITUATION FOR THE COMING YEARS

31. The Secretariat provided a summary of EMPRES Central Region expenditure, both in terms of contributions from different funding sources as well as according to expenditure category. It was estimated that the total amount spent in 1999 would reach \$ 1.7 million (compared to \$ 1.4 million in 1998, and 0.9 million in 1997), with about one third of this amount being spent on staff costs. In most cases expenditure was as foreseen in the budgets of the various EMPRES contributions. However, significant underexpenditures were expected in the Swiss contribution because a number of planned research activities had not yet started for reasons already explained. It was noted that detailed expenditure records for 1999 would be provided individually to the donors as soon as the final 1999 expenditures became available from the FAO Finance Division. This may be later than usual because of the change over from the FINSYS to the ORACLE systems.

32. A review of the the financial situation for future years revealed a 13% reduction in available funds for the years 2000 and a 32% reduction for 2001. It was pointed out that expenditure in 2000 would have been expected to be higher than in 1999, because several research initiatives were expected to begin in 2000 and two

major workshops had been carried over. The impact on activities even in 2000 was likely to be significant.

33. The meeting noted that the financial outlook was made more difficult by a number of factors, which included:

- substantial resources continuing to be required for the UNV post and for conducting survey operations in Somalia;
- during the Country Focus programme in Sudan the need for a considerable quantity of equipment and other inputs were identified for achieving a capacity for effective preventive control;
- the possibility that the developing Desert Locust outbreak in West Africa might divert some funds.

34. The Secretariat undertook to work with DLCO to seek solutions to the high cost of surveys in Somalia. Some positive aspects emerged from further discussion. The delegate from the United States said that it was likely that USAID would be able to make additional resources available to EMPRES in 2000. In addition, the increased collaboration between the Central Region Commission and EMPRES would translate into cost savings because many activities would be jointly implemented and funded. FAO would also continue to seek contributions from potential new donors.

PLANNING FOR A SECOND PHASE OF THE EMPRES CENTRAL REGION PROGRAMME

35. The working paper was presented by EMPRES consultant Mr.G.Spendjian who had been involved in the original formulation of the EMPRES Programme. He said that in his long experience of project and programme formulation, he had rarely come across a programme as complex as EMPRES (Desert Locust) which had to take into account the insect's ecology, the great differences between the locust-affected countries concerned and the multi-donor support that was being provided. He informed the meeting that in addition to catching up on the many and impressive EMPRES activities and reports, he had also closely analysed the comments and recommendations of the recent Evaluation Mission. The Mission had noted that the original Programme Document contained some vagueness in respect of outputs expected, progress indicators, workplans and management arrangements. It had recommended that the Programme Document be modified accordingly. The consultant himself endorsed this recommendation but suggested that such clarification should not change the basic conceptual framework which was well accepted. It was also necessary that the Consultative Committee consider the long-term structure and scope of the programme, together with what resources could be allocated by the countries and the donors to implement it.

36. In the consultant's view, the next step after revising the Programme Document would be to hold a Planning Workshop for the Second Phase comprising technical representatives of both the locust-affected countries and the donors, in which the revised Programme Document would be reviewed and an Implementation Document for Phase II would be prepared. In line with the recommendation of the Evaluation Mission, the latter Document could be composed of a "core" element and have, as necessary, satellite projects addressing particular issues or research topics.

37. In discussions that followed, it was noted the objectives of the EMPRES Programme needed to be re-defined for every future phase. In Phase I, five areas of work had been identified with the emphasis on strengthening capacity at the national, regional and international levels. Logically, Phase II should build on what had been achieved and give attention to those aspects on which little progress had been made. However targets that can be realistically achieved, needed to be clearly identified.

38. Comments were made by the locust-affected countries outlining the benefits they had already received from EMPRES. They were unanimously in support of continuing EMPRES activities, towards creating strengthened national capacity as the fundamental component of sustainable preventive control. These delegates also expressed interest in further improvements in information exchange and in research.

39. On the donors side, the Netherlands said that consideration could be given to reallocating their funds already budgetted for 2001 and 2002 to the new Phase. Germany said that for the next Phase the Trust Fund format was not acceptable but it was likely that their contribution could be made bilaterally rather than through FAO. On behalf of Switzerland, consideration would be given, like the Netherlands, to reallocating funds already provided, to the Second Phase. The United States said that its funding was allocated on an annual basis and that these funds would normally be available to support the Second Phase. The United Kingdom said that it would investigate both the possibility of a TF contribution to the Second Phase, and, alternatively, of continued bilateral support to EMPRES.

40. The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Secretariat should proceed with redrafting the Programme Document with the aim of circulating it to all interested parties by the end of January 2000. It was further **RECOMMENDED** that the Secretariat should organize a Planning Workshop for the Second Phase at the end of March 2000. The Committee favoured a three-year duration for the Second Phase of the Programme. All documentation should be translated into Arabic.

LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF DESERT LOCUST MANAGEMENT IN THE EMPRES CENTRAL REGION

41. The Secretariat presented the working paper, pointing out that the item was included in the Agenda as decided by the First Consultative Committee. The Committee's recommendation had been that the CRC was the most suitable body through which to achieve sustainability of EMPRES outputs, and this was still considered valid. The Secretariat also proposed that as a contribution towards sustainability, consideration could be given to expanding the function of the Contingency Funds held by the CRC and by the DLCC.

42. The discussions that took place at the 23rd Session of the CRC Executive Committee which resulted in agreement to invite the four EMPRES countries that were not members (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia) and to develop a joint-workplan with EMPRES, had been significant steps forward towards creating a regional structure which would ensure that the capacity for preventive Desert Locust

management, established by EMPRES, can be maintained in the long term in the Region. Such a structure should be based on solidarity among the countries.

43. The CRC Secretary recalled that before EMPRES had come into existence, the CRC had already recognized the importance of including the four countries and had amended its constitution to permit them to join. FAO had sent letters inviting their membership. Although interest had been shown, no decision had been taken.

44. The delegate from DLCO-EA said that DLCO appreciated the activities that EMPRES had initiated in the Region and had no objection to the four countries considering membership of the CRC. The Committee discussed the different roles of the the CRC and DLCO. It was noted that the main difference was that DLCO maintained an operational capacity through its fleet of spray aircraft and also covered quelea, armyworm and tsetse in addition to the Desert Locust. . CRC, on the other hand, was limited to Desert Locust control and had the overall objective of promoting national and regional research and action with respect to Desert Locust control in the Central Region. There was overlap between the two in that both carried out locust training and provided a forum for discussion. There was little or no prospect that DLCO could expand its operations to cover all the Desert Locust countries in the Region, whereas CRC's constitution allowed the membership of the missing four.

45. In conclusion, the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the question of sustainability be maintained on the Agenda at future meetings and that it be included as an important matter in the Second Phase. It was further **RECOMMENDED** that the four countries consider membership of the CRC. The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the expansion of Contingency Funds, as a contribution to sustainability, be considered at future CRC and DLCC meetings.

FUTURE COMPOSITION AND ROLE OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

46. The Secretariat presented the working paper, recalling the previous discussions that had taken place on the mandate, composition and frequency of the Committee.

47. In the discussions that followed, it was agreed that no change was required in the mandate or the composition. It was noted that the Evaluation Mission had proposed that the Committee need only meet once every two years. However, on the basis that 2000 represented the end of the EMPRES First Phase and that the Committee would probably need to examine the final version of the Second Phase Document at the end of the year, it was **RECOMMENDED** that the Committee should meet at an appropriate date at the end of 2000. The meeting should be held within the Central Region. A decision could be taken at that meeting whether the Committee should continue to meet annually or if a biennial schedule would be more appropriate.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

48. The delegate from Sudan raised the question of the need for security in border areas so that Desert Locust surveys could be carried out unhindered. In discussions

that followed, the importance of border surveys in general and joint-border surveys in particular was stressed. They kept a check on potentially favourable locust habitats and when done jointly improved understanding and collaboration between countries. Where problems of insecurity occurred, the possibility of FAO making pleas to the countries concerned was raised.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

49. The report, with amendments, was adopted. In adopting the report, it was noted that the delegate of Yemen did not have the authority to approve the report. It was agreed that the final version of the report would be sent to the Yemeni authorities. Any comments received would be copied to all the members of the Committee.

CLOSURE

50. The Director of the Plant Production and Protection Division, Mr. Mahmud Duwayri, complimented participants on the satisfactory conclusion of an important meeting which had made a very useful contribution to the future smooth implementation of the EMPRES Central Region Programme. The Chairman thanked everybody for the constructive manner in which the meeting had been held. In addition, he acknowledged the staff who had prepared the report and thanked the interpreters for their work and their flexibility. He wished participants a safe journey home and formally closed the meeting.

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**Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES)
for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests
and Diseases
(Desert Locust Component – Central Region)**

2nd Consultative Committee Meeting

Rome, 24-26 November 1999, Lebanon Room (D209)

AGENDA

1. Opening (9:30h).
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Review of EMPRES (Central Region) progress and constraints in 1999.
4. Report of the EMPRES Central Region Evaluation Mission.
5. Review of the workplan for 2000, as developed by the Liaison Officers Workshop (6-10 November in Sana'a).
6. Review of 1998/1999 expenditures, the budget for 2000 and the financial situation for coming years.
7. Planning for a 2nd phase of the EMPRES Central Region programme.
8. Future composition and role of the Consultative Committee.
9. Long-term sustainability of Desert Locust management in the EMPRES Central Region.
10. Any other business
11. Adoption of the report

