



# DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

FAO Emergency Centre for Locust Operations



(16 Mar 2005)



## General Situation as of 16 March 2005

The Desert Locust situation continues to improve in Northwest Africa where control operations and locust infestations keep declining in Algeria and Morocco. Nevertheless, some adults have matured and started laying eggs. Hatching will begin in about two to three weeks, followed by the formation of a limited number of hopper bands. A few immature swarms persist in Guinea. In northeast Sudan, a small number of immature swarms have formed and more are expected in the coming weeks in the general area including adjacent parts of Egypt. Some of these could cross the Red Sea into Saudi Arabia.

Small infestations of gregarious adults and swarms are present in a few places in Algeria south of the Atlas Mountains where temperatures have warmed up sufficiently to allow adults to mature. Egg-laying started during the first week of March in El Oued province in the northeastern Sahara near the Tunisian border. In Morocco, small groups of immature adults are present in the northeast near Oujda. No locusts were reported in Tunisia. A swarm invasion of Northwest Africa will not occur this spring because of the failure of winter rainfall and the absence of breeding in northern Mauritania. Therefore, spring breeding south of the Atlas Mountains will be on a much smaller scale than in 2004. As temperatures warm up, adults will become more active and easier to find. Consequently, more locusts are likely to be reported but this should not be confused with an

invasion in the region. So far this month, good rains have fallen along the Atlantic coast in Morocco (Agadir to Laayoune) and in the central and southern Sahara in Algeria, extending as far south as northern Mali.

No locusts were reported in Mauritania where light rainfall occurred in the centre and southeast in early March. No reports of locusts were received from other countries in the Western Region. Late reports indicate that limited control operations were underway in mid-February against several immature swarms in central Guinea, and one swarm reached the Sierra Leone border. The remaining swarms will eventually move to eastern Guinea and western Mali.

Despite control operations, a few immature swarms started to form during the second week of March in the winter breeding areas along the Red Sea where late instar hopper bands are present in Wadi Diib in northeast Sudan and in adjacent areas of southeast Egypt. More swarms are likely to form and move to the interior of northern Sudan and southern Egypt. Some swarms could cross the Red Sea to Saudi Arabia. In northern Somalia, mechanical control operations were carried out against small hopper patches on the coast near Berbera.

The most up-to-date information on the situation and photos are available on the Internet ([www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhome.htm](http://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.

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

Facsimile: +39 06 570 55271

E-mail: [ecl@fao.org](mailto:ecl@fao.org)

Internet: [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)

DLIS: [www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhome.htm](http://www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhome.htm)