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DESERT LOCUST SITUATION SUMMARY AND FORECAST

No. 77 JANUARY - EARLY FEBRUARY 1985

SUMMARY

The situation remains calm. Small numbers of adults were reported from India, Pakistan, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Yemen Arab Republic. Winter-spring rains have been adequate for breeding: Pakistan and northern Somalia, but have virtually failed in south-west Arabia. Only small scale spring breeding is anticipated and no control measures are expected to be necessary in the forecast period.

W/R3047

DESERT LOCUST SITUATION, JANUARY - EARLY FEBRUARY 1985

WEST AFRICA

Meteorology

The Intertropical Convergence Zone began to move slowly north, having been quasi-stationary at about 5°N, while displaying some waves. Thundery storms were essentially confined to coastal areas. According to GTS data and Meteosat imagery the maximum daily rainfall was 38 mm at Sassandra on 12 January. Meteosat imagery indicated some rain in the western Sahel and western Sahara coming from the Atlantic. Zouerate and Bir Moghreïn reported good rain in 1-2 January. According to GTS data Arrecife in the Canary Islands received 14 mm on 24 January during the passage of an extensive disturbance, which affected all the area between 15° and 30°N and represented a typical example of the interaction of the weather over the Sahel and the Maghreb. Some sandstorms were reported in Mauritania during the second decade of January.

Maximum daily temperatures ranged from 37°C in Niger to 25°C in Atlantic coastal areas.

Breeding conditions

According to OCLALAV in northern Mauritania there were extensive areas of green vegetation extending from Zouerate to the borders of Algeria and western Sahara and in the desert areas of El Mreiger, Ouarane and Adaffer between 19° and 21°N and 7°-11°W.

In December OCLALAV reported green vegetation in valleys in northern Adrar des Iforas.

Locusts

MAURITANIA

In December small numbers of adults, mainly immature were seen at six localities in Aouker, Aleg, Affole and around Aïoun el Atrouss. There were no reports in January.

MALI

In December there were immature adults at densities of 20 - 500 per hectare and green hoppers at 25 - 100 per hectare in Tamesna. In north-western Adrar des Iforas there were immature adults of densities of 50 - 80/hectare over 150 hectare. There were no reports in January.

There were no reports from NIGER or CHAD.

NORTH-WEST AFRICA

Meteorology

From early January some eastward moving thundery Atlantic depressions affected the Maghreb, and some significant rainfall was reported by the GTS: 51 mm at Annaba on 2 January, 42 mm at Agadir on 5 January, 50 mm at Essaouira on 7 January, 19 mm at Djelfa on 8 January, 23 mm at Giarabub on 17 January, 39 mm and 17 mm at Shahat on 18 and 30 January respectively.

There were violent sandstorms coming from the west over Libya on 17 January. By contrast in the southern and western Sahara the harmattan predominated, with squalls from the east in the region of 50 kilometres per hour, accompanied by showers in the Tindouf area. These differing influences explain the contrasts in maximum temperatures which fluctuated between 5° and 10°C during rainy and snowy periods at the beginning of January later rising to 15°C while in southern Libya they sometimes exceeded 30°C.

Breeding conditions

According to NOAA/AVHRR imagery conditions were probably favourable for breeding from Tindouf to Oued Dra, in parts of Ahnet and to the north of the Tassili-n-Ajjer, and in the Libyan oases.

Locusts

No locusts were reported from the Region during January.

EASTERN AFRICA

Meteorology

Between the rains associated with Mediterranean depressions, which resulted in 16 mm at Alexandria on 1 February and 13 mm at Mersa Matruh on 3 February, and the ITCZ which lay south of the Equator, Meteosat only detected some cloud masses without much rainfall over north-east Africa. However, Djibouti recorded 67 mm (half the mean annual rainfall) on 25 January associated with an eastward moving Mediterranean depression and there were probably further rains along the northern Somali coast on the two following days. Ethiopia was generally dry; one thunderstorm gave rise to 28 mm in Addis Ababa on 27 January and there may have been further thermoconvective activity over western Ethiopia on 3 February. The recession area of Sudan was dry, as was Somalia south of the northern coastal escarpment.

As regards daily maximum temperatures, they ranged from 15°-20°C in the Ethiopian highlands to 35°C in Sudan and the Horn of Africa.

Breeding conditions

According to NOAA/AVHRR imagery conditions were favorable for breeding in the Ethiopian coast north-west of Massawa, along the Gulf of Tadjoura coastal plains in Djibouti, the coastal plains of north-western Somalia from Loyada to Bulhar, around Las Dureh, between Karin and Anchor, between Heis and Kilma and around Bosaso.

Locusts

SOMALIA

In the last decade of December a ground survey was conducted along the following route: Hargeria-Kabri Bahr-Garisa-Silil-Loyade-Zeila-Tokhoshi-Silil-Karure-Lukhaya-Bulhar-Berbera. Three immature adults were seen at Ashaado (113 N/4325 E) and nine adults in an area of 800 m x 200 m on the Haji Hussein plain at (1040 N/4339 E).

During the first decade of January the ground survey continued to the east of Berbera along the following route: Berbera-Karin-Raguda-Mait-Harshau-Las Sukud-Las Khoreh-Durdureh-Elayu-Bosaso-Karin-Buran-Hadaftimo-Erigawo-El Afwein-Las Dureh-Berbera. Nine scattered adults were found between Mait and Las Sukud on 3 January; 48 were found between Las Sukud and Durdurer on 4 January, at Durdureh 15 adults were seen on an area of 50 m x 10 metres 5 km E of Elayu on 5 January; 6 immature adults were seen in Wadi Bosaso and one other 25 km E of Buran on 6 January and 4 adults were flushed at Las Dureh - 9 January.

NEAR EAST

Meteorology

Several Mediterranean depressions crossed the Arabian peninsula during January giving generally light to moderate rain in many areas. Heavy rain was reported from Turaif, which received 35 mm on 12 January, and in south-western Saudi Arabia from 25 to 28 January at Jizan, Najran, Abha (33 mm on 26 January) and Wadi Dawasir. In early February dry weather resumed.

The Red Sea Convergence Zone generally lay between 20°N and 15°N but from 4-6 February it lay at about 14°N.

Midday temperature were generally about 20°N in northern Arabia but 25°-30°C in central and southern parts of the peninsula.

Breeding conditions

Ground surveys in the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen indicated that conditions are very poor for breeding in both coastal and interior areas. According to NOAA/AVHRR conditions are favourable in Wadi Dawasir, in El Kharj and the Qassim.

Locusts

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

Two adults, are gregarious, were found on the northern Tihama of the Yemen Arab Republic.

There were no other reports of locusts from the Region.

SOUTH-WEST ASIA

Meteorology

The continental high pressure (1020-1030 millibars) characteristic of the winter monsoon persisted north of 30°N, while low pressure remained centred south of 20°N. Relatively cold air from the north-east predominated. Some disturbances affected the winter-spring breeding areas. Amongst significant rainfall totals reported by the GTS were 20, 26 and 51 mm at Quetta on 3, 4 and 18 January respectively. Panjgur recorded 133 mm during the first 15 days of January while heavy rain was reported from Nushki and Kharan; 13 mm fell at Khuzdar and light rain was reported from Pasni and Sukkur. There was further heavy rain at Nushki on 18 January. Maximum temperatures ranged from around 15° in northern Baluchistan to 24°C in Karachi.

In India, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Kutch were dry. Maximum temperatures were around 25°C.

Breeding conditions

Conditions will have become favourable for breeding in Baluchistan.

Locusts

PAKISTAN

No locusts were reported during January. On 12 February, however, low density adults at 1-2 per hectare were found at Jiwani (2503 N/6147 E).

INDIA

Isolated adults were seen at Manchitiya (2732 N/2216 E) in Jaisalmer district on 16 January.

There were no other reports from the Region.

FORECAST FOR MARCH-APRIL 1985

Overall the Desert Locust situation remains calm and no control measures are expected to be needed in the forecast period.

In West Africa, small number of adults will persist, particularly in areas of green vegetation, and small scale breeding may occur in northern Mauritania and adjacent areas of Western Sahara.

In North-West Africa, there may be small numbers of adults in the Algerian Sahara and certain Libyan oases and there will start to breed.

In Eastern Africa, initially low density breeding will occur along the northern coastal and sub-coastal plains of Somalia and small scale breeding may take place on the Red Sea coast of Sudan and northern Ethiopia.

In the Near East, there may be some low density breeding in eastern United Arab Emirates and northern Oman and perhaps in restricted areas along the Tihama of Saudi Arabia.

In South-West Asia there will be small scale breeding in Baluchistan, initially in coastal areas but it will later occur inland as temperatures rise.

Rome
25 February 1985.

