



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

DESERT LOCUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Danger Level = Serious (Central Region)

14 OCTOBER 2021. SWARMS LIKELY TO MOVE FROM NE ETHIOPIA

OVERVIEW. The few spring-bred swarms that have remained in northeast **Somalia** are now mature and starting to copulate. No swarms have been reported recently in northwest Somalia, **Djibouti**, or **Ethiopia**. Nevertheless, a few summer-bred swarms are likely to have formed in parts of Afar and adjacent areas of southeast Tigray and eastern Amhara regions. Unfortunately, this cannot be confirmed as most areas are not accessible. No surveys have been conducted recently in **Yemen** where a few summer-bred swarms are likely to be present in parts of the interior. In **Sudan**, only low numbers of scattered adults are present in the interior with local breeding in the Bayuda Desert north of Khartoum where a few groups are forming as vegetation dries out. Elsewhere, the situation remains calm.

WHY IT MATTERS. As vegetation dries out in the breeding areas of northeast Ethiopia, any swarms that form are expected to migrate north through the Ethiopian Highlands to the Red Sea coast of Eritrea and southeast to eastern Ethiopia and northern Somalia. Although the scale of this migration is nearly impossible to predict due to conflict and a lack of reporting, the swarm numbers and sizes should be limited and certainly much less than last year at this time. In any case, breeding is likely to occur in areas that receive rainfall during October and November in the Somali region of eastern Ethiopia, on the plateau in northern Somalia, on the coast of northwest Somalia, and the Red Sea coast in Eritrea. Similarly, a limited number of swarms will migrate from the summer breeding areas in the interior of Yemen to the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden coastal plains for winter breeding. There is a low risk that a few small swarms could eventually reach the coast of Sudan and Saudi Arabia while others may cross the Gulf of Aden from Yemen to northern Somalia. Given the current uncertainty of the scale of migration and upcoming rains, surveys should be mounted in the above areas and maintained until at least the end of this year and early next year. While every effort should be made to reduce the number of swarms before they lay eggs, this may not be entirely possible so control against the new generation of hopper bands is likely to be required towards the end of this year.

CONTEXT. Insecurity hampers field operations in parts of northern Ethiopia and Yemen.

- **SOMALIA.** The few remnant swarms have matured in the northeast where they are copulating.
- **ETHIOPIA.** No locusts seen in Somali region and parts of central Afar.
- **DJIBOUTI.** No locusts in the east.
- **YEMEN and ERITREA.** No recent surveys.
- **SUDAN.** Calm; few hopper and adult groups in the Bayuda Desert north of Khartoum.
- **SAUDI ARABIA.** No locusts in the southwest.
- **WEST AFRICA.** Calm.
- **SW ASIA.** No locusts in Iran, Pakistan, and India.

TAKEAWAY. Current field operations in Somalia and Ethiopia should be maintained while surveys should start on the Red Sea coast in Eritrea.

- **Central Region (SERIOUS)** –increase surveys (Djibouti); maintain surveys (N Somalia, E Ethiopia); start surveys on Red Sea coast (Eritrea)
- **Western Region (CALM)** – improve monitoring and reporting (Mauritania, Niger)
- **Eastern Region (CALM)** – no significant activities



CURRENT SITUATION. The situation remains unclear in northeast and northern Ethiopia where immature swarms may be present, which could migrate to Eritrea, eastern Ethiopia and northern Somalia and eventually breed in areas that receive rainfall. The situation is also unclear in Yemen where summer-bred swarms are likely to move to coastal areas for breeding this winter.