

June 2012



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# DESERT LOCUST CONTROL COMMITTEE

<b>Fortieth Session</b>
<b>Rome, 19-22 June 2012</b>
<b>Desert Locust outlook until winter 2012/13</b>
<b>(Agenda Item 5)</b>

This working paper includes information and data received by DLIS up to 5 June 2012. It will be updated in the DLCC session.

## I. Summary

The Desert Locust outlook for the Sahel in West Africa this summer is alarming. Early good rainfall will allow at least one and probably two generations of breeding that could cause locust numbers to increase dramatically in Niger and Mali, and perhaps Chad. Control operations are likely to be necessary against hopper bands and swarms. The situation could deteriorate further if swarms move at the end of the summer to northwest Mauritania where autumn breeding could threaten North-West Africa during the following spring. Elsewhere, small-scale breeding will occur during the summer in the interior of Sudan and western Eritrea as well as along both sides of the Indo-Pakistan border but locust numbers will remain low, and no significant developments are likely.

## II. Western Region

Summer. There is a possibility this year for two generations of breeding to occur in the Sahel because early good rains fell in parts of northern Mali, Niger and Chad during the second half of May as a result of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) pushing some 300 km further north than usual. The first generation of egg-laying is likely to commence from mid-June and continue into July. Immature swarms could start forming in late July and continue during August. A second generation of egg-laying could commence in late August and continue during September. The scale of second-generation breeding will depend on the timing, distribution and intensity of rainfall in August and September as well as the effectiveness of control operations. Seasonal precipitation predictions suggest that above-average rains will occur during July and August in Niger and to a lesser extent in northern Mali. Above-average rains are also predicted in central and northern Chad in July. Poor rains

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are expected throughout the Sahel in September and could continue in Mauritania during October and November but might improve in Niger and Chad.

Therefore, at least one generation of breeding is expected to occur in Mali, Niger, Chad and, to a lesser extent, in Mauritania this summer. Breeding may occur further south than usual in the Sahel and pose of significant threat to crops and already vulnerable food security. Hopper bands and small swarms are likely to form in some areas, and control operations will be required. Survey and control operations will be hampered in northern Niger due to insecurity and will probably not be possible in northern Mali. If good rains and two generations of breeding occur, there is a high possibility that large numbers of locusts will be present between Mali and Chad in October and November that would further threaten the seasonal harvest. As vegetation dries out, an increasing number of swarms would form and move to southern Algeria, northwest Mauritania, Western Sahara and perhaps southern Morocco and southwestern Libya. Current seasonal precipitation predictions suggest that below normal rains are likely in most of these areas during November.

Winter. In spite of the seasonal precipitation predictions, if good rains do fall in northwest Mauritania after the summer, a generation of breeding will occur in which additional swarms could develop and threaten the spring breeding areas south of the Atlas Mountains in 2013.

### **III. Central Region**

Summer. Seasonal precipitation predictions suggest that drier than normal conditions will prevail throughout the region until December, except during June and July when above-average rains may fall in the summer breeding areas in the interior of Sudan and western Eritrea. Consequently, small-scale breeding will occur, causing locust numbers to increase slightly in both countries during August and September but remain below threatening levels. In Oman, small-scale breeding may occur in the northeast during June. No significant developments are likely.

Winter. Low numbers of adults produced in the summer breeding areas are likely to appear on the Red Sea coast in Sudan and Eritrea from about November onwards. The timing and scale of the breeding will depend on rainfall in coastal areas during the winter. Small-scale breeding may also occur along parts of the Red Sea coastal plains in Saudi Arabia and Yemen that receive rainfall. No significant developments are likely.

### **IV. South-West Asia**

Summer. The monsoon rains are expected to arrive in Rajasthan about the first week of July and in adjacent desert areas of eastern Pakistan by about mid-July. Thereafter, one generation of small-scale breeding is expected to occur, causing locust numbers to increase slightly but remain below threatening levels. Locust numbers will decline in about October as adults move towards the spring breeding areas in western Pakistan.

Winter. No significant activity is expected until temperatures warm up in the spring breeding areas of western Pakistan and southeastern Iran in about February and March 2013. Thereafter, small-scale breeding will occur in areas that receive rainfall. No significant developments are likely.