



New Year Message from the Director General

As we start the New Year, the CropLife Africa Middle East team wishes you all a successful 2020.

Looking into 2020 and beyond, I am proud to be a part of an industry that is working to make growth in agriculture in the countries of Africa Middle East a reality. Challenges have dominated agriculture over the past year, the invasion of FAW, locust plagues, climate change and increased activism and media attention on the perceived risks of pesticides to consumers placing science-based decision making under scrutiny. Faced with these challenges, the efforts of CL AME and its national associations remain dedicated to advocate and encourage governments to rely on science-based decision-making.

Before we move onto 2020, let's look back and reflect on some of the notable achievements of the past year. CropLife AME staff worked diligently to increase the resilience of decision makers, the development of regulatory frameworks focussing specifically on harmonisation and data protection and the effective management of regulatory issues. Our efforts also covered the adoption of CBI guidelines by the EAC Sectorial council and the enhancement on the setting of MRL's, consumer safety and trade in Africa's agricultural commodities. We also intensified our dialogue among the regulatory authorities in more than 23 countries through our Sub-regional workshops in the region. Critical topics addressed included: Emergency Registration Procedures - in the light of emerging pests and diseases; changing policy landscape for pesticides, especially highlighting the MRL import tolerances and hazard based regulatory decision making. Also, strides in the implementation of GHS, Protection of Confidential Business Information, Risk Assessment Procedures for both conventional and Biologicals, Mode of Action labelling, Regulations and Quality Assessment in anti-counterfeiting efforts and minor formulation changes and risk mitigation.

We also continued with our commitment on the advancement of sustainability and stewardship across the region. In the past year, we continued to support efforts in container management in 9 countries and advocated on the implementation of Mode of Action labelling. The SSP concept continues to be our main driver in rolling out IPM/RU with partners. Our commitment to contribute in managing the threat of food security posed by Fall Armyworm was a ToT workshop held for West African countries and to ensure the rollout to farmers to fight this pest.

On the challenge of counterfeit and illegal products, we worked diligently to nurture coalitions and stakeholder alliances. These included the likes of USDA-USAID-Michigan State University initiative in West Africa, the US DoJ/ICHIP-USPTO in a joint workshop attended by 12 francophone countries in Africa and REACT in Nigeria and Kenya, INTERPOL in Cape Town, the WCO-JICA in Kenya, the WIPO-Ethiopia IPO and the Ghana Customs (GRA)-SGS. This level of cooperation gave us the opportunity to reinforce and empower our messages to both, governments and the media in the region to address the challenges of the counterfeiting as a collective responsibility.

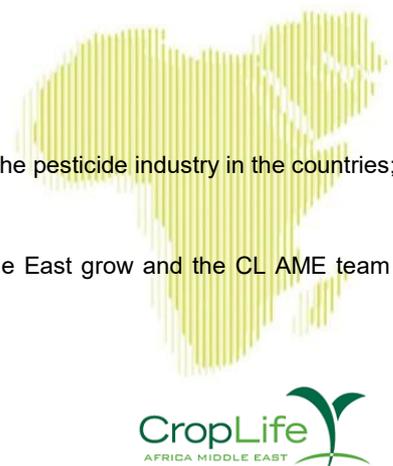
For 2020, we aim to concentrate our efforts in establishing strategic partnerships in order to provide a common voice through multi-stakeholder approaches. This will help to advance solutions to the many challenges facing our industry in our region.

In addition to the above we are committed to:

- Advocating for an efficient, predictable, and evidence-based regulatory system;
- Intensifying our promotional efforts in stewardship outreach;
- Addressing the anti-counterfeiting issue as a collective responsibility;
- Strengthening our national associations to enhance a favourable environment of the pesticide industry in the countries;
- Proactive communication and advocacy to be able to provide a media balance.

It's both a privilege and opportunity to play a part in helping agriculture in Africa Middle East grow and the CL AME team is proud to pursue this mission.

Dr. Samira Amellal
Director General



Stewardship

CropLife undertakes a Trainer of Trainers workshop in the management of Fall Armyworm in East & Southern Africa

Farmers across Africa are struggling with the often devastating spread of Fall Armyworm, an invasive species from the Americas that was first observed in West and Central Africa in early 2016.

In its larval stage, Fall Armyworm feeds on over 80 plant species – including maize, a staple crop in many parts of the continent. As an adult moth, *S. frugiperda* can fly up to 100 kilometres in a single night. Fall Armyworm is now confirmed in every African country south of the Sahara except for Lesotho (due to its elevation). It has also been found in Egypt and spread into much of Asia.

As Fall Armyworm spread through Africa’s small farms, there was a rush to control the pest, too often using unsuitable products and then in the an incorrect manner. CropLife advocates for the Integrated Pest Management of Fall Armyworm but this requires knowledge of the pest, its ecology and the damage that it does. This is a big ask in terms of information provision, something that we need to be addressing with our partners. In most of Africa, there are not enough agricultural extension agents to educate farmers about pests like the Fall Armyworm.

“The Fall Armyworm is in countries to stay,” said Anne-Sophie Poisot, an advisor in sustainable agriculture for the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). “It is not a pest that can be eradicated. But it can be brought to a level where it is not seen as a huge threat by farmers. That means that we have to educate farmers, because we cannot solve the problems with a few quick actions.”



Above & Below: Fall Armyworm in the maize cob



Typical damage caused by Fall Armyworm



Stewardship



Undertaking assessments under the watchful eye of Vincent Simwinga, of IITA

The responses recommended by CropLife, FAO, CABI, and others, focus on integrated pest management techniques.

CropLife Africa Middle East made an informed decision in 2018 to become a leader and reference point in the Integrated Pest Management of Fall Armyworm, this in partnerships wherever possible. Training materials were developed and introduced into the Spray Service Provider training program. In February 2019 a ToT workshop was organized for West African countries with the aim of the training to be cascaded down to members of the respective CropLife national associations.

In January 2020, this training was repeated for countries in East & Southern Africa and included Egypt and a representative from CropLife Asia. The training was facilitated by Desiree van Heerden, the Insecticide Lead for Syngenta in the region. This was a combination of classroom learning together with “hands-on” field experience. The field experience took place at Alan Miller’s large commercial farm, Lilayi and at the IITA – Zambia SARAH Campus under the guidance of researcher, Vincent Simwinga. The visiting group were able to see first-hand every stage of the Fall Armyworm cycle, some fields with 100% infestation and the resulting devastation caused by this pest. This was an excellent training all round.

Les Hillowitz



Group Photo



Stewardship

SSP Associations for Sustainable Services

CropLife Africa Middle East has assisted Spray Service Providers (SSPs) in Nigeria and Uganda to create SSP associations.

Through a variety of activities, partnerships with stakeholders were established and the capacity of members was built on association management. SSP associations are perceived by CropLife as a way to ensure sustainable service delivery by the SSPs.

CropLife, in close collaboration with partners Palladium in Nigeria and the International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC) in Uganda, observed over the years that SSPs perform better when they are monitored regularly and have a sense of belonging to some organization. In addition, after a rapid assessment among SSPs in both countries, it was noted that the main challenges of SSPs is access to good quality pesticides, access to credit and competition of non-trained applicators, amongst others. Because in both countries already several SSPs had organized themselves in groups, CropLife decided to assist them to lift the groups to a higher level.

A total of 21 associations were established in Nigeria bringing together more than 500 SSPs, while 8 associations with 140 member SSPs were created in Uganda.

The capacity building of members was focused on membership (who can become a member and who can't), the role of members and the Executive Council, the development of an internal Code of Conduct for SSPs and financial sustainability.

During a special program developed for executive members, sessions were concentrated on skills to develop partnerships, including how to introduce their association to potential partners and how to negotiate a win-win deal.



Capacity building of members during a training program on association management in Kaduna, Nigeria



Field Officer Mushin Lawal Gambo of CropLife Nigeria during the stakeholder forum in Kano, Nigeria



Demonstration on teamwork in Kabale district, Uganda



Field Officer Richards Maiwada (right) of CropLife Nigeria during a monitoring visit to one of the SSP association in Jigawa state in Nigeria

Stewardship

The executive members could put their skills right away into practice during stakeholder forums that were organized at the state and district level. During those meetings several SSP associations and potential partners, including CropLife members and their distributors, credit institutions, processing companies, farmers organizations and others, were brought together. To give every association the chance to talk to every stakeholder that was present, a method called “speed dating” was used, in which 15 minutes is allocated for one-on-one meetings before rotating to the next stakeholder.

The method was perceived by participants of both the SSP associations and stakeholders as very effective, because it gave the chance to really sit down and discuss a possible collaboration with several organizations in a short time span. After the stakeholder forums, SSP associations followed up with potential partners who were interested in building partnerships to formalize the deal.

In Nigeria, a total of 72 partnerships were established. Several associations pooled funds to purchase large quantities of quality pesticides against very competitive prices from member companies of CropLife Nigeria. Other associations opened bank accounts for the association and each member and are in the process of applying for credit to purchase pesticides for the upcoming season. Some associations will be able to access government grants and training because as an association they are recognized as a registered group and can benefit from programs offered by the government. A few associations that cope with competition of untrained applicators, have been able to promote themselves actively and regulate charges on spraying. The general feedback from associations is that organizations, government officials, companies and farmers perceive the SSPs as more professional now they were able to organize themselves into groups.

CropLife is dedicated to assist more SSPs that have grouped themselves to ensure that their members can continue selling their services to farmers.

Manon Mireille Dohmen, Babajide Adigun (CropLife Nigeria) and Betty Atto (CropLife Uganda)

The SSP association in Gwarzo, Kano state was registered in May 2019 and has 30 members. At the start of the season, members jointly collected funds and negotiated a good deal with a member company, Syngenta, for the purchase of pesticides. To date, members purchased 120 bottles of insecticides which were delivered to their community. The deal will enable the SSPs to apply good quality pesticides thereby attracting happy customers plus the ability to make some extra money by charging the normal market price for the pesticides. Farmers will not spend on transport costs that they would normally do when buying pesticides, so farmers will also benefit from spending less on pesticides. The association has also reached out to processing companies to sell their services to their out growers.



Field Officer Mushin Lawal Gambo of CropLife Nigeria (third from the right) with members of the Gwarzo SSP association

Stewardship

Training Course on Pesticides Management – SAGA (CropLife Sudan) 8 Dec 2019 – 10 Jan 2020

As background, any retail shop selling pesticides in Sudan must obtain a license from the National Pesticides Council (NPC). The person responsible for sales at the retail outlet must be an agriculturist and licensed by the NPC to perform this function.

In order for a such a person to obtain a license from the NPC, he must present a “certificate of experience” in crop protection from a known agricultural scheme or relevant institute practicing crop protection. Owing to the difficulty in obtaining a “certificate of experience”, it was observed by the Inspection Committee who regularly check on the performance of pesticide retailer shops that most of the sales personnel / technicians, in these shops are either not licensed or lacking in the knowledge on pesticides, even when licensed.

SAGA suggested to the NPC that it would be best to train these crop protection specialists and provide them with a license on completion, rather than base this on the “certificate of experience”.

After much persuasion, it was finally agreed that SAGA together with University of Khartoum, the NPC and the Agricultural Council, would cooperate and come up with a training program suitable for candidates who after graduation in crop protection would be able to run genuine pesticide retail businesses.

A comprehensive 4-week training program was developed, the theory of which would be given by the University while the practical part would be handled by SAGA and the NPC, represented by the Plant Protection Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture.

The curriculum developed was found to be very practical comprising of all the requirements that a retailer would need to perform a sound, scientific, clean and legal business.

The start of the rollout of the program was most encouraging and this will in all likelihood become the standard for any candidate to obtain a license in the future. Plans are in place for this to be extended to the different states in the country and other Universities.

SAGA and its member companies were the main funders of this undertaking with contributions from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Plant Protection Department.

The future challenge will be the ongoing funding of this initiative.

Elsir Omer, Chairman SAGA



The first group of participants

Stewardship

Securing a cleaner environment: Where are the leftover obstocks?

CropLife Kenya values the integrity of its members and has strived to maintain a robust self-regulatory discipline of which it can be proud of. In the past, less than acceptable storage habits have been practiced, leading to the stockpiling of unused products which had either been rendered unusable by legislation or through poor judgement. CropLife Kenya with the generous support of its partners has managed to recover a substantial quantity of these products and safely dispose of these in line with acceptable international practices.

It has been almost 6 years since the CleanFarms project secured and disposed of in excess of 220 tons of obsolete pesticides in 2014. Better stock management practices were steadily introduced at most points of bulk usage/storage. Some segments of the supply chain such as agro-dealers, medium scale farmers and production units have accumulated quantities of obsolete stocks and enquiries suggest smaller but widely distributed volumes.

Encouraged by the member companies, CropLife Kenya has undertaken an inventory the leftover obstocks following the gap since the CleanFarms program and to take steps to eliminate these from the country. Action is already underway at used level by adopting a rotational procurement plan. The focus on resistance management and anti-counterfeiting are taken into consideration during the procurement process and this has reduced the occurrence of unused products at the end of a specific demand and supply cycle.

In this regard, 2020 has started off on a positive note and after a period of close to 1.5 years of running a silent campaign on the declaration of obsolete stocks for safeguarding and disposal, CropLife Kenya has been able to verify 26.3 tons at 4 sites. The stockpiles consist of post-harvest grain storage products, herbicides, insecticides, wetting and spreading agents, dyes, soil treatment products and liquid fertilizers. Safeguarding and disposal is the next step to complete the cycle.

It is encouraging that the sustained effort urged on by members has borne fruit and will now be rolled out to reach other parties of interest who may be harbouring unwanted pesticides on a wait-and-see basis. Financial support for a full-scale campaign is in the planning.

Benson Ngigi



Benson recording the inventory of obstocks at a distributor's warehouse

Association Management

The CropLife Africa Middle East Team meets in Ethiopia

The CropLife Africa Middle East Team met in Addis Ababa to develop the way forward for the year ahead. The timing of the visit coincided with the kick-off of the Feed the Future Ethiopia Value Chain Activity, ((FTFE VCA) SSP project. The areas covered by the management team in their 2-day meeting, included:

- An exchange on the pesticide environment in the AME region.
- A review of the strategy needed 2021 – 2023

As background to the FTFE VCA project, one of the reasons for poor pest and disease control is that input supply systems are inefficient and underdeveloped. It is therefore difficult to get good quality pesticides on time and at a fair price, especially in remote rural areas. The lack of good quality products is one of the reasons for the occurrence of counterfeit and illegal pesticides that find their way onto the market, especially in places where good quality products are difficult to source. Another challenge is the irresponsible use of pesticides; many farmers cannot read the label, do not know how to measure or mix pesticides, and do not protect themselves adequately from exposure to pesticides. On top of this, they are not aware of pre-harvest intervals with the risk of residue levels that are above the allowed Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs), leading to the rejection of crops. Another issue is the application of the product which is often not done properly.

The improper usage of pesticides can lead to over, or under, application, whereby the pest or disease is not well controlled and money is wasted. In addition, farmers do not readily manage the waste when applying agricultural remedies, this includes both empty pesticide containers and obsolete pesticides, leading to possible contamination of the environment and exposure to humans. This is especially true when empty pesticide containers are reused for household purposes. Another challenge facing the agricultural industry is the involvement of children and pregnant women in the handling and application of pesticides which can be dangerous to their health. Finally, the application of pesticides is a labour intensive task for which the person applying the product needs to be in good physical condition. With the rising age of farmers, the pressure of finding labour to do strenuous work will become more and more of a challenge in the future. In addition, fewer youth are willing to work in the agricultural sector and there are not many job opportunities for young people in the rural areas. It is also essential to strengthen the capacity of partner institutions in integrated Pest Management (IPM) of Fall Armyworm (FAW), to ensure proper procedures are conducted both for the safety of the individual sprayer and also for the safety of the farm and surrounding communities.

Under this subcontract CropLife Ethiopia will establish a new network of 165 Spray Service Providers in FTFE VCA value chains of maize and chickpea in activity targeted regions and continue to provide follow-up trainings to the 250 current SSPs. This network will allow smallholder farmers to engage with SSPs who have been well trained and equipped in the proper procedures for pesticide application. All 415 SSPs will undergo a business training.

The opportunity was also taken to meet with the CropLife Ethiopia Team as well as other key stakeholders with whom we are engaged in SSP projects.

Les Hillowitz



Association Management

Participants at the "kick-off" of the FTFE VCA project



Dinner with the CropLife Ethiopia team

CropLife Zambia to serve on the Board of the Zambia Environmental Management Agency

Perry Ngoma, Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Zambia was appointed to serve on the Chemical Review Committee of the Fourth Board of the Zambia Environmental Management Agency, on 8 January 2020. This appointment was bestowed on Perry by Dr. Dani E. Banda, Board Chairperson.

Our sincere congratulations to both CropLife Zambia and Perry for this achievement, which will go a long way to strengthen the relationship between our industry and the regulatory body.

Les Hillowitz



Plant Biotechnology



South Australia Lifts Ban on GM Crops

Minister for Prime Industries and Regional Development Tim Whetstone released his statement at the start of 2020, saying that farmers in South Australia (SA) can now opt to grow genetically modified (GM) crops, following the State Parliament's move to lift SA's moratorium that banned GM crops in the region since 2004.

Talks of lifting the moratorium has been going on since August of 2019, after Australian economist Professor Kym Anderson of the University of Adelaide released a high-level independent review of the GM moratorium in 2018 which concluded that banning GM crops in SA cost grain producers millions of losses in Australian dollars, and will continue to millions more in income if the ban will continue to 2025.

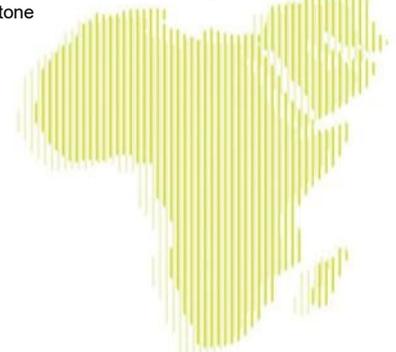
In early December of 2019, talks about the GM moratorium peaked again after its lifting was deferred due to amendments to the GM Bill that were submitted to the Parliament, which will require SA growers to obtain additional permits that can potentially cause delay the start of their planting season. The moratorium was originally set to be lifted on December 1, 2019.

This time around, Minister Whetstone officially announced on January 1, 2020, that SA farmers now have the choice to use GM seeds and grow GM crops as the State Parliament made the decision for the GM moratorium to be finally lifted. He said that now that the GM ban has set aside, SA farmers will find themselves at par with their competitors in the whole of Australia who already had access to GM products in the last 10 years.

The Minister foresees improvement in SA's economy, farmers' income, and scientific research and development to explore more opportunities in GM studies and tackle environmental issues and climate change through new technologies. In 2018, farmers in Australia planted 793,000 hectares of biotech cotton and canola.



Minister for Prime Industries and Regional Development
Tim Whetstone



Plant Biotechnology

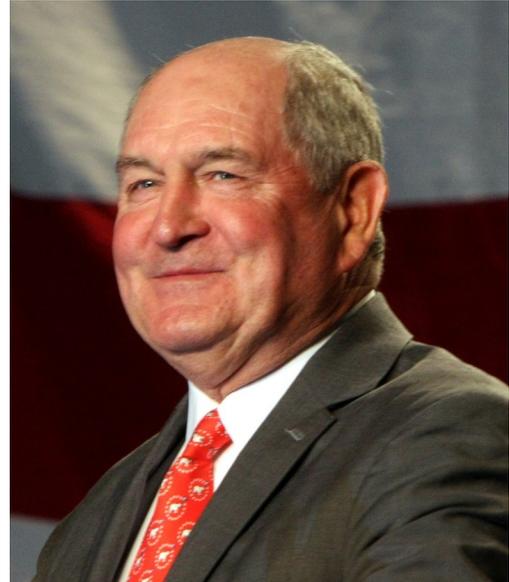
US Ag Secretary Perdue Urges EU to Make Science-based Decisions

United States Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue urges European policymakers to make science-based decisions if they want to help their farmers tackle concerns over sustainability. Perdue said that decisions on food should be based on science.

Secretary Perdue spoke to a group of journalists in Brussels, Belgium, and said that EU policymakers are aware of the challenges in agriculture. He also met with EU Agriculture Commissioner Janusz Wojciechowski, as well as EU health chief Stella Kyriakides and Trade Commissioner Phil Hogan.

When asked if EU policymakers are willing to have discussions on agricultural biotechnology, Secretary Perdue said that EU policymakers are willing to do it. He added that there was some anxiety regarding the ability to counteract NGOs who spread fear about GMOs.

Secretary Perdue also defended the use of CRISPR, calling it a "natural breeding technique that is just expedited." He strongly believes the EU needs to communicate this message to the public. The Secretary insisted that decisions on food should be based on science and the European public opinion needs to understand that if they choose to have a technology-free zone, their producers are going to be at a huge disadvantage.



United States Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue

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