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ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ALIMENTATION ET L'AGRICULTURE

ORGANIZACION DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACION

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AGP Division

Locusts, other migratory pests and emergency operations grou

DESERT LOCUST SITUATION SUMMARY AND FORECAST

No. 30 FEBRUARY - EARLY MARCH 1981

SUMMARY

Breeding has commenced within an area of some 200,000 square kilometres in central Algeria and is likely to become even more widespread. Heavy hopper infestations and three immature swarms were reported from the Red Sea Province of Sudan. There were six reports of mature swarms from the northern Tihama of Saudi Arabia and hopper bands were found subsequently. Small numbers of adults were reported from Mali, Egypt, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and India.

W/P2320

DESERT LOCUST SITUATION - FEBRUARY AND EARLY MARCH 1981

NORTH-WEST AFRICA

Weather

Widespread rain fell in January in Libya in coastal areas and inland as far as Nalut, Ghariane and Houn. There were also good rains in southern Tunisia in the first five days of January, and in eastern Tunisia in February. There was no rain in the recession area in Morocco from December 1980 to February 1981.

ALGERIA

Ecological conditions were very favourable for breeding around the Tademait plateau.

During January and February 400 hectares of immature adults were treated around Tademait.

In early March adults at densities of up to 5,000 per hectare were found in two areas totalling 1,300 hectares. 70% of the adults were mature and laying was in progress. Ground survey teams subsequently found widespread maturing adults within some 200,000 square kilometres within the area 25°-29°N, 0°-5°E. From 3-14 March 746 hectares of maturing and copulating adults were treated, and over 1,000 hectares were treated from 14-18 March.

LIBYA

Groups of adults were found in several localities around Nalut (3152N/1059E) on 4 March.

No locusts were reported from MOROCCO or TUNISIA in February. According to a late report small numbers of adults were recorded in southern Tunisia in November and December 1980.

WEST AFRICA

Weather

Strong pushes of polar air occurred during the first 15 days of February and their meeting with warm humid south-westerly winds resulted in extensive cloud from Morocco and Western Sahara to Gambia. Several falls of rain occurred in northern Mauritania and the Seguiet-al-Hamra. Al Aioun recorded 38 mm, Smara 32 mm. Traces of rain were recorded in northern Adrar des Iforas and in Tanezrouft in Mali on 14 and 15 February.

MAURITANIA AND WESTERN SAHARA

A swarm was reported from El Aioun on 25 January.

In February the guide at Atar reported that nomads were moving to the north, which is evidence that conditions will be good for desert locusts. A survey will be made in March.

MALI

Vegetation was green in areas surveyed in western and north-western Adrar des Iforas and northern Timetrine. The soil was moist at a depth of 15-18 cm.

One adult was observed at Tarlit (1935N/0045E) and one at Tin Eridjane (1958N/0035E). A population of pausogenetic adults at a density of 5-10 per hectare was observed in oued Tadjnout (2043N/0150E) over an area of 20 hectares. In oueds in northern Timetrine densities were less than one per hectare.

NIGER

No surveys were undertaken.

EASTERN AFRICA

SUDAN

As recorded in Summary No. 29, a settled immature swarm covering 600 hectares was reported from Khor Mekrik on 9 February. On 21 February a settled immature swarm measuring 12 square kilometres was reported from Safiya (2127N/3612E). Dense groups of adults were reported from four localities of the northern sector of the Red Sea coast and heavy infestations of first to fourth instar hopper bands were reported from two localities in the northern sector during the last two decades of February. Groups of adults and hopper bands were also present in the Tokar Delta.

In the first decade of March a settled immature swarm covering 8 square kilometres was found at Khor Agilhok (2107N/3637E) and there were small bands of third and fourth instar hoppers over an area of 800 hectares.

During February 12,670 litres of fenitrothion were sprayed over an area of 29,574 hectares. Ground control operations continued.

Elsewhere in the region there was heavy rain in the Diredawa area of ETHIOPIA during the first 10 days of March. Asmara recorded 30 mm on 8-9 March, Massawa 5 mm on 4 and 7 March. According to a newspaper report there were very heavy rains in DJIBOUTI during the third week of March.

NEAR EAST

Weather

There was further widespread rainfall in Saudi Arabia during February and light-moderate rain in some areas of the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Heavy rain fell along the northern coast of Egypt in late February.

In the third week of March there were widespread heavy rains in all areas of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. There was further rain in northern and interior areas of Saudi Arabia in March.

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

On 25 February three mature, copulating and laying solitariform swarms were reported from the Um Lejj area on the northern Tihama during a period of southerly winds. They later dispersed. Control measures were mounted immediately using BHC dust. Scattered adults were reported from Yenbo, Al Bahr and Qunfidah.

In March there were a further three reports of swarms in the Um Lejj area, where hatching and first instar bands were reported by 24 March. Control is in progress. The vegetation is drying out.

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

Two adults were seen in Wadi Siham (1445N/4305E) on 24 February during a ground survey of the Tihama.

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Ground surveys in coastal areas revealed adults at densities of 12-13 per hectare over an area of 25 square kilometres around Dar-as-Assaylah (1253N/4411E) on 18 February. Conditions were generally very dry early in the month but improved in western coastal areas due to showers.

EGYPT

Aerial surveys of the Lake Nasser area and the South-Eastern Desert revealed green vegetation in areas which received rain in November and December. Small numbers of adults were observed at Allaqui (2250N/3320E), Tushka (2230N/3150E) in the Lake Nasser area, and at Abraq and Shalatein in the South-Eastern Desert.

There were no reports from other countries of the region.

SOUTH-WEST ASIA

IRAN

Heavy rain was reported from Baluchistan and Khuzistan during January and coastal areas were reported to be suitable for breeding. No locusts were observed in January.

PAKISTAN

Widespread rain fell in the winter-spring breeding area in the first half of February and again in mid-March, Karachi recording 109 mm on 14-15 March. No locusts were observed or reported.

INDIA

There were isolated showers in the first half of February and more widespread rain in the second half of the month. There were also showers in Bikaner district in mid-March.

Adults at densities of 25 and 37.5 per square kilometre were observed at Jamarsar (2807N/7301E) and Nokh (2733N/7215E) on 23 February. India was reported clear during the first half of March.

AFGHANISTAN was reported clear in January and February.

FORECAST FOR APRIL-MAY 1981

Breeding will become widespread in North-West Africa extending from Western Sahara to Libya, particularly in Algeria. Fledging will begin in early May, and is likely to include swarms. Escapes may initially move north but the main emigration will probably be southwards across the Sahara. Some swarms may move east and reach Egypt. Breeding could also occur in Mali, Niger and Mauritania. Breeding may continue on the coastal and sub-coastal plains of Sudan and may extend into south-eastern Egypt. Adults produced by this breeding and that in Red Sea coastal areas of Saudi Arabia are likely to move south-west and reach the interior of the Sudan. Small scale breeding is likely in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, northern Somalia, Djibouti and in southern Iran and Baluchistan of Pakistan.

In North-West Africa breeding will be very widespread, and extend from Western Sahara and southern Morocco across Algeria to southern Tunisia and north-west Libya. As adults mature they are likely to form groups so that band formation is likely. Fledging will probably commence around 10 May. In areas which are difficult of access, swarms are likely to be produced and there may be large areas where adults at lower densities are produced. Initially displacements may be to the north into agricultural areas but the main emigration will be southwards across the Sahara. Some swarms however may move eastwards across Libya and reach Egypt (as in May 1958).

In West Africa breeding will probably occur in northern Mauritania and may be on a scale sufficient to produce hopper bands and swarms. The swarms are likely to move south. Breeding may also commence in north-east Mali and north-west Niger if these areas receive pre-monsoon rains. Initially it will probably be at low densities.

In Eastern Africa breeding may continue in coastal and sub-coastal areas of Sudan if there is further rain. Adults from these infestations (and those in Egypt and Saudi Arabia) will move south-west into the interior and may include groups. Breeding initially at low densities is likely to occur in north-west Somalia and Djibouti. It is possible that some swarms may reach Sudan from the north-west.

In the Near East swarms may reach Egypt from the west, as in May 1958. Low density breeding may occur in the South-East Desert of Egypt. Adults produced by this breeding and by breeding on the northern Tihama of Saudi Arabia are likely to move south-west into Sudan. Breeding will almost certainly occur in People's Democratic Republic of Yemen but initially it will probably be only at low density.

In South-West Asia small scale breeding will occur in Baluchistan of Pakistan and may occur in south-eastern Iran.

Rome
26 March 1981

Desert Locust Situation Summary No. 30 FEBRUARY/EARLY MARCH, FEVRIER/DEBUT DE MARS 1981