

Desert locust situation update for the 1st dekad of April 2007

Central region

Sudan

Intensive survey and control operations continued over large areas along the Red sea coast from Suakin to the Eritrean border and in Adros (190238N/362922E), Warmabert (185500N/362117E), Korkrieb (84801N/360034E), Wadiariab (184052N/354000E), **Sudan**. Close to 13,000 ha were surveyed, some 4,560 were found infested and more than 3,200 ha were sprayed during the first dekad of April. Most of the locusts were immature, mature (2 mature adults each measuring 100-200 ha), gregarious and scattered low to medium density adults and dense hopper bands. The locusts concentrated mainly in Tokar Delta and the southern part of the Red sea coast. As vegetation and soil continue drying up, locusts are expected to further concentrate and form small groups in wadis and low laying areas where patches of green vegetation exist. No locusts were detected in the summer breeding areas during this time.

Egypt

Local breeding is in progress on the southern Red Sea coast of **Egypt** between Halaib and the Sudanese border.

Eritrea

Ground and aerial control operations are in progress in winter breeding areas along the extreme northern coastal areas of **Eritrea**, particularly in Karura plain, Wedi-Medini, Enjahat and Hamel-Ketin river bed (between 17 40 48N/38 22 37E and 17 59 49N/38 33 29E) where late instar hoppers and gregarious immature adults were sprayed. DLCO-EA aircraft treated close to 2,050 ha along the Red Sea coasts of Eritrea between 28 March and 4 April. Control operations will continue in these areas to prevent locusts from migrating further west into the highlands or to adjacent areas in neighboring countries. As vegetation continues drying out and ecological conditions further deteriorate, locusts will be forced to move into low laying areas and wadis and form small groups and perhaps swarmlets in patches of green vegetation.

Ethiopia

A survey and control team has been operating in eastern **Ethiopia** bordering Djibouti and northern Somalia through April 6. The team confirmed the presence of up to four small, allochthonous, swarms (about 200-250 ha each), composed of mature and immature adults that are believed to have come from NW Somalia. According to PPD/Ethiopia, these swarms were reported on 23rd March by local inhabitants in Awbere, eastern Ethiopia as "*large and covering thousands of hectares*".

Rains have fallen and ecological conditions improved in these areas. As a result, locusts will likely begin breeding in the coming weeks. The local administrations and locust scouts in frontline *Woreds* have been advised to remain vigilant and report any locust activities to the proper authorities immediately.

Northern Somalia

The locust situation improved in **northern Somalia** over the past weeks. Only low numbers of scattered adults, a small group and a mature swarm were present east of Berbera near the coast. The swarms that were reported earlier by FAO/DLIS are believed to have moved west into eastern Ethiopia where four small swarms were detected during surveys carried out by PPD/Ethiopia in **eastern Ethiopia**. The DLCO-EA spray aircraft that was scheduled to be deployed to the locust infested areas in **northern Somalia** has been rerouted to carry out survey and possible control operations in eastern Ethiopia and adjacent areas. USAID/OFDA augmented deployment of the aircraft.

Saudi Arabia

According to FAO/DLIS, two small mature swarms were reported laying eggs on 1-2 April on the Red Sea coast about 230 km south of Jeddah, **Saudi Arabia**. Another swarm was reported on the 5th. Aerial survey and control operations are in progress. No reports were received on the locust situation from DLMCC/**Yemen** during this period.

Eastern Region

No reports were received from the eastern region during this period, but ecological conditions are expected to have improved in areas extending from northern **Oman** to Baluchistan in southeast **Iran** and western **Pakistan** where widespread rain fell from 17-20 March. Small-scale breeding may have commenced or will commence soon in a few places in **northern Oman**, **southeast Iran** and **western Pakistan**.

Western region

The situation in the western region outbreak areas remained calm during the 1st dekad of April. Only a few isolated mature and immature adult locusts may be present in southern Morocco, western Algeria and northwestern Mauritania. No locusts were reported from Mali, Niger, Chad, Libya or Tunisia and significant developments are not expected in this region in the coming dekad.

Frontline countries in winter breeding areas have been alerted to stay vigilant and take actions as necessary. AELGA will continue monitoring the situation and issue updates and advise accordingly.