



BACKGROUND

Bananas are one of Africa's most important agricultural crops grown for food security and income generation. As in other banana-producing regions of the world, the crop is threatened by a Fusarium wilt disease caused by the soil-borne fungus *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *ubense*. A highly virulent variant of the fungus, Foc tropical race 4 (Foc TR4), was first detected in Africa when commercial Cavendish banana farms in northern Mozambique were devastated by Fusarium wilt. Foc TR4 was later also found in Mayotte Island off the east African coast. There is a real risk that Foc TR4 may spread to neighbouring countries in Africa in future, or that it will be re-introduced into the continent with the rapid expansion of monoculture Cavendish banana plantings. The spread of Foc TR4 would pose a significant risk to the continued production of bananas on the continent.

The virtual conference on banana Fusarium wilt in Africa, jointly organised by the FAO, Stellenbosch University and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) with the financial support from the European Union, is intended to raise awareness about the importance of banana Fusarium wilt disease in Africa, and to update participants about recent developments related to Foc TR4 internationally. Two regional workshops will be held after the conference on 2nd and 3rd June 2022; the first to discuss the threat posed by Foc TR4 to countries in Southern Africa countries, and the second to deliberate its potential spread and impact in the rest of Africa and the Middle East.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BANANA FUSARIUM WILT DISEASE IN AFRICA

30 May – 1 June 2022
13:00- 16:00 Central African Time (GMT +2)

Register here!

<https://fao.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJiscOqrrTotGNQhzNnS4Xj7HoMLxadPTsMC>



AGENDA

DAY 1. Monday, 30 May 2022 | 13:00 –16:00 Central African Time (GMT +2)

Opening: Welcoming remarks (30 min)

Time	Item and presenter
13:00 –13:10	Southern African Development Community (SADC), Director of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources, (FANR)
13:07 –13:15	Mr Eugene Cloete , Vice Rector for Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies Stellenbosch University, South Africa
13:15 –13:22	European Union, Head of Delegation
13:22 –13:30	Mr Jingyuan Xia , Director of Plant Production and Protection Division (NSP), FAO, Italy

Session 1: Overview on banana production and Fusarium wilt (45 min)

Time	Item and presenter
13:30 –13:45	<i>Musa</i> diversity and cropping systems in Africa, by Mr Eldad Karamura and Ms Deborah Karamura , Uganda
13:45 –14:00	Overview of banana Fusarium wilt in Africa, by Mr Altus Viljoen , Stellenbosch University, South Africa
14:00 –14:15	Vision and collective efforts of FAO, World Banana Forum (WBF) , the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the prevention and management of banana Fusarium wilt disease, by Mr Fazil Dusunceli , FAO, Turkey

Session 2: Activities to manage banana Fusarium wilt internationally (90 min)

Time	Item and presenter
14:30 –14:45	Research and development in Australia on Fusarium wilt TR4, by Mr Tony Pattison , Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Australia
14:45 –15:00	Managing Fusarium wilt TR4 in China, by Mr Yi Ganjun / Mr Li Chunyu , Guangdong Academy of Agricultural Sciences, China
15:00 –15:15	Efforts in India to mitigate banana Fusarium wilt TR4, by Mr Raman Thangavelu and Ms Uma Subbaraya , National Research Centre for Banana (NRCB), India
15:00 –15:15	Research in Colombia on Fusarium wilt, by Mr Gustavo Rodriques , Colombian Agricultural Research Corporation (AGROSAVIA), Colombia
15:15 –15:30	Efforts to curb the Fusarium wilt TR4 epidemic in the Near East, by Mr Thaer Yaseen , FAO-RNE, Egypt
15:30 –16:00	Discussion

DAY 2. Tuesday, 31 May 2022 | 13:00 –16:15 Central African Time (GMT +2)

Session 3: Activities and actions to deal with banana Fusarium wilt in Africa (90 min)

Time	Item and presenter
13:00 –13:15	The occurrence and impact of banana Fusarium Wilt in southern Africa, by Mr Altus Viljoen , Stellenbosch University, South Africa
13:15 –13:30	Dealing with banana Fusarium wilt in East Africa, by Mr George Mahuku , International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Uganda

13:30 –13:45	Fusarium wilt and banana production in West Africa, by Mr Yao Kolombia , International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Nigeria
13:45 –14:00	Breeding bananas for Fusarium wilt resistance in Africa, by Mr Rony Swennen , International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Belgium
14:00 –14:30	Discussion

Session 4: Early detection and diagnostics (75 min)

Time	Item and presenter
14:45 –15:00	Incursions and early field detection of banana Fusarium wilt TR4, by Mr Miguel Dita , Alliance Bioversity – International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT). Colombia
15:00 –15:15	Surveillance and monitoring of Fusarium wilt TR4, by Mr Jamisse Amisse , Agricultural Research Institute of Mozambique (IIAM), Mozambique
15:15 –15:30	Remote detection of banana Fusarium wilt: Prospects and Challenges, by Mr Michael Selvaraj , Alliance Bioversity – CIAT, Colombia
15:30 –15:45	Diagnostic tools for the identification of Foc strains, by Ms Diane Mostert , Stellenbosch University, South Africa
15:45 –16:00	Q&A session

DAY 3. Wednesday, 1 June 2022 | 13:00 –16:00 Central African Time (GMT +2)

Session 5: Prevention, biosecurity and containment (90 min)

Time	Item and presenter
13:00 –13:15	Efforts to prevent the spread of invasive pests in Southern Africa, by Mr Chiluba Mwape , Southern African Development Community (SADC), Key Expert on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, Botswana
13:15 –13:30	Efforts to contain Foc TR4 in Mozambique, by Ms Antonia Vaz , Mozambique Ministry of Agriculture
13:30 –13:45	The detection and containment of Fusarium wilt TR4 in Mayotte Island, by Mr Loïc Larroche , French Directorate for Food, Agriculture and Forest, (DAAF), Mayotte Island
13:45 –14:00	Lessons learnt from the spread of Foc TR4 in Asia, by Mr Si-Jun Zheng , Alliance Bioversity – International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), China
14:00 –14:15	Efforts to prevent the spread of Foc TR4 in Latin America, by Mr Luis Pocasangre , EARTH University, Costa Rica
14:15 –14:30	Biosecurity and containment of Foc TR4 in Australia, by Mr Stewart Lindsay (Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry and Ms Rhiannon Evans (Biosecurity Queensland), Australia
14:30 –15:00	Discussion

Session 6: Concept strategy for Foc TR4 in Africa (75 min)

Time	Item and presenter
15:00 –15:15	Challenges faced in Africa, and a draft strategy to prevent and manage banana Fusarium wilt TR4 on the continent, by Mr Altus Viljoen , Stellenbosch University, South Africa
15:15 –16:00	Panel discussion on future actions for Africa, Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (Representatives of Stellenbosch University (SU), International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS), National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs), grower organisations, FAO and AU), facilitated by Mr Mathew Abang , FAO-SFS, Harare
16:00 –16:10	Summary of the meeting, by Mr Fazil Dusunceli , FAO, Turkey
16:10 –16:15	Closing

Satellite session – DAY 4. Thursday, 2 June 2022 | 09:00-12:00 CAT

Regional satellite workshop on the threats and management of Fusarium wilt TR4 in Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries.

Satellite session – DAY 5. Friday, 3 June 2022 | 10:00-14:00 CAT

Regional satellite workshop on the threats and management of Fusarium wilt TR4 in North Africa and the Middle East.

For more information, please contact: fazil.dusunceli@fao.org