



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

DESERT LOCUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Danger Level = Serious (Central Region)

3 JUNE 2021. MORE HATCHING AND BANDS FORM IN ETHIOPIA & SOMALIA

OVERVIEW. Despite an earlier decline, the current upsurge prevails in the **Horn of Africa** where good rains allowed breeding to continue with hatching and more hopper bands forming in eastern **Ethiopia** and northern **Somalia**.

WHY IT MATTERS. In addition to aerial operations, ground survey and control teams will play an important role in finding and reducing hopper band infestations this month before they fledge and form a new generation of immature swarms starting in late June and continuing into July. The swarms are expected to move to the Afar region in northeast Ethiopia for summer breeding in August and September where above-normal rains are forecasted.

CONTEXT. Locusts remain active in the Horn of Africa but are declining in the Arabian Peninsula.

- **Saudi Arabia and Yemen:** Hopper bands have declined in the northern interior of Saudi Arabia due to control and drying conditions. Nevertheless, immature adult groups and perhaps a few small swarms could form and move south to the interior of Yemen where only solitary adults are present but conditions are favourable for breeding.
- **Near East:** Control operations were undertaken in parts of Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon against hoppers that hatched and formed small groups and bands as a result of earlier breeding by adult groups and small swarms that arrived in April.
- **SW Asia:** Although control operations continue in southwest Iran against hopper groups, a few small groups of immature adults could form and move east to the Indo/Pakistan border. Although small scale breeding is likely to commence with the onset of the monsoon in July, locust numbers should remain low.
- **West Africa and Sudan:** Once the summer rains begin, small-scale breeding is expected to occur in the Sahel of West Africa and Sudan from July onwards.

TAKEAWAY. Increased ground survey and control operations are required in Ethiopia and Somalia to treat hopper bands and reduce the scale of eventual swarm formation. Teams are already in the Yemen interior to detect any arrivals from Saudi Arabia and subsequent breeding.

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