



warning level: **THREAT**

DESERT LOCUST ALERT

FAO Emergency Centre for Locust Operations



(17 Feb 2013)



General Situation as of 17 February 2013

There have been numerous reports of immature Desert Locust swarms invading cropping areas in northern Sudan in the past few days. The swarms have originated from the winter breeding areas on the Red Sea coastal plains and subcoastal areas in northeast Sudan and southeast Egypt. The situation is potentially dangerous as more swarms are expected to form in the coming weeks that could move into parts of Sudan and Egypt. All efforts are required to control the infestations and protect winter crops.

At least six immature swarms and a number of immature adult groups were present on the Red Sea coastal plains of **Sudan** between Mohamed Qol (2054N/3709E) and the Egyptian border. Locals reported seeing the swarms flying high and crossing the border. At least one immature swarm and many immature adult groups were present in subcoastal areas on the western side of the Red Sea Hills in Wadi Diib. Several immature swarms moved to the west, reaching the interior of northern Sudan and the Nile Valley between Abu Hamed (1932N/3320E) and Dongola (1910N/3027E), including Merowe (1830N/3149E) and Ed Debba (1805N/3055E), on about 14 February, attacking winter crops and fruit orchards. Aerial and ground control operations were immediately launched and have treated at least five swarms so far.

On the southern coastal plains of the Red Sea in Sudan, four small immature and maturing swarms and groups of adults were reported and treated near the border of **Eritrea**. Control operations were also carried out in Eritrea recently. Breeding is in progress and late instar hopper bands and fledglings are present in both countries.

In southeast **Egypt**, ground control operations continue against immature adult groups and swarms on the coast and in subcoastal areas between the Sudan border and Marsa Alam (2504N/3454E). Aerial and ground control operations also continue on the Red Sea coast in **Saudi Arabia** against hopper bands and mature swarms north of Jeddah and, to a lesser extent, on the central coast near Lith (2008N/4016E).

More swarms are expected to form in northeast Sudan and southeast Egypt in the coming weeks. If no further rains fall and vegetation dries out, some of these swarms could move into the interior of both countries and also cross the Red Sea to the coast of Saudi Arabia. As ecological conditions remain favourable along the border of Eritrea and Sudan, breeding will continue, causing additional hopper bands and small swarms to form. All countries should remain on high alert and make every effort to find and treat all infestations.

FAO will continue to keep all countries informed of any significant developments. The most up-to-date information on the situation is also available on Twitter (www.twitter.com/faolocust) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/faolocust).

The FAO Desert Locust Bulletin is issued every month by the Desert Locust Information Service, AGP Division (Rome, Italy). It is supplemented by Alerts and Updates during periods of increased Desert Locust activity. All products are distributed by e-mail and are available on the Internet.

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