**OCCURRENCE OF FALL ARMYWORM (*SPODOPTERA FRUGIPERDA*) IN MALAWI**

IPPC CONTACT POINT FOR MALAWI

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Fall armyworm *(Spodoptera frugiperda)* is a native to Tropical and Sub-tropical regions of America. In Malawi it was first observed by farmers in their maize fields in December, 2016 and January, 2017 but they thought it was maize stalk borer (Busseola fusca). After it was reported to the Malawi National Plant Protection Organisation under the Department of Agricultural Research Services (DARS) in the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, the NPPO immediately conducted a field visits in some areas in Malawi in January, 2017 in Blantyre district, Neno district, Balaka district, Ntcheu district, Machinga district, Zomba district, Mulanje district, Phalombe district, Chiradzulu district, Chikwawa district, Nsanje and Thyolo district to collect insect specimens, suspected larvae of fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda* )for identification at Entomology laboratory at Bvumbwe Agricultural Research Station and some sent to CABI in United Kingdom for confirmation through CABI plantwise programme. The results from CABI UK confirmed on 11 April, 2017 that most of the insect specimens which were sent to them for laboratory analysis were indeed fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda). The* fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda)* hasalso attacked cereal crops i.e. sorghum and grasses in the rainy season cropping in Malawi. This pest has been introduced into Malawi.

The Ministry in collaboration with other stakeholders has so far done the following:

* Created awareness and trained agriculture extension staff, NGOs staff, media, farmers on identification and management of fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda).*
* Procured synthetic pesticides to control fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda).*
* Developed a regional concept note and regional research proposal for Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia to conduct research and develop IPM strategies to manage fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda).* The research proposal will be submitted to World Bank under Agricultural Productivity Programme for the Southern Africa for consideration for funding.