



# DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

FAO Emergency Centre for Locust Operations



(18 Dec 1997)



## General Situation as of 18 December 1997

**Desert Locust breeding continues along the Red Sea coastal plains of Sudan and Eritrea. Small swarms have started to form in Sudan and are expected to begin shortly in Eritrea. Control operations are underway against hopper bands in both countries. So far only low numbers of adults have been reported from Saudi Arabia and Yemen but breeding is probably in progress on a small scale and some swarms may appear from the west. The situation remains calm in the other regions.**

New information received since the last Bulletin (231) indicates that aerial and ground control operations have increased in **Sudan** against small hopper bands in Tokar Delta and along the coastal plains from Tokar to just north of Port Sudan. Some of the hopper bands in the Tokar Delta have already started to form small swarms. More swarms are expected to form elsewhere along the central and southern coast. Nearly 6,500 ha were treated from 29 November to 8 December. Similar infestations were reported south of Tokar to the Eritrean border but could not be confirmed since this area is not accessible at present.

In **Eritrea**, numerous very small hopper bands and patches have been present for the past three weeks along the northern coast near the Sudan border. The military and farmers were participating in control operations and a total of 136 ha containing 545 bands were treated since 24 November. Hatching continued during the first half of December. Although new adults and swarms have not been reported, they are expected to appear at any time in the breeding areas.

It appears that breeding so far this winter has been heaviest on the Red Sea coastal plains near the Sudan / Eritrea border. As it is very difficult to undertake survey and control operations in this area, there is a good chance that some breeding may not be detected or reported. Most of the new adults and swarms that form are expected to remain on the coastal plains, rapidly mature and lay eggs. However, there is risk that some of these may not stay and, instead, move between the two countries as well as migrate across the Red Sea to invade the coastal plains of **Saudi Arabia** and **Yemen**. As a second generation of breeding is very likely, locust numbers could increase significantly by the spring. Affected countries are urged to undertake surveys in all breeding areas and conduct control as required.

Elsewhere, insignificant numbers of solitary adults have been reported from a few places in northern **Somalia** and northern **Mauritania**. Small scale breeding occurred in the Tamesna of **Niger** during November where scattered adults were present.

The FAO Desert Locust 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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## Other Locusts

Small hopper bands and swarms of the African Migratory Locust are present in northern **Cameroon** adjacent to previously infested areas of south-western Chad. In early December, band densities were estimated at up to 2,000 hoppers per sq. m and adults up to 1,000 per sq. m. Nearly 17,000 ha were reported infested near the Logone River. Significant damage was seen on sorghum, rice, millet and corn.

In **Madagascar**, infestations of hopper bands and swarms of African Migratory Locust are present within an estimated area of 5 million hectares in the west and south-west. Aerial and ground control operations are in progress coordinated by FAO experts in country with assistance provided by donors.



## Announcements

Tentative schedule of Desert Locust meetings for 1998:

12 February	EMPRES Stakeholders, Rome
2-6 March	Pesticide Referee Panel, Rome
24-26 March	EMPRES West Africa, Nouakchott
26-28 May	DLCC Technical Group, Rome
2-9 June	Central Region DL Commission, Cairo
5-10 June	North-West Africa DL Commission
September	South-West Asia DL Commission



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