



“Stellenbosch Declaration on addressing the threat of *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* tropical race 4 (Foc TR4) to banana production in Africa”

**AN OUTPUT FROM THE FIRST WORKSHOP OF THE
AFRICAN CONSORTIUM
FOR *FUSARIUM OXYSPORUM* F. SP. *CUBENSE*
TROPICAL RACE 4 (AC4TR4)**

Stellenbosch, South Africa

10 June 2014

PREAMBLE

Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. *cubense* tropical race 4 (Foc TR4), a highly pathogenic form of the banana Fusarium wilt fungus previously confined to Asia, was discovered in northern Mozambique in 2013 (<http://www.rtb.cgiar.org/new-banana-disease-to-africa-found-in-mozambique/>). In Asia, the fungus has caused considerable damage to Cavendish bananas and certain locally grown varieties in all of the countries where it has been introduced. In order to manage the disease outbreak in northern Mozambique, and to prepare African countries reliant on banana for food security and income generation against its possible spread, a stakeholder workshop of the African Consortium for Foc TR4 (AC4TR4) was held in Stellenbosch, South Africa from 23 to 24 April 2014, focusing on the theme: “Development of a Strategy to address the threat of Foc TR4 in Africa.”

The workshop was convened by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and was attended by intergovernmental bodies, regional research institutions, trade organizations, government representatives, plant protection experts, universities, the private sector, producers, donors and international cooperating partners (ICPs) with the mandate and expertise to curtail the introduction and spread of Foc TR4 in Africa. The objectives of the workshop were as follows:

1. To develop a strategy to manage Foc TR4 in Africa with clear institutional roles and responsibilities;
2. To plan and prioritize activities and immediate actions; and
3. To identify mechanisms to engage donors and policy makers.

THE DECLARATION

We, as representatives of AC4TR4 from eastern, central, and southern Africa, hereby jointly declare that we:

Are deeply concerned about the introduction of Foc TR4, a quarantine pest of banana, into the African continent despite efforts of Member States to operationalize commitments made under the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) treaties, as well as the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on the application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures;

Commend Stellenbosch University (SUN) for providing technical expertise in the successful identification of Foc TR4, and for SUN and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) for offering advisory services and mobilizing resources for the containment of the disease at Matanuska Farm and for the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) of Mozambique;

Commend the NPPO of Mozambique (NPPO MZ) for the timely reporting of Foc TR4 on the IPPC portal as required by the IPPC and SPS Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade;

Commend Matanuska Farm for being transparent about the detection and spread of Foc TR4 on their farm, and for being receptive to further plant pathogen diagnosis and collaborating with the NPPO MZ to institute on-farm quarantine measures;

Recognize the role being played by SADC and COMESA; in collaboration with regional and sub-regional partners, SUN, IITA and Bioversity International; in coordinating a strategy to deal with the threats of Foc TR4 in Africa. We urge that these joint efforts be further strengthened until the disease is brought under effective control;

Acknowledge the sponsorships of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF); the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the Global Partnership for Agriculture Research (CGIAR) and Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas (RTB); SUN and IITA that enabled facilitation of the first workshop of AC4TR4, towards the development of a strategy to coordinate efforts on the continent;

Encourage collaboration and coordination of activities between research institutions, government organizations, the private sector, and international partners to address issues of mutual concern on the African continent;

Reaffirm our commitment to prevent the introduction and spread of plant pathogens and pests of economic importance in Africa while facilitating safe trade of plants and plant products, including regulated articles, in order to enhance food security and eradicate poverty on the continent.

WE HEREBY JOINTLY AGREE TO

1. Fully develop and implement a continental strategy under the direction of an African Foc TR4 Task force in order to contain the incursion of Foc TR4 in the Nampula province of Mozambique and to prevent similar incursions elsewhere in Africa.
2. Provide and enhance technical capacity on the continent, and to implement and monitor phytosanitary systems; including promoting greater use of International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) and other matters concerning plant health.
3. Report and map new outbreaks of Foc TR4 in African Member States and communicate information on new outbreaks, successful containment, and prevention initiatives electronically by means of a web portal.

4. Recognize that Foc TR4 is a continental issue that requires coordination and collaboration between NPPOs, RECs, ICPs, research institutions, universities, governments, and other relevant stakeholders throughout Africa by means of regular meetings and consultations.
5. Develop and apply appropriate diagnostic services, provide training, raise awareness, monitor disease spread, and screen banana germplasm for Foc TR4 resistance for deployment by vulnerable banana growers.
6. Call upon African and international organizations to recognize and support the activities of AC4TR4 by investing in research, awareness programs, human capacity, and infrastructure development on the continent.
7. Develop a regional Pest Risk Analysis document and set of phytosanitary measures to be enforced by Member States in order to prevent the introduction and spread of Foc TR4 and other quarantine pests of banana to areas where they do not yet occur.
8. Encourage governments in Africa to formulate the necessary legislation and to implement the required activities to protect the crops of vulnerable farm owners against destructive foreign plant pests.

The Stellenbosch Declaration has been endorsed by the following institutions and organizations

National Plant Protection Organization representatives of:

Burundi

South Africa

Kenya

Tanzania

Malawi

Democratic Republic of Congo

Mauritius

Uganda

Mozambique

Zambia

Rwanda

Zimbabwe

Representatives of:

SADC

COMESA

EAC

ASARECA

FAO

Stellenbosch University

IITA

Bioversity International

