



LOCUST BULLETIN No. 13



FAO - Plant Production and Protection Division (AGPM)

16 April 2012

Situation level: CALM for DMA, CIT and LMI

General Situation during March 2012 Forecast until mid-May 2012

The locust situation was calm in March in all Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA) countries where the weather conditions were still cool and unsuitable for hatching. Consequently, no hatching has been reported so far. It should start during the first half of April in southern Central Asian countries. No control operations were carried out during the month.

Caucasus. No hatching was reported in March. Temperatures were still cool and snow fell at times in **Armenia**. Moroccan Locust (DMA) hatching should start in April in **Azerbaijan** and **Georgia**, and Italian Locust (CIT) hatching is expected from late April or early May in Armenia and Georgia.

Central Asia. Due to cool temperatures, DMA hatching is delayed by 2 to 3 weeks in **Tajikistan** and **Uzbekistan** and will not start before early April. A similar situation probably occurs in **Afghanistan** and **Turkmenistan**. DMA and CIT hatching will probably also be delayed in **Kazakhstan** and **Kyrgyzstan**.

Weather and Ecological Conditions in March 2012

Cool temperatures prevailed in all CCA countries and the conditions were not suitable yet for locust hatching.

In **Caucasus**, cool weather prevailed.

In Armenia, snow fell throughout the country and, at the end of March, the cover was still of 45-48 cm in some foothills and up to 65 cm in mountainous areas; it disappeared from the valleys and other foothills during the second fortnight. The average temperature was below normal by 1 to 4°C. Temperatures ranged from -5/-9°C to 15/20°C in lowlands, from -9/-13°C to 12-15°C at foothills and from -15/-20°C to 1/6°C in mountainous areas. In lowlands, spring field work concerned pruning of fruit trees and vineyards. In mountainous areas and foothills, crops were still dormant.

In Azerbaijan, the weather was mainly cold (average temperature of 1-2°C) with little precipitation during February. In March, the weather was cool, with average daily temperatures of 4-6°C and a wind speed of 5-10 m/s; it was still not suitable for final stage of locust egg development and hatching. Natural vegetation started its development but the cover was still sparse; crops were at germination and cereals at tillering stage.

In Georgia, the winter was exceptionally cold (average temperatures of -5/-2°C) with rainy periods longer than usual (in particular, snow fell during almost the whole month of February). During March, the average temperature was of 0-5°C (10°C less as compared to March 2011).

In **Central Asia**, the weather was still cool.

In Tajikistan, from 1st November 2011 up to 22 March 2012, there were numerous snowfalls in the central part of country resulting in a snow cover varying from 10 to 70 cm. Temperatures during that period ranged -18 to -8°C. From 25 March onwards, temperatures increased up to 24°C. Therefore, it is expected that the grass cover will develop well and quickly as the soil moisture is also suitable for plant growth and that rain fell during the last week of March.

In Uzbekistan, the weather conditions were so cool during the winter period and until mid-March that that a delay of 20-25 days of hatching is expected.

In the Russian Federation, March was characterized by negative temperatures and snowfalls in all regions.

Area Treated in March 2012

No control operations were carried out in March.

Locust Situation and Forecast

(see also the summary on page 1)

Armenia

• SITUATION

No hatching was observed In March.

• FORECAST

CIT hatching will probably start in April in lowland areas with its peak in May. It is expected that 4,000 to 5,000 ha will be infested in 2012 and that control operations will concern 3,000 ha. Immigration flights of *DMA* from neighboring countries are not excluded.

Azerbaijan

• SITUATION

An end-of-winter survey of *DMA* egg-beds was carried out in February to assess egg survival and determine the hatching period. No hatching was reported so far.

• FORECAST

DMA mass hatching followed by hopper development will occur in April in traditional locust areas (Eldar, Djeiranchel, Garasu, Padar and Kharamin steppes), boosted by increasing



temperatures and suitable weather conditions. It is expected that high densities of *DMA* will be found there.

Georgia

• SITUATION

No surveys were carried out and no hatching or locusts were reported in March.

• FORECAST

Due to exceptional cold winter, *DMA* hatching will probably start later than usual and not before mid-April in the Dali, Mori and Samukhi areas of the Kakheti region, in the south-eastern part of the country, along the Azeri border. *CIT* hatching should start in May in the northern and north-western parts of the above mentioned areas as well as in the eastern part of the Kvemo Kartli region. Because of under-treated locust-infested areas in 2011, it is expected that the locust situation will be serious in 2012.

CENTRAL ASIA

Afghanistan

• SITUATION

No report was received in March.

• FORECAST

DMA hatching should start in early April in the northern part of the country. Based on the end-of-summer surveys, it is expected that the infested areas decrease as compared to 2011 (almost 257,000 ha were infested in 2011 out of which more than 227,000 ha were treated from early April to early June in 11 provinces).

Kazakhstan

• SITUATION

No report was received in March.

• FORECAST

Under suitable weather conditions, CIT hatching should start from the 3rd decade of April until the 3rd decade of May depending on the locations. DMA hatching should also start during the 3rd decade of April. It is expected that more than 2.2 million ha will require control operations in 2012, including 1,8 million ha against CIT; this would represent an increase of 16% as compared to 2011.

Kyrgyzstan

• SITUATION

Three-week spring surveys concerning the status of over-wintering egg-pods should have started during the 2nd decade of March in Jalal-Abad, Osh and Batken provinces and the 3rd decade of March in Chui, Talas and Issyk-Kul provinces but were hampered by snowfalls during the 3rd decade of March. A similar survey is planned from the 2nd decade of April onwards in Naryn province. At the end of March, surveys were in progress in the South (Osh and Batken provinces) and in the Chui province.

• FORECAST

DMA hatching is expected to start during the second half of April in Jalal-Abad, Osh and Batken provinces. CIT hatching should begin in early May in Chui, Talas and Issyk-Kul provinces and by mid-May in Naryn province. It is planned to have to carry out treatments on 60,000 ha, a bit more than in 2011.

Tajikistan

• SITUATION

The preparation of the 2012 locust campaign is on progress with a higher allocation from the Government as compared to 2011. Tenders for the purchase of pesticides and sprayers have been launched and the spring survey workplan established. Meetings and training courses (which will concern up to 300 staff) will start in early April.



• FORECAST

DMA mass hatching is expected by mid-April in Khatlon province and should start in late April in Sughd province and RRS, i.e. about one month later than last year. It is anticipated that infested areas in 2012 will decrease as compared to 2011 and consequently that less than 130,000 ha will have to be controlled this year.

Turkmenistan

• SITUATION

No bulletin was received for March.

• FORECAST

DMA hatching will probably start in early April and hopper development occur during the forecast period. It is expected that, similarly to 2011, an area of about 250,000 ha will have to be treated in 2012.

Uzbekistan

• SITUATION

Due to very cool weather conditions, DMA hatching, which usually starts in mid-March onwards, is delayed by 20-25 days.

• FORECAST

DMA hatching is expected to begin in early April. It is anticipated that control operations will concern 418,000 ha during the 2012 locust campaign, a slight decrease as compared to 2011.

Russian Federation

• SITUATION

No survey was carried out in March. Survey will start as soon as the snow cover disappears.

• FORECAST

Substantial locust populations will probably be present in 2012 although a general decrease in infested areas is expected. Treatments are anticipated on 800,000 ha (against 1,4 million ha in 2011).

Announcements

Locust warning levels. A colour-coded scheme indicates the seriousness of the current situation for each of the three main locust pests: green for *calm*, yellow for *caution*, orange for *threat* and red for *danger*. The scheme is applied to the Locust Watch web page dedicated to the current locust situation ("Locust situation now!") and to the regional monthly bulletin header. The levels indicate the perceived risk or threat of current locust infestations to crops and appropriate actions are suggested for each level.

Locust reporting. During calm (green) periods, countries should report at least once/month and send standardized information using the national monthly bulletin template. During caution (yellow), threat (orange) and danger (red) periods, often associated with locust outbreaks and upsurges, updates should be sent at least once/week. Affected countries are also encouraged to prepare decadal bulletins summarizing the situation. All information should be sent by e-mail to Annie.Monard@fao.org. Monthly information received by the 5th of each month will be included in the CCA Locust Bulletin to be issued by mid-month; otherwise, it will not appear until the next bulletin. Reports should be sent even if no locusts were found or if no surveys were conducted.

New information on Locust Watch in Caucasus and Central Asia. Recent additions to the website (<http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts-CCA/en/index.html>) are:

- Report of the Technical Workshop on Locusts held in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 24-28 October 2011.
- List of CCA National Focal Points for the "Five-year Programme to improve national and regional locust management in CCA".



March 2012 events and activities. The following activities occurred or were ongoing:

- From December 2011, preparation of the monographs on the three CCA locust pests;
- National Project for Kyrgyzstan approved in February 2012 (FAO funding); National Project for Tajikistan (FAO funding) and Regional Project under the FAO-Turkey Partnership Programme under approval;
- Identification of National Focal Points;
- Recruitment of National Consultants for the preparation of the national monthly bulletins and of National Consultants for the remote sensing study on progress for all countries except Turkmenistan;
- Delivery of equipment for locust survey and control operations and demonstration purpose (sprayers, PPE, GPS, survey kits and satellite telephone) on progress.

April 2012 events and activities. The following activities are scheduled:

- Technical assistance provided to Kyrgyzstan on locust monitoring (A.V. Latchinsky);
- Technical assistance provided to Azerbaijan on ULV spraying techniques (S. Lagnaoui);
- Cross-border survey between Azerbaijan and Georgia at the end of April, with the participation of Armenian technicians (Kakheti region, Georgia);
- Cross-border survey between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan (Fergana Valley).