



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

## DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

DESERT LOCUST INFORMATION SERVICE

*Danger Level = Serious (Central Region)*

### 27 MAY 2021. MORE BANDS FORM IN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA

**OVERVIEW.** Ground teams are detecting an increasing number of early instar hopper bands that are forming in eastern **Ethiopia** and northwest **Somalia** as more eggs hatch. This will continue until about mid-June as mature swarms are still laying eggs in some places. Ground and aerial control operations are in progress. In **Saudi Arabia**, control operations continue in the spring breeding areas of the interior where groups of immature adults have formed and are likely to migrate south to **Yemen** for eventual breeding in the interior. So far, a few groups have already migrated to within about 100 km of Yemen.

**WHY IT MATTERS.** A new round of breeding signifies the potential for a further increase in locust numbers in the Horn of Africa. If hopper band infestations are not adequately detected and treated, new swarms could form from late June onwards and move west during July to the Afar region in northeast Ethiopia for summer breeding. Locust numbers could build up in the interior of Yemen that may eventually threaten the Horn of Africa.

**CONTEXT.** Locusts are currently active in the Horn of Africa and Saudi Arabia.

- In Ethiopia, more hatching and band formation is taking place in eastern Bale zone of Oromia region and the Somali region, mainly in the western zones of Afder, Erer, Fafan, Jarar, and Nogob zones but most likely underway in other woredas and zones. Mature swarms persist south of Djibouti in Siti zone where hatching and band formation are imminent.
- In Somalia, hatching continues and more bands are forming on the escarpment and plateau in the northwest (Somaliland) where mature swarms are still laying eggs; there are unconfirmed reports of mature swarms in the northeast (Puntland).
- In Saudi Arabia, control operations continue against a few early instar hopper bands in the north near Al Jawf, fifth instar hopper bands and fledglings in the east near Jubail, and immature adult groups between Riyadh and Hail. Today, a few immature adult groups appeared in the Asir Mountains in the southwest near Khamis Mushait.
- In Yemen, scattered adults in the interior areas of Shabwah and Hadhramaut.
- In Sudan, locusts declined on the Red Sea coast and only scattered adults persist near Tokar.
- In Iran, a few early instar hopper groups remain on the southwest coast near Bushehr.
- In Iraq, control operations ended against hopper groups in the upper Euphrates Valley near Syria. No new reports from Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

**TAKEAWAY.** Increased ground operations are required in Ethiopia and Somalia to treat hopper bands and reduce eventual swarm formation but only after hatching has completely finished, avoiding repeated treatments of the same area.

- Central Region (SERIOUS) – increase survey and control (Ethiopia, Somalia, Saudi Arabia), increase preparedness, survey and possible control (Yemen interior)
- Eastern Region (CALM) – maintain control (Iran)
- Western Region (CALM) – no activities

