

## FAO DESERT LOCUST BULLETIN No 126

### GENERAL SITUATION DURING FEBRUARY-EARLY MARCH 1989 FORECAST FOR APRIL-MAY 1989

#### SUMMARY

No major change in the general situation occurred during the summary period. The overall situation remains calm with generally only low population levels reported from most regions. In West Africa small immature swarms were present in northern Mauritania, southern Senegal and Guinea Bissau: low density populations persisted in the Sahel with localised small scale breeding reported from northern Chad. In North-West Africa the scale of adult control measures in Morocco continued to decline whilst the remainder of the region remained free of any significant locust activity. In The Near East populations continued to decline and by the end of the summary period only low density populations were reported to be present. In Eastern Africa the situation continued to improve and by late February the region was reported free of locusts. South-West Asia remained calm during the summary period.

#### WEST AFRICA

##### Meteorology

Analysis of Meteosat imagery for the second decade of February indicated a large cloud mass extending from the Atlantic coast of Mauritania north-east towards Atar and extending north almost to the Algerian border : meteorological stations in the region recorded significant rainfall in this period with a maximum of 38 mm reported from Atar. Field surveys in the Akjoujt-Atar area in late February reported the presence of areas of standing water and green vegetation.

##### Breeding Conditions

Analysis of low resolution NOAA imagery for early February indicates that no areas of green vegetation are present north of approximately 14 degrees North. Areas of drying vegetation are present in south-western Senegal, south-western Mali, the Gambia and the extreme south-west of Niger. Significant areas of green vegetation were identified in Guinea and Guinea Bissau. However, recent rain in northern Mauritania will result in improved conditions for breeding particularly in the Akjoujt-Atar area.

##### Locusts

#### MAURITANIA

The overall situation continued to improve during February. Localised hatchings and small pockets of early instar hoppers were reported from the Akjoujt area in the second decade of February where small scale control was undertaken over approximately 2500 ha. The situation along the coastal zone from the Senegal River to Nouakchott was described as calm with no adult infestations at densities suitable for control reported following small scale swarm control in the Keur Macene area in early February. In mid to late February two swarms were reported from the Zouerate area of Tiris Zemmour. Three small immature swarms were reported from Amsaga, north-east of Akjoujt, on 27 February in an area which had received significant recent rain and copulating adults were also observed south-east of Atar at Terjitt and Mhairez. In the south-eastern region of Hodh El Gharbi a small (50 ha) immature swarm was reported at Djigueni on 18 February flying in a northerly direction. There were unconfirmed reports of immature swarms in the Bir Moghrein area in late February.

**SENEGAL**

The overall situation continued to improve during the summary period with only isolated adults present in most regions apart from the Kaolack area where a few small swarms were reported to persist.

**GAMBIA**

Swarms were reported to be persisting in the North Bank district in mid February but no details were available.

**GUINEA**

Three small (ca 10 sq. km) swarms were reported to have invaded northern Guinea on 22 February. Migration in a southerly direction towards Kakoni, Gaoual and Boke was reported. Ground control measures were in progress but no details were available.

**GUINEA BISSAU**

Swarms were reported from Ingore (1226N/1613W), Sancaleba (1226N/1627W), Papia (1227N/1607W), Sao Vincente (1217N/1612W) and Antotinha between 20 and 29 January and small scale ground control was undertaken. Further small immature swarms were observed in the Dungal (1229N/1513W), Bafata (1210N/1440W) and Mansaba (1219N/1510W) areas in the second week of February.

**CAMEROON**

A swarm was reported between Bertoua and Belabo in late February flying to the north-west but it is more likely to refer to Tree Locust than Desert Locust.

**MALI**

There was an unconfirmed report of several swarms in the Wadi Zazak (1940N/0248E) and Tadelok (1940N/0207E) areas of the Adrar Des Iforhas in the first decade of February.

**NIGER**

There was an unconfirmed report of swarms in the Tamesna-Air area of northern Niger in late February. In early March there were reports of mixed instar hoppers and low density mature and immature adults in the Air-Tamesna area but no details were available.

**CHAD**

Small areas of low to moderate density adult groups were reported in the Kirdimi (1810N/1830E), Fada (1714N/2133E), Amoule (1955N/1910E) and Oumianga Kebir (1903N/2030E) areas of B.E.T. province in early February and small scale breeding was reported. Small scale ground control over approximately 160 ha was undertaken. There was also an unconfirmed report of locusts in the southern Logone region in late February.

**NORTH-WEST AFRICA****Meteorology**

Analysis of Meteosat imagery indicates that a significant cloud mass was present over Morocco, north of 30 degrees North extending east-south-east into western Algeria in the second decade of February and this is likely to have resulted in significant rain. A smaller cloud mass was also present over the Guelmim area of southern Morocco extending south for approximately 150 km.

**Breeding Conditions**

Analysis of low resolution NOAA imagery for early February indicates that area of green vegetation are mainly confined to the coastal areas of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco and the Anti-Atlas of Morocco. However, significant rain is likely to have fallen south of the Anti-Atlas of Morocco and the Algerian-Moroccan border area and in the Guelmim area of Morocco and this is likely to result in an improvement in breeding conditions in these areas. No high resolution NOAA imagery was available for analysis.

**Locusts****MOROCCO**

Small scale control of adults was undertaken in the Tata, Errachidia, Guelmim, Ouzarzate and Bouarfa areas during February. A total of 6144 ha were treated during February and small scale control was continuing in early March.

**ALGERIA**

There was an unconfirmed report of a small swarm at Kerkaz on 13 February. A small (3000ha) low density infestation of predominantly immature adults was reported from the Wadi Habadra-Wadi Botha (approximate coordinates 2634N/0328E) area in mid February: localised flooding had occurred in these wadis during January and conditions were reported as green.

**TUNISIA**

No report of locust activity was received during the summary period: assumed free of locusts.

**LIBYA**

No report of locust activity was received during the summary period: assumed free of locusts.

**EASTERN AFRICA****Meteorology**

Analysis of Meteosat imagery indicates that a significant cloud mass was present over northern coastal areas of Somalia extending south-east over the Ogaden to the Indian Ocean coast of Somalia in the second decade of February and this probably resulted in significant rainfall. No significant cloud mass was identified over Sudan, north of 14 degrees North, during February.

**Breeding Conditions**

Analysis of low resolution NOAA imagery for the first decade of February indicates that, in general, breeding conditions were unfavourable in the region. No recent high resolution NOAA imagery was available for analysis.

**Locusts****SUDAN**

The overall situation remained calm throughout Sudan during the summary period with a continued decline in locust activity reported. Ground surveys in the Red Sea coastal areas in early to mid February reported only isolated mature and immature adults and small scale hatching over approximately 4ha and 10ha respectively in the Nafisa (1816N/3748E) and Krimbit (1815N/3740E) areas which were subsequently controlled. All regions were reported free of any significant locust activity on 6 March.

**ETHIOPIA**

Small swarmlets were reported on the Dahlak Islands flying to the south-west on 10 February. The situation was described as calm on 28 February with no locust activity reported.

**DJIBOUTI** and **SOMALIA** were reported calm on 28 February.

**KENYA**, **UGANDA** and **TANZANIA** were reported free of any locust activity on 28 February.

## NEAR EAST

### **Meteorology**

Analysis of Meteosat imagery for February indicates that scattered rain may have fallen in the southern Tihama of Yemen Arab Republic and in western parts of Yemen PDR in the last two decades of February. Significant rain may also have fallen in southern Iraq and in the Kuwait-Iraq-Saudi Arabia border area in the second decade of February.

### **Breeding Conditions**

In general field reports indicate that only small localised areas were favourable for breeding in Saudi Arabia, the Yemen Arab Republic, Yemen PDR and the UAE. Analysis of NOAA low resolution imagery for early February indicated that favourable conditions were present only in the Wadi Dawasir and central region of Saudi Arabia.

### **Locusts**

#### **KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

There was an unconfirmed report of immature swarms in the Harrad area of central Saudi Arabia and of scattered immature adults in the Yabrin area, located approximately 100 km south of Harrad, in late January-early February. There was an additional unconfirmed report of hoppers and adults in the Nefud area in mid February. However, on 7 March, following extensive surveys, the situation was described as calm with only scattered adults present in the Eriya and Fahdli areas and unconfirmed reports of hatching in the Wadi Dawasir area.

#### **EGYPT**

The situation was reported to be calm on 20 February with no significant locust activity.

#### **YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC**

On 28 February control operations in the Tihama were reported to have ended and the situation was described as calm with the Highlands and Eastern Lowlands free of locusts. Suitable breeding conditions were reported along the Tihama.

#### **YEMEN PDR**

A few small mature adult groups were observed in the Qishin (1524N/5142E) and the Wadi Hadramout areas in the first half of February and small scale hatchings were controlled in the Zinjibar (1337N/4524E) area in the first week of February. The general situation was described as calm on 15 February.

#### **KUWAIT**

Isolated low density mature adults were reported over an estimated area of 50 sq. km in the Al Wafra (2834N/4804E) area in late February. Low density immature adults were also present over an estimated area of 5 sq. km at Al Salmi (2907N/4640E) in the same period.

#### **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

Between 23 and 26 January two immature swarms, estimated size 20 to 60 sq. km respectively, were reported to have invaded the Sila (2410N/5140E) and Gezira (2350N/5150E) areas. One additional immature swarm was reported from the Shahbana (2410N/5140E) area on 28 January. A light infestation of immature adult groups was observed in the Ghaiaty (2350N/5245E) and Bada Zayed areas on 29 January. On 12 February approximately 50 ha of immature adult groups were controlled in the Bada Zayed (2350N/5345E) area. A total of approximately 6400 ha were treated in January-February.

## SOUTH-WEST ASIA

### **Meteorology**

Significant rain fell in coastal areas of Pakistan during the first half of February with Pasni recording 25 mm. No significant rainfall was reported from India. Analysis of Meteosat imagery indicates that significant rain may have fallen in western Iran in the second decade of February.

### **Breeding Conditions**

Breeding conditions are generally unfavourable apart from coastal areas of Mekran. Low temperatures are likely to have limited breeding in western Iran.

### **Locusts**

**AFGHANISTAN** was reported free of locusts in January.

**IRAN:** no report received.

### **PAKISTAN**

Scattered adults, varying in density between 75 and 450 per sq. km, were reported from 21 localities in the Turbat, Pasni and Panjgur areas in the first half of February with the maximum recorded at Gwadar (2503N/6215E) on 5 February. In the second half of February low density adults were observed in the Mekran, Chagai and Lasbela areas with a maximum density of 750 per sq. km recorded at Agore (2528N/6532E) on 25 February.

### **INDIA**

Isolated low density adults were reported from Diatra (2747N/7249E) in the first half of February.

### **FORECAST FOR APRIL-MAY**

In West Africa further small scale migration south into the Gulf of Guinea States may occur but it is unlikely that breeding will ensue. There is a high probability that small to moderate scale breeding will occur in northern Mauritania, following significant rain in mid February, with hatching and hopper band formation likely during the forecast period. Small scale breeding is also likely to occur in northern parts of the Sahel in locally favourable areas and limited control measures may be required.

In North-West Africa no significant change in the situation is expected during the forecast period. Small scale migration of locusts into southern parts of Morocco and Algeria may occur during the forecast period.

In Eastern Africa the situation is expected to remain calm during the forecast period. There will be a low to moderate risk of small scale migration from the east into Sudan and Ethiopia.

In the Near East there will be an increasing risk of locusts migrating in a northerly direction from the Arabian Peninsula towards Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Turkey. However, in view of the current low population levels in the Arabian Peninsula such migrations are likely to be small scale.

In South-West Asia small scale breeding is likely to occur in the Mekran area of Pakistan but no significant change in the overall situation is expected to occur within the forecast period.

*Rome, 9 March 1989.*

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