



DESERT LOCUST GROUPS IN NORTHERN SAHEL AREAS

OVERVIEW. The December outbreak in Niger, with adult groups and small swarms, is probably an indicator of a more general situation in the region. Adult groups as well as small hopper groups are likely present in many areas from northern Chad to northeast Mali and southern Algeria. Surveys and preventive controls are necessary in all potential areas to better understand the situation and avoid further development. The outbreak in Sudan remains with adult groups and swarms along the Nile Valley, and groups of hoppers and adults and bands along the Red Sea coast. The outbreak in Eritrea continues with hopper and adult groups along the northern Red Sea coast.

WHY IT MATTERS. Following good rains in August and September, green vegetation has persisted in the northern Sahel and southern Sahara. This allowed locust to increase and reproduce beyond the summer season. Rainfall is not anticipated in the Sahara until March. However, if it arrives earlier, it could lead to favourable vegetation and one generation of spring breeding in those areas. This could be followed by rain and subsequent breeding in the northern Sahel at the onset of the summer season, around June or July.

SITUATION. Hopper and adult groups in northern Sahel and southern Sahara, while groups, bands and swarms around the Red Sea coast.

- **ALGERIA.** Green vegetation is concentrated in many wadis (In Guezzam, Tamanrasset, Djanet, Illizi); hopper, adult, groups, and laying in the south; 10 932 ha treated (1–15 January).
- **EGYPT.** Isolated and scattered adults and hoppers in the southeast; 160 ha treated (2 January).
- **ERITREA.** Hopper and adult groups along the northern Red Sea coast; 2 195 ha treated (1–9 January).
- **NIGER.** Locals reported transiens adult groups in the north; green vegetation in many wadis (Tamesna, Air Mountains, central pastures).
- **OMAN.** A few immature adult groups and small swarms remain in the northeast; 144 ha treated (9–11 January).
- **SAUDI ARABIA.** Rain fell in the central Red Sea coast and interior on 5 and 6 January; hoppers, adults and a few groups; 605 ha treated (1–14 January).
- **SUDAN.** Adult groups and a few swarms along the Nile valley, and adult groups, laying and hopper bands of small instars along the Red Sea coast; 1 005 ha treated (1-15 January).

FORECAST. Surveys and controls are needed in Western Region, maintain efforts in Central Region.

- **Western Region.** Small-scale breeding may continue in a few areas in northern Mali, Niger and Chad as well as southern Algeria, but some groups are likely to wait for warmer temperatures and spring rains.
- **Central Region.** Breeding will persist along the Red Sea coasts from southeastern Egypt to central Eritrea. Fledging and newly formed immature adults and groups are expected at the end of February. In Saudi Arabia, a new generation of breeding may begin along the central coast in early February, while some adults may move to the northern coast to breed.
- **Eastern Region.** No significant developments are likely.

The FAO Desert Locust Bulletin is issued every month by the Desert Locust Information Service (DLIS) at FAO HQ in Rome, Italy. Based on survey and control results from affected countries, DLIS continuously monitors the global Desert Locust situation, weather and ecology using remote sensing, historical data and models to provide early warning. The bulletin is supplemented by Alerts and Updates during periods of increased Desert Locust activity.

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