

ETOP update for the 1<sup>st</sup> dekad of  
November 2006

Meteorological and ecological conditions

Light to moderate showers were recorded in Errachidia (32 mm), Oujda (9 mm), Bouarfa, Taroudant and Ouarzazate (1-2 mm), Morocco during the 1<sup>st</sup> dekad of November. Maximum temperatures ranged between 22-28°C in the coastal areas and 29-36°C in the south, respectively and min. temps. were between 6-15°C and 18-26°C in the interior of the country and the southern province, respectively. Annual vegetation was green in Awsserd and Beggary, southern Morocco.

Conditions were favorable for locusts to persist and breed in Tijirit south of Nouadhibou and Inchiri zone, northwestern Mauritania, but the central and southern parts of the country are largely dry with the ITCZ retreated far south to southern Senegal, southern Mali and southern Niger.

Desert locust

Hatching has occurred and patches of 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> instar hoppers were detected over areas varying in size from 1 sq. m to 400 sq. m in Banc d'Arguin, Inchiri and south Nouadhibou during this period. Young adults at densities varying from 100 –10,000 insects/ha were seen in d'Adhm Aghmoult, in north Trarza, central region where molting was mostly completed and only a few 5<sup>th</sup> instar hoppers were seen dispersed. Mature adults were also seen dispersed in this area. Low density scattered immature and mature adults and 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> instar hoppers were detected in Adrar northwestern region.

Low density, isolated immature and maturing adults were observed in Laayoune region in oued Boucraa and isolated mature and immature solitary and transient adults were seen in Dakhla region. Solitary transient 1st - 3rd instar hoppers were seen in Fadrat Lakhchabe, Morocco.

Actions taken

Fifteen survey teams and 9 control teams are carrying out survey and control operations in

Mauritania. Ground survey is in progress in Morocco. Survey operations were maintained in Missirah, Ogo and Richard Toll areas in northern Senegal, but locusts have not been detected there so far.

Areas treated

As of the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> dekad of November, some 1,545 ha have been treated in Mauritania most of which was done from 6-31 October. Control was carried out against small patches of dispersed locust groups during this dekad.

Extended Forecast

According to FAO, a probabilistic weather forecast for November 2006 to March 2007 issued recently by the World Climate Service (WCS), suggests a 1 degree C rise above normal temperature over northern Mauritania during the entire period and a possibility for 2-16 mm above normal rains in November over Mauritania, Western Sahara and western Algeria. Northern Mauritania and Western Sahara may receive 2-7 mm more rain in January. Normal rainfall is predicted for the other months.

It is cautiously predicted that the above scenario could create favorable conditions for one more generation in northwest Mauritania. If so, the current generation of locusts will likely mature mid-November on and begin laying by the end of the month. Hatching could commence by mid-December and hoppers will mature by mid-February. Another generation could occur and begin laying in mid-March with hatching at the end of the month and fledging in late April if favorable conditions persist. Thereafter, vegetation will dry up in these regions and adult locusts begin moving to the summer breeding areas in southern Mauritania in May

However, at the moment, locust numbers are not expected to increase significantly until at least another generation of breeding occur. Some of the first generation adults could move northward into northern Mauritania and southern Morocco in late November. If the above scenario fails, low temperatures will set

in and restrict northward movements until around February, after which the second generation adults could move as far north as the Draa Valley in Morocco. This could occur only if ecological conditions remain favorable and breeding occur for the next three months in northwest and northern Mauritania, which, at the moment is unlikely. Nevertheless, given the presence of hoppers in southwest Morocco where favorable conditions exist and in view of the current locust situation in Mauritania, locusts could develop and augmented by incoming adults from northern Mauritania and form small groups in Awsserd region in the coming weeks.

#### Other events in Sahel West Africa

An operational-scale field trial was carried out on Green Muscle<sup>R</sup> in Ichiri, northwestern Mauritania on November 13, 2006 and the results are being awaited.

A similar trial is currently underway in Senegal against the Senegalese grasshopper. The trial is executed by DPV/Senegal and Virginia Poly Technique Institute and State University staff and sponsored by the USAID/Senegal.

#### Late received information on other ETOPs

##### Red Locust

A late received report indicated that red locust swarms were controlled on 2,800 ha in October by the International Red Locust Control Organization (IRLCO-CSA) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MOAFS) in Lake Chilwa and Lake Chiuta plains, Malawi.

##### Tree Locust

A late received update from the Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO-EA) reported tree locust infestations in October in Afar, Oromo and Somali regions of Ethiopia. Further details were not available at the time this report was compiled and AELGA will monitor the situation and issue updates as necessary.

##### Armyworm

Armyworm outbreaks were reported on 13<sup>th</sup> October in Balaka district, Machinga Agricultural Development Division, Malawi. The pest attacked 5 ha of irrigated maize and 12 ha of pasture. Armyworm outbreaks were also reported in Ghana in November but details were not available at the time this update was compiled.

##### Quelea Birds

Aerial control operations were carried out by the DLCO-EA between 28<sup>th</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> November against quelea birds threatening irrigated rice and sorghum in Mwaea locality Kirinyaga District, Central Kenya and from 18-31 October in Yala locality Kisumu District, Western Kenya. Similar operations were carried out by DLCO between 11 and 29 October in the southern Rift Valley and north eastern parts of Ethiopia. Ground control teams sprayed invading quelea populations in Senegal in November.

##### Forecast for other ETOPs

Based on information received from IRLCO-CSA, successful breeding of red locust is likely in the coming months in areas where residual populations were detected in Wembere plains, Iku-Katavi plains, South Rukwa plains, Malagarasi basin in Tanzania; the Lake Chilwa plains in Malawi and the Kafue Flats in Zambia.

There is a high probability of recurring armyworm outbreaks in Malawi and fresh outbreaks in neighboring Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe and possibly Tanzania in the coming months.

Quelea and other grain eating birds are likely to continue being a problem to paddy rice growers in Nyanza Province, Kenya. Early migration of quelea in its southern zone will likely commence soon after the seasonal rains. Active surveillance and monitoring are essential in all these.