



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND
REGIONAL INTEGRATION

JOINT COMMUNIQUE'

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF DESERT LOCUST AND OTHER TRANSBOUNDARY PESTS IN THE IGAD REGION:

THE ENDORSEMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

17 JUNE 2021

We, the Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Livestock of the Member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) namely: Republic of Djibouti, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Republic of Kenya, Federal Republic of Somalia, Republic of South Sudan, Republic of the Sudan and Republic of Uganda, held a virtual ministerial meeting on the sustainable management of Desert Locust (DL) and Other Transboundary Pests (OTPs) in the IGAD Region on 17 June 2021, to discuss and enforce a shared agenda with a set of recommendations and a way forward, with representatives from international and regional organizations involved in Food Security and Nutrition, and Desert Locust Control Operations (DLCO-EA, CRC, Development Partners, FAO and other UN Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations).

Recalling the decision of the 34th Extraordinary Summit of the IGAD Heads of State and Government held on 9 February 2020 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia endorsing three recommendations of the IGAD Council of Ministers on the desert locust invasion, namely:

- Calling upon Member States to act collectively through IGAD and join forces with neighbors and relevant agencies including the Desert Locust Control Organization towards the total eradication of this pest and address the broader aspects of climate change in the region;
- Urging Member States through the IGAD Secretariat to be proactive in sharing information and best practices to coordinate and build the necessary capacity in combating the locust menace to predict, monitor and control the spread of new swarms; and
- Calling on international Development Partners to build the requisite financial, technical and logistical capacities of IGAD Member States, and support ongoing efforts to effectively fight the locust invasion.

Further recalling the communiqué adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union at its 917th meeting held on 9 April 2020, on the humanitarian situation in the countries affected by desert locust invasion in Africa:

Further recalling and building on the statement of the virtual Ministerial Meeting on Desert Locust invasion and Coordination of Control Operation in the IGAD region held on 21st May 2020, that specific recommendations for IGAD member states around;

- Desert Locust impact assessment and development of livelihood support contingency and recovery plans for the worst-case scenario;
- The structure and operational function of a regional and inter-regional desert locust control plan and coordination framework;
- A joint inter-regional and IGAD Regional Contingency and Response Action Plan;
- Intensification of desert locust response, in consideration of the challenges that could disrupt desert locust operations due to COVID-19 pandemic:

Based on the report of the High-Level Virtual Regional Technical Consultation Meeting on Prevention and Monitoring of future Desert Locust outbreaks in the region on 4th and 5th of MAY 2021 and recommendations therein, we have agreed to a shared agenda for action on sustainable management of Desert Locust to :

On Strategies and preparedness

1. Establish dedicated desert locust units or teams in relevant national entities to maintain a high level of alertness on potential desert locust invasion/upsurge.
2. Building on the achievements of the ongoing campaign, each member country should develop a national preparedness plan encompassing the required institutional and human capacity, infrastructure/technology, training programs, research, and information required for a sustainable national system. A similar system should be developed at the regional level to create connection between the individual national plans and support cross-border cooperation.
3. IGAD and Member States should build effective surveillance, monitoring and early warning and early response systems to prevent locust outbreaks/upsurges in future through a coordinated national and cross-border protocol
4. Develop national and regional risk assessment and crisis management plans for desert locusts and other transboundary pests, considering the possible changes in desert locust gregarious distribution areas due to climate change leading to the development of more frequent upsurges, within and beyond the frontline countries.

Regional and/or Interregional collaboration

5. Build a repository on data and information on desert locusts (expanded to other transboundary pests for invasion countries) and establish sharing mechanisms to ensure availability of data to member states.
6. Establish (and continuously update) a coordinated national and regional communications plan by IGAD Member States while learning from the recent upsurge. The communications plan will include guidance for outreach with the media and donor community, and effective communications campaigns for civil society and affected populations.
7. Establish public-private partnership (PPP) agreements at national and regional level to maintain and strengthen the availability of supplies and services needed to respond to desert locusts and other pest outbreaks, while learning from the current upsurge about the role of the private sector as a key partner in the fight against pests.

On Governance and coordination

8. Conduct external and independent institutional assessment of desert locust and other transboundary pests through an established Task Force coordinated by IGAD. The assessment should map the technical, institutional and financial sustainability (reviewing roles and mandates, identifying overlaps and synergies, etc.) or the related regional and inter-regional institutions (DLCO-EA and CRC) in consideration of the different needs of invasion and frontline countries.
9. Develop a regional funding plan to secure/resume member states financial support/contribution based on the findings of the assessment. And possibly increase the available annual resource.
10. Establish an inter-regional platform to facilitate exchanges between frontline countries in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, and invasion countries. The platform will aim to enhance institutional arrangements and create a joint/coordinated strategy for frontline and invasion countries, coordinate response, training plans, sharing of information, and conducting south-south exchange programs to promote experience sharing and learning.
11. Review policies and regulations to support an effective response to desert locusts and other transboundary pests at national and regional (cross-border) level.
12. Develop a comprehensive plan for the modernization/reform of existing and/or new regional institutions.

On Research and innovation

13. Commit to work with research institutions at national, regional and international levels to conduct fundamental assessments and research on topics related to surveillance and management of desert locusts and other transboundary pests.
14. Develop research agenda on the use of biopesticides, utilization of desert locusts for food/feed, the gene isolation for the identification of pheromone producing chemicals in locusts (i.e., fall armyworms), etc.

We shall seek to advance this shared agenda at national and at cross border levels with the overall coordination of IGAD secretarial and we look forward to working alongside all our partners including all relevant resource and technical partners, United Nations System, international organizations and Non-Governmental Organization to **build resilient livelihoods and food systems** for the rural communities threatened by the perpetual threat posed by Desert Locust in the region.