



DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

FAO Emergency Centre for Locust Operations



(22 January 2004)



**General Situation as of 22 January 2004
Forecast until mid-February 2004**

More swarms are forming in Mauritania where the situation remains very critical. Control operations continue in southern Morocco and limited operations are in progress on the Red Sea coast of Sudan. Swarms are expected to form shortly in Saudi Arabia where aerial and ground control operations are in progress against hopper bands on the Red Sea coast. A few small swarms may move from there towards the spring breeding areas in the interior of the country.

The situation remains critical in **Mauritania** where conditions remain favourable and an estimated 300,000 hectares may be infested with hopper bands between Nouakchott and Bir Moghrein. Most of these have fledged and large, dense swarms are forming in the centre (Adrar), northwest (Inchiri, Dakhlett Nouadhibou) and north (Tiris-Zemmour) of the country. Additional breeding and hatching have been seen in the north where light rains fell on 7-8 January. Nearly 18,000 ha were treated on 1-10 January by 12 ground teams (8 Mauritanian, 2 Moroccan, 2 Algerian) and one aerial team. Additional control teams will be provided by Algeria.

In **Morocco**, different stages of hoppers and adults are present at densities up to 70 locusts/m² in the south from the Mauritanian border to Laayoune. Ground control teams treated 4,275 ha on 1-10 January. No information has been received from **Mali, Niger or Algeria** where locust infestations are

currently present. Light rain fell in parts of central and southern Algeria and perhaps in northern Mali.

In **Sudan**, ground control operations continue against hoppers, fledglings and adults in cropping areas in the Tokar Delta on the Red Sea coast, and treated 319 ha on 1-18 January. So far, only one band has been seen. Light rain fell a few times on the southern coast. Low densities of early instar solitary hoppers and isolated adults were present on the northern coastal plains. There were unconfirmed reports of locusts on the southern Red Sea coastal plains in **Egypt** near the Sudanese border where light rain may have recently fallen. Further details are awaited.

In **Saudi Arabia**, most of the current infestations on the Red Sea coast between Jeddah and Umm Lajj are late instar hopper bands. Fledging has started in all areas and small swarms will form by the end of the month. Most of these should stay on the coast because conditions remain favourable in most areas, but some may move towards the interior where several days of good rains occurred this month. More than 58,000 ha were treated by 31 ground control teams and four aircraft on 1-20 January.

The most up-to-date information on the situation and photos are available on the Internet (www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhome.htm) as well as maps of the latest infestations (193.43.36.11/mapper).

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.

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