

Crop Pests, Control Measures and Potential Impacts in Kihansi Catchment Area

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Abstract

A baseline survey which covered 349 households in Bomang'ombe and Masisiwe (Kilolo district), Kibengu and Mapanda (Mufindi district) and Chita and Chisano (Kilombero district) was conducted to identify major pests, control measures and potential impacts in Kihansi catchment area. Maize was the most predominant crop being cultivated by 55% of the total respondents in all the study districts. Pests and diseases were the major constraints to crop production, whereby cereal stem borers were the most serious pests being reported by 88.2% of respondents. Application of synthetic pesticides was the major pest control measure, being applied by 66% of the respondents. Increase in pest populations, decline of biodiversity and human health effects were reported by 85%, 61% and 38% of the respondents, respectively, as negative impacts associated with pesticides use. Dissemination of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) packages targeting the key crops and public awareness on good agricultural practices is recommended to sustainably manage the pests and enhance crop production, human health and biodiversity in the catchment.

Keywords: Pests, Pesticides, Good Agricultural Practices, Integrated Pest Management, Kihansi.

Introduction

Agriculture is the dominant sector in Tanzanian economy, providing livelihood, income and employment to over 80% of the population, accounting for 60% of export earnings and 56% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (NBS 2015). It is an important economic sector in terms of food production, employment generation, production of raw materials for industries and generation of foreign exchange. Over 80% of the arable land is used by smallholders (NBS 2017). Food crops account for about 65% of agricultural GDP, with maize crop accounting for over 20% (NAP 2013). About 50% of the cultivated land in Tanzania is allocated to cereal crops (FAOSTAT 2014) which serve as major staple crops.

Maize is the most important cereal crop accounting for 70% of the cereals produced in

the country; with per capita consumption being estimated at 80–135 kg/person/year (USDA 2018). Maize is also identified as a key crop to enhance food security and income (FAOSTAT 2015). Although maize is produced almost throughout the country, the southern highlands zone, which includes Iringa, Rukwa, Ruvuma, Njombe, and Mbeya regions, is the major producing area.

Rice is the second most important staple crop followed by wheat and sorghum. Of the total area under rice cultivation, rain fed lowland rice accounts for about 74%, whereas irrigated rice accounts for 26%, respectively (Kanyeka et al. 1994), with Morogoro region being one of the highest rice producing regions (MAFC2009, MALF 2011).

Average yield per hectare for cereals is mainly low with an average yield of 1.2 tons/ha (NBS 2015) which is lower than the

estimated potential yields of 4-5 tons/ha (NAP 2013). The main causes of low yields and sporadic production include pests and diseases, small landholding, drought stress, poor agricultural practices, high costs, poor access to inputs and poor infrastructure (Nyaligwa et al. 2017).

A baseline survey was therefore conducted to identify major crop pests occurring in the area, their control measures and potential impacts of the control measures in the Kihansi catchment in order to recommend mitigation measures.

Materials and Methods

Kihansi Catchment area, which covers three districts; Kilolo and Mufindi (Iringa region) in the upstreams, and Kilombero (Morogoro region) in the downstream of the Kihansi River, is among the major agricultural producing areas in Tanzania. The area is also significant in terms of biodiversity conservation including the Kihansi Spray Toads. The area has a diversity of climatic and geographical zones, which support the production of large quantities and a wide variety of crops.

Kilolo district has 4,181.8 km² of arable land with 1,810 ha of irrigated land including Ruaha and Mahenge valleys. The district lies between 900 and 2,700 metres above sea level, with temperatures ranging from below 15 °C to 29 °C and rainfall ranging from 500 to 1,600 mm per annum. Agriculture is main source of livelihood, employing about 90% of the district workforce (Kilolo District Agricultural Development Program, 2013).

Kilombero covers 445,896 ha of arable land with 655 ha of irrigated land that includes the Kihansi valley. It lies between less than 300 to 1700 metres above sea level with average temperature and rainfall ranging from 26 °C to 32 °C and 1200 to 1600 mm, respectively. The greatest part of the district is comprised of Kilombero valley, which consists of alluvial flood plains, while a part of it is in the Rufiji Basin and Selous Game Reserve, which extends to the Udzungwa

Mountains. More than 80% of the population is involved in agriculture as a major source of food and income (Kilombero District Agricultural Development Program, 2012).

Mufindi district has mountainous landscapes with cool and rainy climate that supports the production of diverse crops including the temperate fruits.

Despite the agro ecological diversity, crop productivity is low due to crop pests, while the biodiversity conservation is at risk due to poor agricultural practices including the unjudicious use of pesticides near water sources.

The survey was conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries in collaboration with the National Environment Management Council and funded by the Global Environmental Facility under Kihansi Catchment Conservation Project. It was conducted for two weeks towards the end of the rainy season in June 2015 covering three districts, namely; Kilolo, Mufindi and Kilombero.

A questionnaire designed by scientists from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries was used which covered information on major crops, pest types, inputs application (pesticides and fertilizers), pest control measures and associated impacts. The pre-testing of the questionnaire was conducted to enable familiarization, identification of gaps and make necessary adjustments. Focus Group Meetings (FGM) comprised of 10 people including District Agricultural Irrigation and Cooperatives Officers (DAICO), District Agricultural Extension Officers (DAEO) and District Plant Protection Officers (DPPO) were conducted in each district to enable the selection of wards and villages where the survey would be conducted. Two wards were selected from each district based on geographical locations and disparity of the farming systems. In each ward, key informants meetings involving Village Agricultural Extension Officers, Village Chairman, Village Executive Officers and paraprofessionals were conducted to

enable the selection of villages where survey would be conducted. Data were collected using a check list and structured questionnaires through key informants meetings, focused group discussions and household surveys.

A total of 349 respondents were interviewed from 12 villages sampled in 6 wards, which included Bomang'ombe and Masisiwe (Kilolo district), Kibengu and Mapanda (Mufindi district) and Chita and

Chisano (Kilombero district) (Table 1). Coloured photographs were used to enable the identification of pests by the respondents. Photographs of pests and damage symptoms were taken as references in identification. Data editing involved the sorting and discarding of questionnaires with anomalies. The data from numbered questionnaires were coded and analysed using Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Studies (SPSS).

Table 1: Participating wards and villages in the baseline survey

| District | Ward | Village | Number of respondents |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Kilolo | Bomalang'ombe | Bomalang'ombe | 32 |
| | | Mwatasi | 36 |
| | Masisiwe | Masisiwe | 35 |
| | | Mbawi | 21 |
| Mufindi | Kibengu | Igeleke | 30 |
| | | Kipanga | 32 |
| | Mapanda | Uhafiwa | 28 |
| | | Ukami | 30 |
| Kilombero | Chita | Chita | 31 |
| | | Udagaji | 33 |
| | Chisano | Chisano | 17 |
| | | Mngungwe | 24 |
| Total | 6 | 12 | 349 |

Results and Discussion

Types of crops

Several types of crops were cultivated in the survey area including cereals (maize, rice, wheat, sorghum and finger millet), legumes (common beans, garden peas, pigeon pea), round potatoes, vegetables (tomatoes, cabbage

and onions), tropical fruits (oranges, mangoes and bananas), root crops (sweet potatoes and cassava), temperate fruits (avocado, plums and apple), oil seeds (sunflower) and perennial cash crops including tea, coffee, and cocoa. Table 2 shows the major crops cultivated by the respondents.

Table 2: Crop pests associated with maize, rice and round potatoes in Kihansi catchment area

| Common name | Scientific name | Host crop |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Spotted stem borer | <i>Chilo partellus</i> | Maize |
| Pink stem borer | <i>Sesamia calamistis</i> | |
| African Stalk borer | <i>Busseolla fusca</i> | |
| Elegant grasshopper | <i>Zenocerus elegans</i> | |
| Armyworm | <i>Spodoptera exempta</i> | |
| Cutworm | <i>Agrotis spp</i> | |
| Maize aphids | <i>Rhopalosiphum maidis</i> | |
| Maize leaf hopper | <i>Cicadulina mbila</i> | |

| Common name | Scientific name | Host crop |
|--|--|----------------|
| Termites | <i>Microtermes</i> spp | |
| White and chaffer grubs | <i>Phyllophaga</i> spp. | |
| Large grain borer | <i>Prostephanus truncatus</i> | |
| Maize lethal necrosis disease (MLND) | | |
| Maize stalk and ear rot | | |
| Maize streak (maize streak virus-MSV) | | |
| Maize smut | <i>Ustilago maydis</i> | |
| Mycotoxins | <i>Aspergillus</i> spp. <i>Fusarium</i> spp. | |
| Dark headed stem borer | <i>Chilo polychrysa</i> | Rice |
| Stalk-eyed fly | <i>Diopsis</i> | |
| African rice gall midge | <i>Orseolia oryzivora</i> | |
| African armyworm | <i>Spodoptera exempta</i> | |
| Rice whitefly | <i>Auleurocybotus occiduus</i> | |
| Stink bugs | <i>Aspavia armigera</i> | |
| White tip nematode | <i>Aphelenchoides hesseyi</i> | |
| Rice blast | <i>Pyricularia grisea</i> | |
| Rice Bacterial leaf blight | <i>Xanthomonas oryza</i> epv. (<i>Oryzae</i>) | |
| Rice yellow mottle virus diseases (RYMV) | | |
| Leaf miner | <i>Liriomyza</i> spp | Round Potatoes |
| Potato cutworm | <i>Agrotis</i> spp.) | |
| Aphids | <i>Myzus persicae</i> | |
| Whitefly | <i>Bemisia tabaci</i> | |
| Red spider mites | <i>Tetranychus</i> spp. | |
| Root knot nematodes | <i>Meloidogyne</i> spp | |
| Early blight | <i>Alternaria solani</i> | |
| Late blight | <i>Phytophthora infestans</i>) | |
| Bacterial wilt | <i>Ralstonia solanacearum</i> | |
| Fusarium wilt | <i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> | |
| Rhizoctonia canker | <i>Rhizoctonia solani</i> | |
| Weeds | | |
| Wood sorrels | <i>Oxalis</i> spp. | |
| Nuts and sedges | <i>Cyperus</i> spp. | |
| Goat weed | <i>Argeratum conyzoides</i> | |
| Fern plant | <i>Polypodium vulgare</i> | |
| Mexican poppy | <i>Argemone mexicana</i> | |
| Black jack | <i>Bidens pilosa</i> | |
| Spurge | <i>Euphorbia</i> spp. | |
| Wild marigold | <i>Sida</i> spp. | |
| Pigweed | <i>Amaranthus</i> spp. | |
| Fanpetals | <i>Tegetes minuta</i> | |
| Wild rice | <i>Oryza longisternata</i> | |

| Common name | Scientific name | Host crop |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------|
| Cogon grass | <i>Imperata cylindrical</i> | |
| Wandering jew | <i>Commelina bengalensis</i> | |
| Spurges | <i>Euphorbia spp</i> | |
| Goat weed | <i>Argeratum conyzoides</i> | |
| Witch weed | <i>Striga spp</i> | |
| Itch grass | <i>Rottboelia exaltata</i> | |
| Guinea grass | <i>Panicum maxima</i> | |
| Goose grass | <i>Eleusine indica</i> | |
| Jungle rice | <i>Echinochloa spp</i> | |
| Nutgrass/nut sedge | <i>Cyperus spp.</i> | |

Among the crops, maize, beans, rice, round potatoes, peas and finger millets were the most predominantly cultivated. Maize was cultivated most by 55% of the total respondents in all the districts, followed by beans (32.5%), peas (24.6%), rice (17.5%), round potatoes (13.6%) and finger millets (9.8%) (Figure 1). The leading producing area for maize, beans, peas and round potatoes was Bomang'ombe ward (Kilolo district) by 100, 80, 61 and 51% of the respondents, respectively. The leading producing area for rice was Chita ward (Kilombero district), whereby 63% of the respondents cultivated the crop. Finger millets were predominantly

cultivated in Mapanda ward (Mufindi district) by 10% of respondents; which is lower compared to those who cultivated other crops.

Distribution of the crops varied according to agro ecological conditions. For example, beans, peas and round potatoes, which prefer high elevation, cool temperatures, and well-drained soil with adequate moisture, were predominantly cultivated in Kilolo and Mufindi districts where such conditions are found. On the other hand, rice crop which prefer low altitude, warm temperatures and clay loamy soils was predominantly cultivated in Kilombero district.

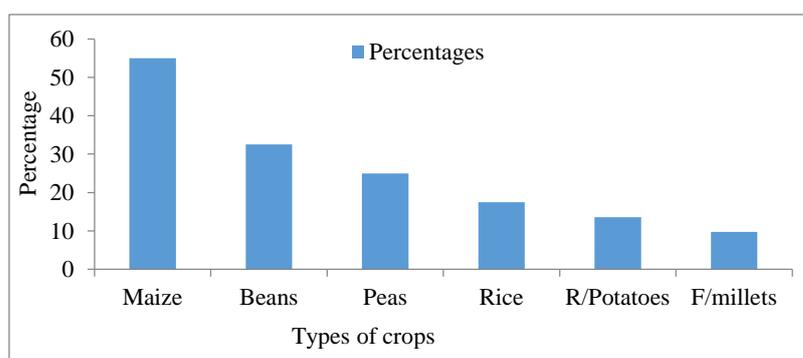


Figure 1: Types of crops cultivated in Kihansi catchment.

Crop yields

More than 80% of respondents harvested less than 25 bags of maize/acre (Figure 2). The reported yields were low compared to the estimated national average yield of 1.2 tons/ha (NBS 2015) and 4-5 tons/ha (NAP

2013). Yields for rice were also low, whereby only 4.3% of the respondents harvested more than 15 bags/acre. Yields of beans and peas were also low with only 8.3 and 9.7% harvested more than 7 and 5 bags of the crops/acre, respectively.

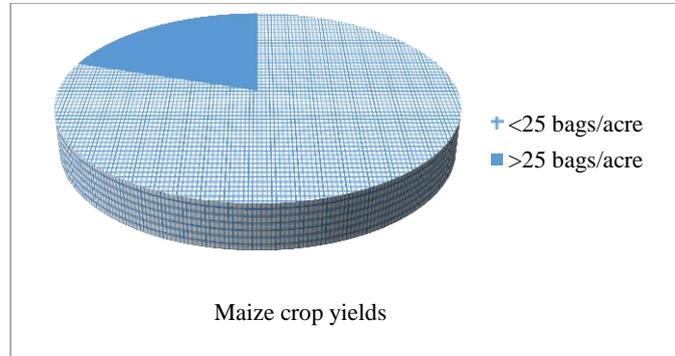


Figure 2: Maize crop yields in Kihansi catchment.

Agricultural practices

At least 60% of respondents reported to own small pieces of land ranging from 0.5 to 3 acre where crops were cultivated either in intercropping or monocropping systems. Due to land scarcity and the topography of the area, cultivation was done even on hillsides and valley bottoms near water catchments. The size of the land reported by the respondents is small compared to typical farm size owned by smallholder farmers in Tanzania, which ranges between 0.2 and 2.0 hectares (NAP 2013), a production scale that is too low to generate significant income streams to farmers for effective poverty reduction and agricultural development.

The types of fertilizers which were applied in the survey area include triple super

phosphate (TSP), double ammonium phosphate (DAP), Minjingu rock phosphate (MRP) and urea. A moderate proportion (59.3%) of respondents reported to apply those fertilizers, while less than 10% applied inorganic fertilizers and 40% did not apply any fertilizer (Figure 3). The recommended amount of fertilizers is 10 bags of 50 kgs per acre. Among those who applied fertilizers, 49% applied less than 10 bags/acre. Reasons for not using or using low dose rates of fertilizers were reported to be high prices and delay in distribution of the fertilizers. Majority of respondents (86.8%) reported to have observed a decline in soil fertility in the crop lands (Figure 4), which can be associated with continuous use of the land without replenishing the nutrients (Tan et al. 2005).

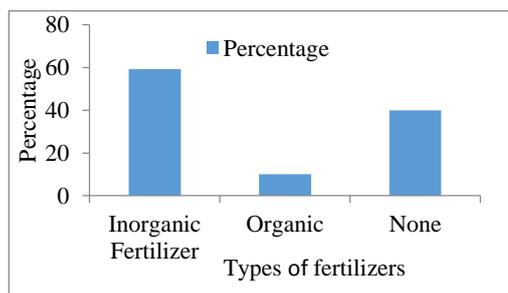


Figure 3: Types of fertilizes applied by farmers in Kihansi catchment.

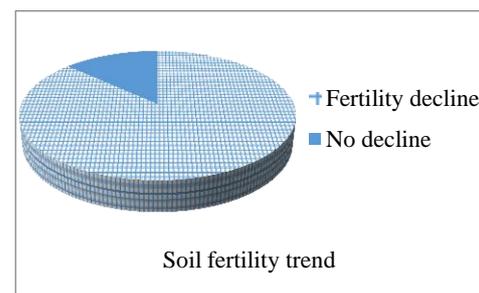


Figure 4: Soil fertility trend in Kihansi catchment.

Types of crop pests

A diversity of crop pests were reported in association with the crops cultivated in Kihansi catchment area (Table 2). Cereal stem borers were the most widespread pests reported by 88.2% of the respondents followed by aphids (35.8%), armyworm (17.5%), cutworm and grubs (15.4% each), rice yellow mottle virus disease (13.7%), whiteflies (9.7%), larger grain borer (9.4%) and Fusarium wilt (9.1%). Within the wards, Bomangombe (Kilolo district) had the highest proportion of respondents who reported stem borers (64%), Fusarium wilt (23%), cutworms (17%), larger grain borer (15%) and whiteflies (14%) as the most serious pests (Figure 5). Chita ward (Kilombero district) had the highest proportion of respondents who reported white grubs (33%), rice yellow mottle virus (RYMV) (32%) and armyworm (27%) as the most serious pests. Mapanda ward (Mufindi district) had the highest proportion (38%) of respondents who reported aphids as the most serious pests.

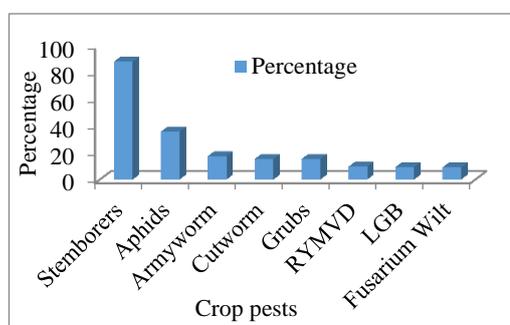


Figure 5: Crop pests in Kihansi catchment.

Distribution of the pests corresponds to the distribution of the host crops. For example, the highest proportion of respondents who reported stem borers as the most serious pests belonged to Bomangombe ward where maize was reported as a major crop, while Masisiwe ward with the least proportion of respondents who reported maize as major crop had the least stem borers. Similarly, for rice crop whereby the highest

proportion of respondents who reported rice yellow mottle virus disease as the most serious pest were from Chita ward, where rice was reported as the major crop (Figures 1 and 5). On the other hand, cutworm, whiteflies and aphids, which had a wide range of host crops including maize, rice, round potatoes and vegetable crops were widely distributed, though in less percentage compared to other pests.

Species diversity, distribution and damage due to stem borers have been reported (Nsami et al. 2001, Pallangyo et al. 2002, Le Rü et al. 2006a, 2006b). Maize yield losses of up to 63 and 100% have been reported due to *Chilo partellus* and *Busseola fusca*, respectively, while yield losses of up to 45% and 87% were reported due to larger grain borer and cutworm, respectively (Chabi-Olaye et al. 2005, Mgoo et al. 2006, Golob 1988, Showers et al. 1983). Yield losses of up to 100% have also been reported in maize crop due to RYMVD (Abo et al. 1997). Other pests are reported to transmit diseases such as Cassava Brown Streak Disease (CBSD) and Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD) (Legg et al. 2011, Mware et al. 2009, Navas-Castillo et al. 2011). Losses in maize yield and mycotoxin contamination are also reported due to Striga weed and storage pests infestation (Suleiman and Rosentrater 2015, Soltani et al. 2016).

Occurrence of those pests in the catchment area could therefore be associated with the low crop yields reported by the respondents.

Pest control measures on major crops cultivated in Kihansi catchment area

Pest control measures included the use of synthetic pesticides, botanicals and cultural methods (mechanical, rouging, crop rotation). Generally, use of synthetic pesticides was the most widely adopted method applied by 66% of the respondents from all the districts. Cultural control measures were applied by 21% of respondents and botanical pesticides by 1.7%, while 11.3% of the respondents applied all measures, i.e., synthetic pesticides, botanical pesticides and cultural control

measures (Figure 6). Bomang’ombe ward had the highest proportion (95%) of respondents who applied synthetic pesticides followed by Kibengu ward with 56%. Unlike synthetic pesticides which were applied in all wards, cultural practices were applied by respondents from Chita, Chisano and Mapanda wards with Chita ward having the highest proportion (30%). Less than 10% of the respondents, mainly from Chisano ward applied botanical pesticides.

Impacts of pest control measures to the Kihansi catchment environment

Regarding the impacts of pesticides to the environments, majority of the respondents (85%) reported to have observed an increase in pest populations in their fields, while 61% reported a decline of biodiversity. Some of the respondents (52%) reported to have observed water pollution and 38% reported to have experienced headaches, vomiting, nausea and

skin irritation, which were considered to be associated with pesticides because they occurred during or after applications of the pesticides (Figure 7).

The increase in pest populations which was reported by respondents could be associated with continuous uses of broad spectrum pesticides. Overuse of pesticides has been reported to cause insect resistance to insecticides, and development of secondary pests (Catarino et al. 2015), while the use of broad-spectrum pesticides was reported to hamper the contribution of natural enemies leading to increase of pest population densities (Abrol et al. 2003). Decline in biodiversity could be associated with the use of hazardous pesticides such as endosulfan, which has been reported to cause mortality to aquatic organisms (Nyangababo et al. 2005). Alternative measures are therefore needed to reduce pesticide resilience in the catchment area.

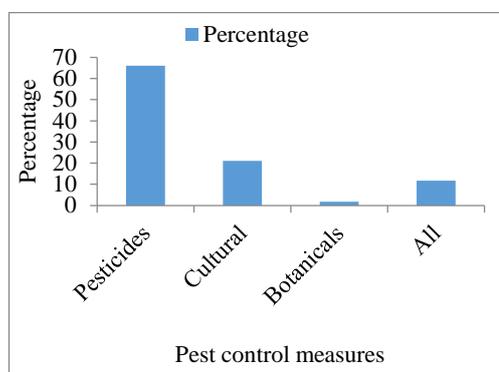


Figure 6: Pest control measures in Kihansi catchment.

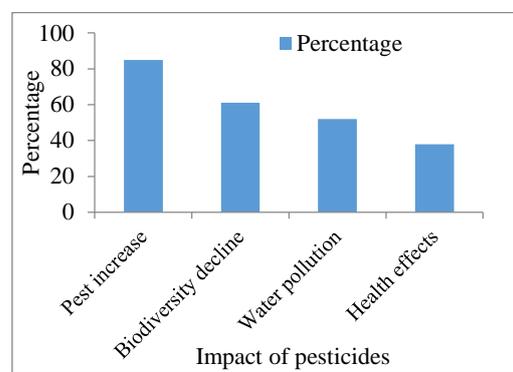


Figure 7: Impacts of pesticide applications in Kihansi catchment.

Biological control and cultural practices including intercropping and use of resistant varieties are among measures that can reduce pest population and associated damage without causing adverse negative impact to the environment. Successful reduction of stem borers, whiteflies, aphids, cutworms and white grubs populations densities have been achieved through biological control (Pallangyo et al. 2003, Pallangyo et al. 2005,

Anderson and Morales 2005, Mwanauta et al. 2015). Successful reduction of striga weed through inter-cropping and Push Pull Habitat Management are also reported (Massawe et al. 2002, Pallangyo et al. 2006a, 2006b, Nyaligwa et al. 2017). Integrated Pest Management (IPM) that focuses on the use of many compatible methods can reduce Diamondback moth and aphids with minimal pesticides requirement (Varela et al. 2003).

Conclusion

The findings show that crop pests are the major constraints to crop production in the Kihansi catchment area. Farmers rely on synthetic pesticides as pest control measures. However, continuous use of pesticides tend to increase pest populations leading to reduction in crop yields; decline in biodiversity and human health effects. Integrated Pest Management involving the use of beneficial organisms, host plant resistance, cultural measures and judicious use of pesticides will minimize pesticides resilience leading to enhanced crop yields, food security, biodiversity and human health.

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