



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

DESERT LOCUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Danger Level = Serious (Central Region)

11 JUN 2021. SWARMS ABOUT TO FORM IN SOMALIA

OVERVIEW. Numerous hopper bands have formed in northwest **Somalia** and, to a lesser extent, in eastern **Ethiopia**. More hopper bands are likely to be present in areas that have not yet been surveyed. Although substantial control operations are underway, new swarms will start to form next week, which are likely to persist in northern Somalia until conditions dry out. Nevertheless, there is a risk that some swarms could move north to Yemen and west to northeast Ethiopia.

WHY IT MATTERS. Unexpectedly good rains in late April and early May have caused widespread breeding and a further increase in locust numbers in the Horn of Africa. While locust numbers are lower than last year at this time, it signifies that the current upsurge is not yet over. New swarms that form later this month and during July are expected to move west to the Afar region in northeast Ethiopia for summer breeding from August to October. This could allow the upsurge to continue to at least the end of this year.

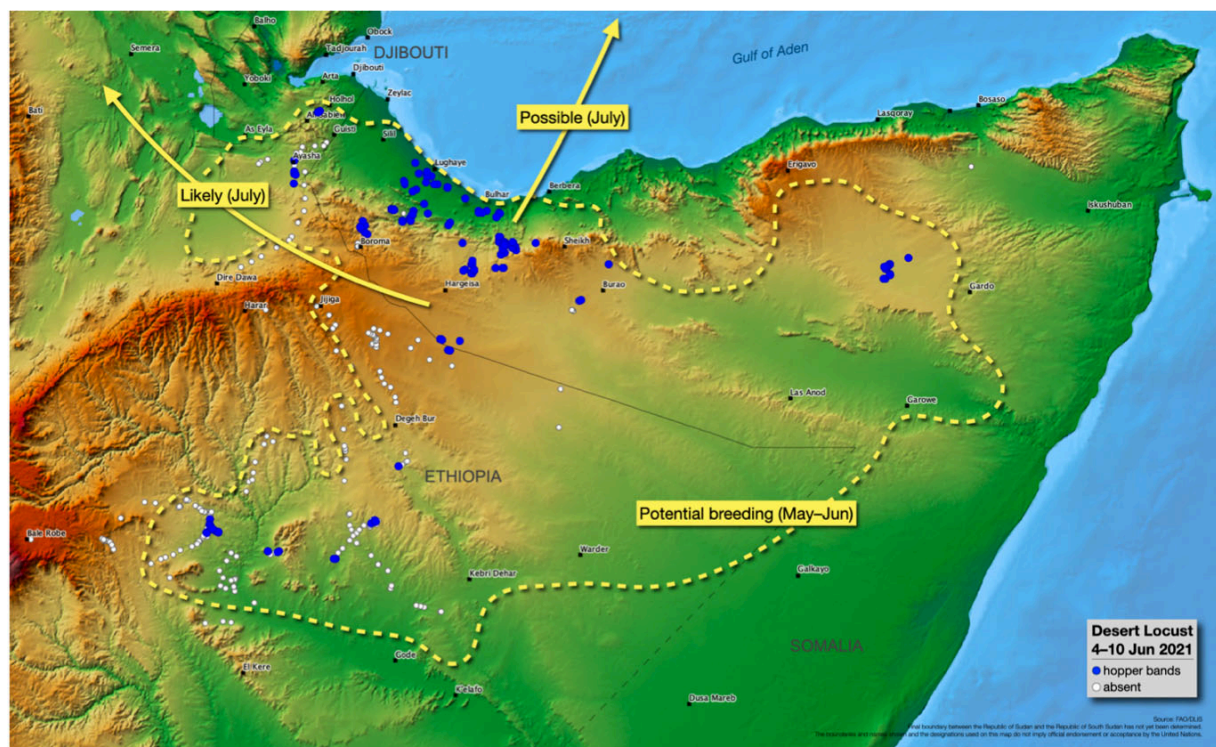
CONTEXT. The most important infestations are in Somalia and Ethiopia.

- **SOMALIA.** Hundreds of late instar hopper bands are present on the coast and the escarpment in the northwest (Somaliland) where aircraft are undertaking barrier spraying, supplemented by ground teams, to prevent the hoppers from becoming adults. Early instar hopper bands are present on the northern plateau where egg-laying occurred later. Infestations are likely to continue further east to Puntland, but some areas are not accessible.
- **ETHIOPIA.** Hopper bands continue to develop in eastern Bale zone of Oromia region and the Somali region (Fafan, Jarar, Nogob, Siti; and probably further east in Korahe and Dollo).
- **DJIBOUTI.** Control is underway against small hopper bands in the southeast where limited hatching occurred.
- **SAUDI ARABIA.** Control operations continue against a few mid instar hopper bands near Al Jawf in the north and immature adult groups in the Asir Mountains of the southwest.
- **YEMEN.** Scattered adults are present on the plateau north of Wadi Hadhramaut and near Oman.
- **JORDAN.** Control teams were still treating a few hopper bands last week near Zarqa that formed during May.
- **IRAN.** No locusts seen during recent surveys throughout the south.

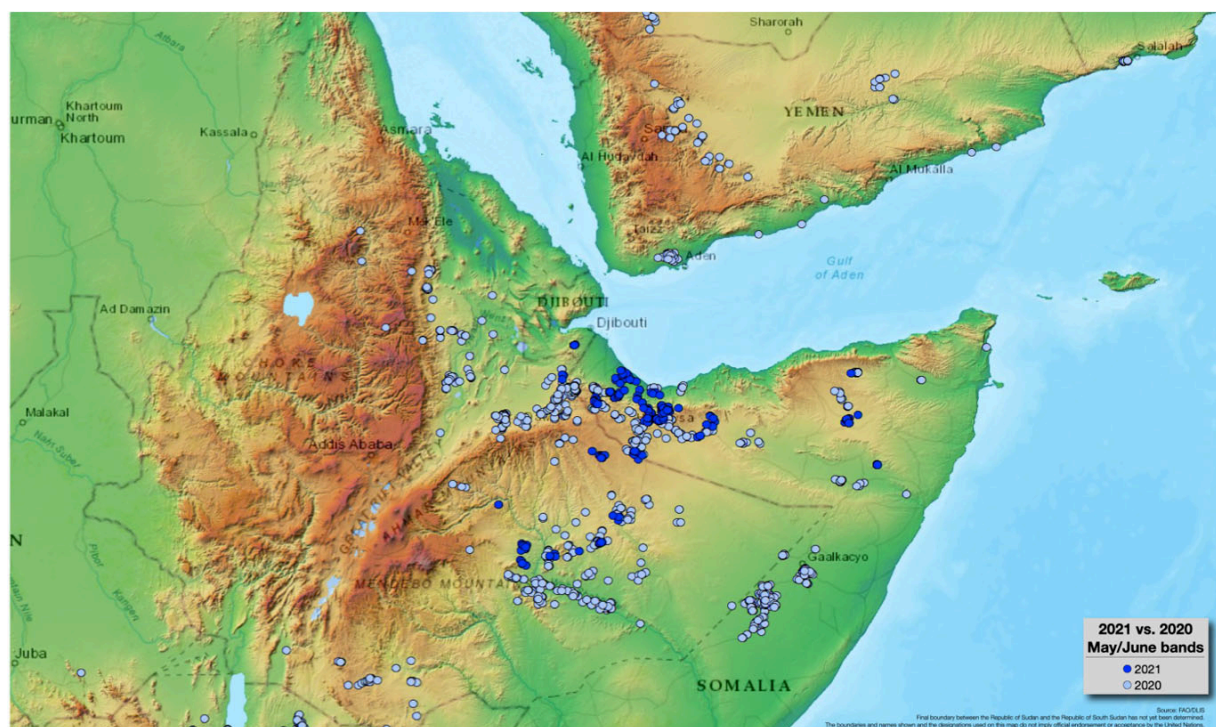
TAKEAWAY. Operations should extend to eastern Somali region (Ethiopia) and all accessible areas of the northern plateau in Somalia to reduce swarm formation by detecting and treating as many hopper bands as possible.

- Central Region (SERIOUS) – increase survey and control (Ethiopia, Somalia, Saudi Arabia), increase preparedness, survey and possible control (Yemen interior)
- Eastern Region (CALM) – initiate summer surveys next month (Indo-Pakistan)
- Western Region (CALM) – initiate summer surveys next month (northern Sahel)

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CURRENT SITUATION. Hopper bands are mainly concentrated in NW Somalia and in parts of eastern Ethiopia. Large swaths remain unsurveyed within the potential breeding area.



2020 COMPARISON. So far this month, current hopper band infestations are less numerous than one year ago when spring breeding also occurred in southern and northeastern Ethiopia, central Somalia, northern Kenya, and Yemen. This year's breeding is further north, reaching the coast of northwest Somalia and nearby Djibouti.