



DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

FAO Emergency Centre for Locust Operations



(17 November 2003)



General Situation as of 17 November 2003 Forecast until mid-December 2003

Desert Locusts have moved into southern Morocco and northern Mauritania. Control continues in the outbreaks areas in Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Sudan, and new operations were undertaken in northern Senegal and southern Morocco. There is a risk of adult groups and swarms moving into southern Morocco, northern Mauritania and Algeria, while others could cross the Red Sea from Sudan to Saudi Arabia where good rains have fallen.

Three small maturing swarms invaded southern **Morocco** near Awssard (2240N/1410W) and Tichla (2135N/1458W) on 7 November probably coming from nearby infestations in northwestern Mauritania. Aerial and ground control operations started the next day and treated 1,470 ha. In **Mauritania**, late instar hopper bands and adult groups are present in the centre and northwest, hatching is in progress in the west and northwest, and ground control operations are underway. In the past few days, mature adult groups in the north (Tiris-Zemmour) were seen arriving from the east and laying. Seven teams are in the field, supplemented by the military. In northwestern **Senegal**, ground operations treated 400 ha of small hopper groups, bands and adults south of Richard Toll (1626N/1541W) along Lake Guier. Although hoppers are present and forming groups and small bands in northern **Mali**, many of the populations have fledged and adults are grouping, mainly in Tamesna where additional copulating and egg laying were seen in early November. In **Niger**, high-density transiens

hopper groups were present in some places in Tamesna where many of the hoppers have fledged and immature adults are forming small groups. In the southern Air, mature adults were seen laying eggs and 32 ha have been treated so far. As vegetation dries out in Mali and Niger, the majority of the adult populations will form groups and a few small swarms that are likely to move towards the north and west to Algeria, Morocco and northern Mauritania where they could disperse over a large area. Smaller populations will persist in vegetation that remains green in northern Mali and Niger.

In **Sudan**, most of the infestations along the Atbara River shifted during the first half of November to the western side of the Red Sea Hills where vegetation is starting to dry out and a few small bands and swarms were reported. Adults are gregarizing and forming groups west and southwest of Khartoum, and other adult infestations are present in the north near Dongola. Ground control operations have treated an additional 2,640 ha since 1 November. So far, there are no reports of locusts on the Red Sea coastal plains. In **Egypt**, high numbers of transiens adults are present and copulating in crops along the western shore of Lake Nasser where 375 ha were treated during the first week of November. Confirmation is being sought if these are Desert or Tree Locust. Seven survey and control teams are operating between Aswan and the Red Sea coast.

The situation is likely to worsen if good rains fall in northern Mauritania and along both sides of the Red Sea during the winter. So far, no rain has been reported in northeastern Mauritania. Heavy rains fell on the coast of **Saudi Arabia** between Jeddah and Yenbo on 9-10 November. Any locusts escaping operations in northeastern Sudan may arrive in this area.

The FAO Desert Bulletin is issued monthly, supplemented by Updates during periods of increased Desert Locust activity, and is distributed by fax, e-mail, FAO pouch and airmail by the Locusts and Other Migratory Pests Group, AGP Division, FAO, 00100 Rome, Italy. It is also available on the Internet.

Telephone: +39 06 570 52420 (7 days/week, 24 hr)

Facsimile: +39 06 570 55271

E-mail: ecl@fao.org

Internet: www.fao.org

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