

Proposal for a Common African Plant Protection Strategy (CAPPS)

2001 Baseline

Major achievements have been made to increase agricultural production in Africa during the last decades. However, Africa is still lagging behind other regions in the world in terms of per capita agricultural production and trade. Weak capacities of the majority of national plant protection and quarantine services in Africa, coupled with the ongoing process to liberalise African economies and increase trade, and in the absence of adequate plant protection and quarantine measures, have led to increased threats of pest introductions and spread. Further, the inability of most countries to respond to the new challenges and requirements of importing countries, international agreements, and conventions makes it imperative and urgent for the IAPSC, in collaboration with its partners, to develop and coordinate a common plant protection strategy for Africa.

2020 Vision

Plant protection in Africa is visualised as an instrument that can provide substantial input towards the sustainable development of agriculture until 2020. Through this vision, three basic elements in African agriculture can be brought to bear:

1. Sufficient food and feed with satisfying quality is available at any point in time for the entire population of the African continent.
2. African agricultural exports increase and meet world market standards at competitive prices.
3. Environmentally acceptable plant protection policies and practices that are safe for human health and which do not impede trade and/or exchange in plants and plant products.

Principles

Systems Approach

The most promising approach for a common African plant protection strategy is a systems approach. This approach provides for systematic measures for pest risk management and phytosanitary protection, taking into consideration political, socio-economic, geographical, climatic, and those of locally prevailing farming systems, markets, stakeholders, etc. Participatory approaches should be prioritised for target group oriented research & development work and extension.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Most farming systems are complex with several interrelated sub-systems, thus making IPM the most rational approach for prevention of losses during production, storage and processing. The IPM approach should be adopted for all pest control practises and in this context, should underlie any plant protection policies at national and regional levels. Due note should therefore be taken of both past and current IPM experiences and success stories (e.g. in Zimbabwe, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Sudan, etc.). The strategy should be aimed at the

promotion of IPM and plant protection policies at all levels. IPM methods should be adapted to the economic and technological potential of the respective target groups using participatory methods. The potential of new technologies such as genetic engineering to increase productivity as well as to minimize losses has to be carefully evaluated on a case by case basis and implemented where it is feasible, safe and economically sound.

Key Elements

The implementation of a Africa-wide plant protection strategy is based on a number of key elements that have to be developed at national and regional levels. They include:

1. Sound national and regional agricultural and plant protection [policies](#) that provide an enabling environment for increases in agricultural production and improved quality (e.g. removal of subsidies on pesticides except as an emergency measure to mitigate against pest and diseases outbreaks).
2. National [legislations](#) that are harmonized with the existing international standards (e.g. Codex Alimentarius recommendations), conventions (e.g. IPPC, POPs, PIC) and trade regulations (the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of WTO). Care should be taken that the legislations are not over-ambitious and can be implemented with means locally available.
3. Capacity building for highly performing [enforcement](#) mechanisms for legislation and regulations (well equipped services and laboratories with clearly defined mandates and sufficient qualified staff) at national and regional levels.
4. Support for [participatory research](#), development and extension programs with M&E systems for the local adaptation of plant protection methods that are target and target group oriented (intensive collaboration between international, regional and national agricultural research institutes and special consideration of socio-economic issues to be promoted).
5. Encouragement of [participatory extension](#) programs including M&E systems (special attention should be given to the question how a performing extension system can be put in place with a limited number of public extension officers, e.g. with voluntary farmer extensionists, involvement of the non-governmental sector including private companies, farmer field schools, etc.).
6. Empowerment of [women farmers](#) and [youth groups](#) through training in IPM and systems approach
7. Promoting [regulatory plant protection services](#) that restrict themselves to issues related to sovereignty (e.g. enforcement of regulations and implementation of the national agricultural policy based on system approach and IPM, but which eliminates government levies and surcharges imposed on all agricultural inputs).
8. Provision where lacking and improvement of physical infrastructures and capacity building for [Pest Risk Analysis \(PRA\)](#), and other new technologies and products that contribute to crop protection in Africa.
9. Identification of [further priority issues](#) (e.g. disposal of obsolete pesticides, prevention and control of migratory and swarm building pests).

Implementation of the New Strategy

The implementation of the common African plant protection strategy requires the involvement of all stakeholders including the private sector within an overall IAPSC-coordinated framework. Elements of this framework are :

1. Seeking the adoption of the strategy during the 20th General Assembly of IAPSC in Cote d'Ivoire in April 2002
2. Establishing an African taskforce for further development and advice on implementation of the strategy .
3. Promoting the new strategy further through capacity building programs and information dissemination
4. Putting in place a mechanism for coordination and collaboration with ongoing initiatives and institutions involved in development and implementation of plant protection programs and policies in Africa is essential
5. Sensitising governments and other stakeholders of the African countries to take responsibility for the implementation of this strategy in line with the objectives of the common strategy on plant protection policies CAPPS.