



GF-TADs

GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE
PROGRESSIVE CONTROL OF
TRANSBOUNDARY ANIMAL DISEASES

Africa



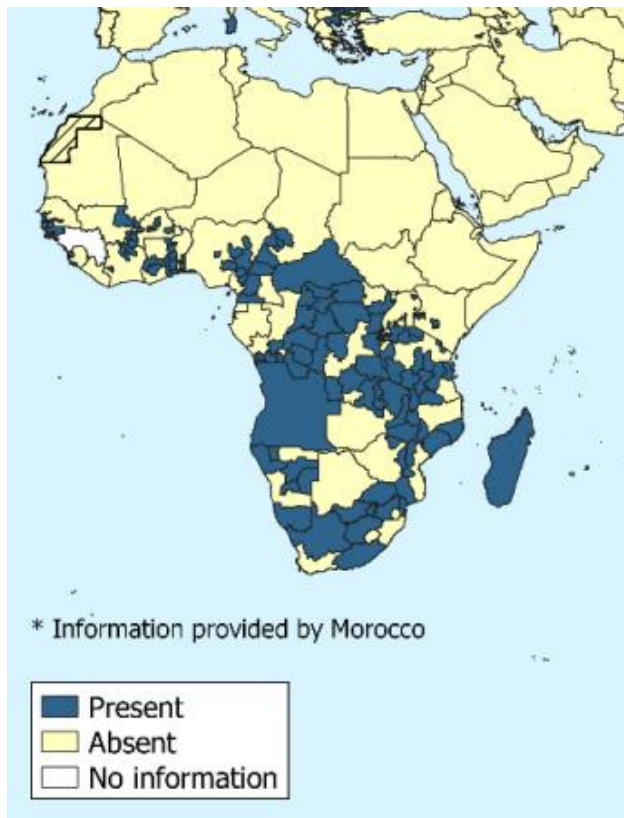
Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever for Africa

Introduction

The situation of African swine fever (ASF) has become of increasing concern globally. ASF has its roots in (a sylvatic cycle in) Sub-Saharan Africa, with reservoir hosts in wildlife (*wild boar, warthogs or other feral swine*), inanimate fomites, and competent arthropod vectors including soft ticks. Between 2018 and 2020, ASF disease outbreaks manifested themselves in 23 countries in Africa¹. Beyond these “immediate notifications”, the OIE *World Animal Health Information System* (WAHIS) also captured



ASF notifications through six-monthly reports submitted by Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa and Zambia.

ASF control measures rely on strict sanitary measures as there is still no vaccine nor treatment to subdue the disease. The current ASF pandemic has impacted even distant industries and revealed weaknesses in the veterinary and agriculture sectors including various direct and indirect links between the pig industry and the recycling or use of by-products.

The Standing Group of Experts (SGE) on ASF for Africa is being formed under the FAO/OIE Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) to promote

¹ Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Congo (Democratic Rep. Of), Congo (Rep. Of), Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia

regular exchange of information and best practices among risk managers, international and national experts.

To face the complexity of ASF, multisectoral and multi-institutional cooperation is required. Therefore, the **Initiative for the Global control of ASF** was developed under the GF-TADs umbrella. GF-TADs has identified key roles to be played by countries, OIE and FAO for the global control of the disease. To achieve global control, ASF requires adequate risk management through the development and implementation of national control programmes. Risk communication is a crucial component of these programmes to effectively address risk pathways and practices. GF-TADs calls on countries to manage risks by implementing OIE International Standards and to maintain transparency through timely disease notification through WAHIS.

The FAO/OIE GF-TADs platform will develop the Global Initiative by promoting national, regional and global partnerships, strengthening prevention and preparedness measures, and minimising the adverse effects of ASF. More information: <https://rr-africa.oie.int/en/projects/gf-tads-for-africa/african-swine-fever/> and <http://www.gf-tads.org/asf/asf/en/>

The 2017 African Union Continental Strategy for the Control of ASF clearly spells out that ASF outbreaks lower the productivity of the pig sector, compounded by not well understood epidemiology and dynamics of ASF and the role of wildlife in the spread of the disease. The revised Strategy (2021) is expected to upscale capacities of veterinary services to disease detection, diagnosis, surveillance, management, contingency planning and emergency response, as well as risk analysis among others.

The ASF *Standing Group of Experts* (SGE) for Africa will start with a core of 6 founding countries in Eastern Africa, West Africa and Southern Africa, with the aim to progressively extend more countries.

Objectives:

Strengthening regional cooperation and regional dialogue on ASF control through:

- Frequent information exchange on ASF situation and control measures applied to support risk assessments,
- Regular review of national, regional and global strategies by international experts based on their experience and best practice, with a view to coordinate disease control policies and building a coordinated science-based regional control strategy under the technical guidance of the SGE.
- Collaboration on laboratory diagnostics by exchange of best practices and capacity building,

- Collaboration in applied research, including ASF epidemiology, socio-economics and ASF vaccine development,
- Collaboration on awareness raising campaigns by exchange of best practices and communication tools,
- Collaboration on border control measures among countries in the Africa region,
- Regular communication on the outcomes of the group discussion to other member countries and all stakeholders,
- Coordination on:
 - consultation processes to provide regional feedback to the global initiative,
 - identification of priorities for the development of tools, training, and projects relevant for the region,
 - development of awareness to enhance the willingness of other countries to engage in ASF control strategy,
- Collaboration on pig diseases of public health significance that may assist in the acceptability or adoption of ASF-targeted biosecurity and hygiene measures (e.g. porcine cysticercosis)

Composition

- ❖ The founding member countries (Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe) will establish the SGE ASF for Africa. Experts from other countries in the region will be included in SGE ASF when relevant according to the extension of the engagement of more countries to active ASF control strategies.
- ❖ AU-IBAR, FAO and OIE regional representations, other regional organisations active in the field of animal health control strategies (to be listed)
- ❖ Regionally and internationally recognised ASF or swine disease experts with experience working in Africa will be included in the group on an ad hoc agreement of the SGE, and drawn from a regional database of the AU-IBAR.
- ❖ OIE and FAO regional reference laboratory experts for ASF as permanent members
- ❖ Additional international recognized experts on ASF or other technical topics to be invited by the group to support the SGE-ASF on an ad hoc basis. Note that these experts may be drawn from the industry and more generally, from the private sector.

Governance

The *Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever* (SGE-ASF) will be established under the umbrella of the GF-TADs for Africa. It will be appointed by, and will report to the GF-TADs *Regional Steering Committee* (RSC) for Africa and will liaise with the ASF WG for the coordination of the ASF Global initiative.

Chair: The meetings will be rotational hosted by founding member countries of the SGE-ASF with host to chair the meeting upon agreement of SGE-ASF.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Regional Representation for Africa, based in Bamako, Mali (RR AF) will act as Technical Secretariat in coordination with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Office for Africa (RAF).

Funding mechanism

- Meeting costs of representatives from AU Member Countries and costs for the logistical organization of meetings will be covered by the three organizations (FAO, OIE and AU-IBAR) depending on the availability of resources.
- Non-voting members are expected to cover their own expenses or seek funding from partner organisations.
- The costs of the operation of the Secretariat will be covered by the OIE.

Meeting mechanism

- The meetings will take place in the SGE-ASF member countries, on a rotating basis;
- The SGE-ASF will meet in person at least once a year, electronic consultations and virtual meetings may be organised between meetings.
- Language: English and French with simultaneous interpretations;
- Host country to assist Secretariat in identification of appropriate meeting venue / hotel and provide logistical support, including transfer from the hotel and, if possible, either welcome dinner or social evening;
- Summary minutes of the meeting to be prepared by the SGE-ASF secretariat, circulated to participants by email and published on the website OIE Regional Representation for Africa.

Meeting attendees

- **Founding Member Countries:**
 - OIE Delegate (CVO or appointed representative of CVO),
 - Technical expert in the topic being covered.

- Total number from each member country should **not** exceed two persons (with exception of host)

- **Subject-matter experts** selected from recognised international and regional ASF and/or swine disease experts.
- **Representatives of AU-IBAR, FAO and OIE**
- **Representatives of partner organisations:** Upon agreement of the members of the group.
- **Meeting observers:** Upon agreement of the hosting member.