



THE IPPC IN 20 YEARS

PAPER SUBMITTED BY ZAMBIA

Introduction

Agriculture is an important part of Zambia's economy, of the total land area of 75 million hectares, 25 million hectares is agricultural land, of which 20.6 per cent is arable. Agriculture provides employment for 85 per cent of the labor force and serves as the main source of income for the rural population, especially women. The importance of agriculture is recognized with its National Agricultural Policy (NAP) and the Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP) of 2011 – 2015, where it clearly states that agriculture remains the priority sector in achieving sustainable economic growth and reducing poverty in Zambia to become “a prosperous middle income nation by 2030”.

The Plant Quarantine and Phytosanitary Service (PQPS) of the Zambia Agriculture Research Institute (ZARI) is under the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL). It is the designated National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) of Zambia which is mandated to provide services that prevent the introduction of pests and diseases into the country and facilitates local and international trade. The mandate is executed under the confines of the laws of Zambia namely the Plant Pests and Diseases Act CAP 233 and the Noxious Weeds Act CAP 231.

IPPC strategic framework objectives

1. Protect sustainable agriculture and enhance global food security through the prevention of pest

Pests not only spoil the quality but also reduce the quality of the produce to a considerable extent. Efforts are required to reduce these losses by the proper management of crops through pest management. Zambian farmers like most farmers in Sub Saharan Africa experience losses due to pest attacks. However to fully enhance food security of the country at farm level there is need to also address the following:

Inadequate food production- Africa is the only continent where agriculture production per capita has been decreasing for the past 30yrs. Zambia is no exception and hence there is need to assist small scale farmers financially to increase their productivity as these farmers account for 60% of the produce produced in the country.

Bad agricultural practices: Farmers need to be encouraged to adopt new agricultural practices or techniques that enhance sustainable agriculture. Agriculture research should be targeted at improved and effective crop protection technologies.

Use of improved varieties: The productivity of Small scale farmers in the country lags behind. Farmers need to be assisted to use higher yielding, disease resistant and drought tolerant varieties if yields are to be improved.

Improved storage structures: In developing countries losses are mainly attributable to the absence of food chain infrastructure and the lack of or investment in storage technologies on the farm. In Zambia there is still need for continued research in postharvest storage technologies especially improved technology for small scale food storage as most are still using traditional storage structures.

Government support. The government should focus on agriculture policies that support the empowerment of farmers. The government needs to put in place deliberate efforts to encourage productivity by facilitating credit access to small scale farmers to improve their productivity on the farms. The government should further provide the information, incentives and economic environment to facilitate the changes needed to increase productivity.

2. Protect the environment, forests and biodiversity from plant pests.

The protection of the environment, forests and biodiversity from plant pests is important in every country. However for protection to be complete other issues that affect the environment, forests and biodiversity

need to be addressed. These include issues such as improper land use, deforestation and climate change. Climate change and global warming are considered major threats to agriculture and food production. In Zambia due to high agricultural dependence and limited capacity to adapt the impact of climate change has being severe on the environment. Floods and severe droughts have inflicted heavy damage to our ecosystems and agro systems. Climate change has made poverty reduction objectives more difficult and more expensive to achieve. The Zambian government needs to take actions towards addressing the challenges brought about by climate change.

Deforestation is very high in the country as indiscriminate cutting of trees is not regulated fully. Furthermore proper land use is not practiced by many farmers and the mining industry in the country. These need to be encouraged to use technologies that encourage proper land use. Farmers should further be encouraged to substitute crops and crop varieties that are more responsive to changing climatic conditions.

3. Facilitate economic and trade development through the promotion of harmonized scientifically based phytosanitary measures.

The Zambian NPPO maintains measures to ensure that the spread of pests and diseases among plants are prevented. The facilitation of harmonization of scientifically based phytosanitary measures will result in more economic and trade development among member states. However the capacity of NPPOs needs to be enhanced so that the ability to come up with science based measures is improved.

4. Develop phytosanitary capacity of members to accomplish the above three.

Zambia like most African countries lacks phytosanitary capacity to effectively participate in international trade. The country has inadequate manpower; inadequate legal and regulatory frame works in place and weak institutional arrangements. To be more effective it will be important not only to build capacity in the NPPO but ensure the legal and regulatory frame work is in place and strengthen the weak institutional arrangements. It will also be important to build capacity of local systems such as extension, technical experts; agro input supplies and diagnostics laboratories so that these are able to deliver more effectively. The Zambian NPPO should be further empowered to put up systems in place for effective detection, identification and monitoring of pest and disease occurrence in the country.