



# DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

FAO Emergency Centre for Locust Operations



(16 November 2005)



## General Situation up to 16 November 2005

The Desert Locust situation remained relatively calm in Africa and along both sides of the Red Sea during the first half of November. Small-scale breeding continued in western Mauritania, and a few adults were seen in the north where more adults may appear by the end of the month. Isolated infestations were present in southeast Algeria and in eastern Chad. A small swarm was reported in Darfur, Sudan and a few more swarms are likely to form there in the coming weeks and move towards the Red Sea coast where so far in Sudan only scattered adults are present. Intensive surveys were underway along the Red Sea coast in Saudi Arabia where a swarm was reported last month but despite searching could not be confirmed. Ground control operations continued against hopper bands along the Indo-Pakistan border where the situation should improve by the end of November.

Small-scale breeding by scattered adults continued in western Mauritania during the first half of November in two areas where ecological conditions remained favourable: between Magta Lahjar (1730N/1305W) and Tidjikja (1833N/1126W) where third to fifth instar hoppers and scattered solitary adults were present and between Boutilimit (1732N/1441W) and Akjoujt (1945N/1421W) where hoppers of all instars mixed with isolated adults were reported. In both areas, densities were less than 200 locusts/ha. Although ecological conditions improved in the north as a result of rainfall during October, so far

only isolated adults have been seen near Bir Moghreïn (2510N/1135W) and Zouerate (2244N/1221W). The situation remained calm in northern Mali. In northern Niger, a *Metarhizium* trial was conducted in early November against scattered adults in the Agaliouk (1846N/0731E) area east of Arlit. Scattered adults were also present in a few places in eastern Chad. In southeast Algeria, hoppers of different instars were present near Illizi (2630N/0825E) and immature solitary adults were seen southwest of Djanet (2434N/0930E).

On 5 November, a 1.5 km<sup>2</sup> immature swarm was seen in West Darfur, Sudan near Zalingei (1251N/2329E). A few more small swarms may form in Darfur where survey and control operations are hampered by the prevailing security situation. If so, the swarms are likely to move towards the winter breeding areas along both sides of the Red Sea. So far, only low numbers of mature solitary adults have appeared on the coast in the Tokar Delta and along the plains towards the Eritrean border but these are likely to increase in the coming weeks. In Saudi Arabia, there was an unconfirmed report of immature gregarious adults near Taif (2115N/4021E) that may be linked to the unconfirmed swarm last month. Intensive surveys are underway along the coastal plains to clarify these reports.

In South-West Asia, control operations continued in the summer breeding areas along both sides of the Indo-Pakistan border in late October. In Pakistan, ground teams treated 1,266 ha of hopper bands and adults during the second half of October. In India, teams treated an additional 1,729 ha of hoppers near Jaisalmer (2652N/7055E).

The most up-to-date information on the situation is available on the new FAO locust web site ([www.fao.org/ag/locusts](http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts)).

The FAO Desert Bulletin is issued monthly, supplemented by Updates during periods of increased Desert Locust activity, and is distributed by e-mail, FAO pouch and airmail by the Locusts and Other Migratory Pests Group, AGP Division, FAO, 00100 Rome, Italy. It is also available on the Internet.

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