

Eritrea locust update

1-10 August, 2005

Summary:

The Plant Protection Department (PPD) in Asmara reported a desert locust outbreak on the Red Sea coast in the extreme north and south of Massawa. To date, control operations treated some 20,950 ha. Survey and monitoring are underway to the extent possible.

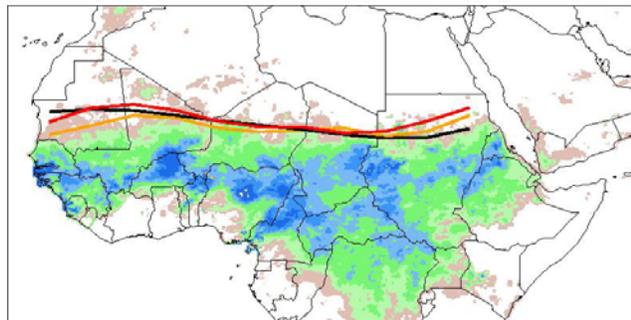
Meteorological and ecological conditions

The Sahel section of the ITCZ over the Horn of Africa moved further north from its position in the third dekad of July and the median position for this time of the year. As a result, light to heavy rains fell over much of the summer breeding areas in Eritrea and ecological conditions continued improving in areas of recent rainfall.

Current vs Mean Position of the Africa ITCZ

As analyzed by the NOAA Climate Prediction Center

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Locust situation

According to PPD/Eritrea, a desert locust outbreak occurred in Mahmimet on the Red Sea coast in the extreme north of Massawa. Locust activities were also reported in Naro, Afabet sub-Zone and Bada, south of Massawa. PPD reported spraying 900 ha on 9 July in Naroc and 20,050 ha in Mahmimet as of July 25th. Nine vehicle-mounted sprayers and some 200 back pack sprayers were used in the spray operations. Survey and control operations are in progress in some of the affected areas.

Forecast

Ecological conditions continued to improve in several places in the summer breeding areas along the Red Sea coast and could continue to be so particularly in areas of recent rainfall. This, coupled with the presence of mature adult locusts, will likely result in further breeding over the coming weeks. Vigilant survey and monitoring are recommended.

Resources

In addition to the in-house training by MOA and training provided by FAO/EMPRES, etc, AELGA, in collaboration with the national PPDs, DLCO-EA, FAO and others has trained hundreds of crop protection officers, field agents and lead farmers in a number of countries, including Eritrea and Ethiopia. These cadres continue to play a crucial role in DL survey, monitoring and preventive control interventions in their respective countries. AELGA, through the EMPRES program has also donated hundreds of ULV sprayers to PPD/Eritrea a few years ago as part of its national capacity strengthening initiatives. As of now, FAO has deployed a locust expert to the country to assess the situation and discuss strategies with the PPD staff and others. The Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO-ES) is deploying an aircraft to assist survey and control operations.

Constraints:

According to PPD, the scarcity of survey, communication, as well as spray equipment, vehicles, pesticides, and camping gear is seen as a glaring constraint.

AELGA will continue monitoring the situation and issue updates and recommendations as necessary.

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