SITREP.07.03

SITUATION REPORT ON EMERGENCY TRANSBOUNDARY OUTBREAK PESTS (ETOPS) FOR JULY WITH A FORECAST TILL MID-SEPTEMBER, 2003

SUMMARY

1. **Summary:** This report provides an update on the situation of emergency transboundary outbreak pests (ETOPs) in Africa, the Middle-East, Central and Southwest Asia, and Latin America in July with a forecast till mid-September 2003. Key ETOPs, including locusts, grasshoppers, armyworm and grain-eating *Quelea* birds are covered by the report. A brief overview of the current status of each of these pests is outlined in the remainder of this summary and detailed accounts with a six-week forecast are provided thereafter.

DESERT LOCUST, *SCHISTOCERCA GREGARIA (*FORSKAL)

2. **Desert locusts, *Schistocerca gregaria* (Forskal)**. The desert locust situation remained fairly calm in July in most of the summer breeding areas in the western and northwestern outbreak regions. Groups of hoppers and immature adults were treated in early to mid July on some 150 ha in southern Algeria near the Mali border. Scattered adults, fledglings and hoppers were found in a few places in Niger. Unconfirmed reports from nomads indicated that locust populations were sited in Tilemsi Valley, Mali. Isolated adults locusts were seen in a few places between Abeche and Fada, Chad. No locusts were reported in July from the other countries in the region. Given the rains that fell in many of the outbreak areas, it is likely that locusts will breed and populations will slightly increase, but significant activities are not expected during the forecast period.

3. The desert locust situation in the central region outbreak areas remained relatively calm in July. Only a few scattered adult locusts were seen in Northern Kordofan, Sudan and a mixture of adult desert locusts and the African migratory locusts were seen in southern Egypt. No locusts were reported in the other outbreak areas in July. As a result of the good rains that fell in parts of the interior of Sudan, western Eritrea and western Ethiopia, conditions have started improving in the summer breeding areas and it is likely that small-scale breeding could occur during the forecast period.

4. A few isolated mature adult locusts were seen in the summer breeding areas in Pakistan in the Easter Region in July. Locusts may also be present in Rajasthan, India in areas of recent rainfall. The monsoon rains that fell in July improved breeding conditions in the areas along the Indo-Pakistan border. It is likely that small-scale breeding may occur and persist in areas of recent rainfall, however, significant locust activities are not likely during the forecast period.

OTHER LOCUSTS AND GRASSHOPPERS.

5. **Red locusts, *Nomadacris septemfasciata* (Surville):** The Red locust concentrations and swarms in Iku-Katavi and Wembere outbreak areas, Tanzania persisted in July. Control operations are scheduled to begin this month. The situation in the other IRLCO-CSA outbreak areas remained relatively calm. Further concentrations of locusts are likely due to the grass burning that is in progress in all

the red locust outbreak areas. Locust numbers will decline if control operations are implemented as planned. Nevertheless, routine survey and monitoring are recommended to avoid any surprises.

6. **Madagascar migratory locust, *Locusta migratoria capito* (L.).** No reports were received on the Madagascar migratory locust in July. With the ecological conditions remaining relatively dry, it is unlikely that locust activities will commence during the forecast period . The situation will remain clam during the forecast period, however, regular survey and monitoring are recommended during the forecast period.

7. Some ***Zonocerus variegatus*** (L) activities were reported in the Casamans region, Senegal. A few mixed populations of the African Migratory Locust, ***Locusta migratoria migratorioides*** (L.), and the desert locusts persisted in crop fields in southern Egypt in July. Grasshopper outbreaks were reported in the western lowlands of Eritrea in June and July, but details were not available on the species and extent of infestation at the time this report was compiled. No reports were received on the tree locust, ***Anacridium melanorhodon*** (Walker), the Senegalese grasshopper, ***Oedaleus senegalensis*** (Krauss) or brown locust, ***Locustana pardalina*** (Walker). With breeding conditions improving in some of the places were rains fell in July and June, it is likely that some limited locust/grasshopper activities may be seen in a few places during the forecast period.

8. **Italian locust *Calliptamus italicus* (L) and migratory locust populations were reported in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in June and part of July. Control operations were carried out against the migratory locust in Uzbekistan, where heavy flooding had further helped control the locust. Some of the locust swarms that were seen in Uzbekistan moved down and out into Turkmenistan. While this was welcome news for the Uzbek farmers, it was bad news for the farmers in Turkmenistan and of course, a bit of diplomatic challenges to the Uzbek Gov, too. Nevertheless, no further report was received on the locust situation from either country.** There is a likelihood of some locust activities in a few locations in the region. Active survey, monitoring, and early interventions using the most appropriate, safe and available methods are essential to avert any significant crop loss.

9. **Armyworm, *Spodoptera exempta* (Walker).** Armyworm infestations were reported in the western lowlands of Eritrea in June and July. Control operations were implemented by the MoA in collaboration with the DLCO-EA. Details were not available at the time this report was compiled. A late received report indicated that armyworm invasions occurred in Tigray, northern Ethiopia in June where close to 9,000 ha of maize, sorghum and millet as well as over 10,500 ha of pasture were reported infested. Ground control operations were effected by the MoA. No further reports were received on armyworm from the other outbreak and/or invasion countries and very limited activities may be seen during the forecast period.

10. **Red-billed quelea, *Quelea quelea* (L.).** Quelea birds continued posing a problem to small grain cereal crop growers in Moshi and Morogoro regions, Tanzania in July. The birds were controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS) in collaboration with the DLCO-EA. Quelea was also reported posing a problem to wheat growers in Narok and Nakuru districts and to

irrigated rice fields in Tana River districts, Kenya where control operations were carried out by the MoA and DLCO-EA. This pest was also reported on sorghum and *teff* crops in Konos and Darash Districts, southern Ethiopia in late July where aerial control operations were carried out by the MoA/Crop Protection in collaboration with the DLCO-EA. No reports were received on quelea in the other invasion areas, but it is likely that irrigated and rain-fed crops might have been affected in some of these regions during the reporting month. The likelihood of quelea birds posing a threat to crops during the forecast period exists, and hence, survey and monitoring are essential to avert any serious damage. End of Summary.

ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION: WEATHER AND ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

11. In July, the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) frequented between 12N and 20N and at times, moved up to 26N over Mali extending to southern Algeria. This was associated with heavy rains that fell across much of the Sahel extending from Chad to Mauritania, where light to heavy rains were reported in the summer breeding areas during the month. As a result of these rains, ecological conditions were improving in these areas and green vegetation persisted in many of the wadis in Niger, Mali, Algeria and Chad.

12. Good rains fell in July in the summer breeding areas in Sudan from the Chad border all the way to the Eritrea border. As a result ecological conditions have improved and green vegetation persisted in Northern Kordofan, Northern Darfur, and Kassala provinces. Good rains also fell on the Red Sea coastal plains of Sudan, Eritrea and Yemen and in eastern Ethiopia. As a result of the rains, conditions have improved or are improving in most of the summer breeding areas in the Central Region outbreak areas.

13. Heavy Monsoon rains fell in July in the summer breeding areas along the Indo-Pakistan border. Jodpur, Bikaner and Barmer, in Rajasthan, India , recorded 138, 107 and 99 mm of rain, respectively. Chhor, and Mirpurkhas in the Tharparkar Desert recorded staggering 400 and 173 mm of rain, respectively. Medium to light rains also fell in a few places in the summer breeding areas along the Indo-Pakistan borders. It is likely that breeding conditions will further improve during the forecast period. No met data was reported from the other countries in the Easter Region outbreak areas.

14. Except for some light showers that fell here and there, no major precipitation was reported in the red locust outbreak areas in July. Most of the areas remained fairly dry and occasionally low temperatures prevailed.

DESERT LOCUST ACTIVITIES

15. **Western and Northwestern Africa Outbreak Region:** The desert locust situation remained fairly calm in July in most of the summer breeding areas in the western and northwestern outbreak region. Groups of third to fifth instar hoppers and scattered immature adults were treated early to mid July on some 150 ha in southern Algeria. Scattered adults, fledglings and or hoppers were found in a few places in Niger. Unconfirmed reports from nomads indicated that locust populations were sited in Tilemsi Valley, Mali. Isolated adult locusts were seen in a few places between Abeche and Fada, Chad. No locusts were reported in July from Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, and Guinea Conakry.

16. Forecast: A few isolated adult locusts may persist in southern Mauritania and northern Mali. Small-scale breeding has started or may start in areas that recently received rain in Tilemsi and Timetrine, Mali, Air and Temesna, Niger and Betline and Ennedi, Chad where locust numbers could possibly increase during the forecast period. Low numbers of locusts may persist in southern Algeria bordering northern Mali where small-scale breeding may occur. No significant activities are expected and the region will likely remain calm during the forecast period.

17. **Eastern Africa, Northeastern Africa, and the Near East Outbreak Region:** The desert locust situation in the central region outbreak area remained relatively calm in July. Only a few scattered adult locusts were seen in Northern Kordofan, Sudan and a mixture of adult desert locusts and the African migratory locusts were seen in southern Egypt. No locusts were reported in the other outbreak areas in.. As a result of the good rains that fell in parts of the interior of Sudan, western Eritrea and western Ethiopia, conditions have started improving in the summer breeding areas, including the interior of Yemen.

18. Forecast: It is likely that limited scale breeding could be seen and the locust numbers could increase in northern Kordofan, Northern Darfur and Kassala, Sudan and a few places in Yemen during the forecast period. Isolated locusts may also be seen in Eritrea, Somalia, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. However, significant developments are not likely in these and other countries in the region during the forecast period.

19. **Eastern Outbreak Region:** A few isolated mature adult locusts were seen in the summer breeding areas in Pakistan. Locusts may also be present in Rajasthan, India in areas of recent rainfall. As a result of monsoon rains that fell in July, breeding conditions have improved in the summer breeding areas along the Indo-Pakistan border. No locust reports were received from other countries in the region in July.

20. Forecast: It is likely that small-scale breeding may occur and persist in areas of recent rainfall, but significant locust activities are not likely during the forecast period. Nevertheless, routine surveillance and monitoring are necessary to avert any unsuspected invasions.

OTHER LOCUST AND GRASSHOPPER ACTIVITIES

21. **Italian locust *Calliptamus italicus* (L) and migratory locust populations were reported in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in June and part of July. Control operations were carried out against the migratory locust in Uzbekistan, where heavy flooding had helped control the locust. Some of the locust swarms that were seen in Uzbekistan moved down and out into Turkmenistan. While this was welcome news for the Uzbek farmers, it was bad news for the farmers in Turkmenistan and of course, a bit of diplomatic challenges to the Uzbek Gov. No further report was received on the Moroccan locust , *Dociostaurus maroccanus* (Thunberg) or the Italian locust, in Central Asia. Unmarked mines in most of the locust infested areas in Khanabad, Kunduz province may continue to pose a threat to the locust operation units in the region.**

22. Forecast: There is a likelihood of some locust activities in the region during the forecast period. Active survey, monitoring, and early interventions using the most

appropriate and safe methods available will be essential to avert any significant crop loss.

23. **Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)**. No reports were received on locusts or grasshoppers in LAC countries in July.

24. Forecast. Some ETOP activities may take place here and there in the coming month or so, but due to lack of sufficient information, a substantive forecast has not been possible.

25. **Red locust, *N. septemfasciata* (Surville).** The Red locust concentrations and swarms that were reported in June in Iku-Katavi and Wembere outbreak areas, Tanzania persisted in July. Control operations are scheduled to begin this month. The locust situation in the other outbreak areas, including Lake Rukwa plains , Tanzania, Lake Chilwa, Malawi, Buzi-Gorongosa plains, Mozambique, and Kafwe flats and Mweru wa Ntipa plains, Zambia remained relatively calm.

26. **Forecast:** Due to the grass burning that has been in progress in all of the outbreak areas, further concentrations of the locust populations are likely. However, locust numbers will decline if control operations are implemented as planned. Routine survey and monitoring are recommended to avoid any surprises.

27. **Madagascar migratory locust, *L. migratoria capito* (L.).** No reports were received on the Madagascar migratory locust in July. Breeding conditions remaining relatively dry, it is likely that locust activities will remain minimized until the onset of the next rains. However, regular survey and monitoring are recommended during the forecast period.

28. **Brown locust, *L. pardalina* (Walker)**: Brown locust activities continued to be calm throughout July in the traditional outbreak areas in the Karoo regions in Namibia and South Africa. Unless, rain falls in these areas, the situation will not change during the forecast period.

ARMYWORM ACTIVITIES

29. **Armyworm, *S. exempta* (Walker).** Armyworm infestations were reported in the western lowlands of Eritrea in June and July. Control operations were implemented by the MoA in collaboration with the DLCO-EA. Vehicle mount sprayers were employed to control the pest. Details on the situation of the pest or control operations were not available at the time this report was compiled. Armyworm invasions occurred in Tigray, northern Ethiopia where close to 9000 ha of maize, sorghum and millet as well as over 10,500 ha of pasture were reported infested. Ground control operations were effected by the MoA. No reports were received on armyworm from other outbreak and/or invasion countries.

30. Forecast: Armyworm activities will likely decline during the forecast period. Very limited activities may be seen in a few isolated locations, but significant activities are not likely. Vigilant survey and monitoring are recommended.

QUELEA BIRD ACTIVITIES

31. **Red-billed quelea, *Q. quelea* (L).** Quelea birds continued posing a problem to small grain cereal crop growers in Moshi and Morogoro regions, Tanzania where they were seen in July feeding on paddy rice, sorghum, millet and maize crops. Control operations were effected by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS), in collaboration with the DLCO-EA. DLCO-EA's 5Y-BCL

aircraft was used to spray the birds with Queleatox. Quelea birds were also seen posing a problem to wheat growers in Narok and Nakuru districts and irrigated rice fields in Tana River districts, Kenya. Control operations were carried out by the MoA/Crop Protection Services in River Tana and Narok districts in close collaboration with DLCO-EA. DLCO-EA aircraft was deployed to control the pest in Nakuru District. Quelea birds were also seen infesting sorghum and *teff* crops in Konos and Darash Districts, southern Ethiopia in late July. Aerial control operations were effected by MoA/Crop Protection team in collaboration with the DLCO-EA. DLCO-EA spray aircraft was used to treat the birds with Queleatox. Although reports were not received from the other quelea invasion areas, it is likely that irrigated and rain-fed crops might have been affected in some of these regions during the reporting month.

32. Forecast: It is likely that these birds could continue posing a problem to cereal crops and pasture in the traditional outbreak areas in Tanzania, Kenya, and other outbreak and invasion countries during the forecast period. Survey and monitoring are essential to avert any serious damage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

33. During the reporting month, a few of the ETOP outbreaks, mainly quelea birds, armyworm, locusts and grasshoppers, required control actions on a limited scale. Had these infestations been left unaddressed, they could have increased to levels that pose serious threats to crops and pasture. It is evident that a minimum shift in the balance of subsistence production system, can significantly offset the already precarious food availability situation in most of the ETOP outbreak areas. Therefore, it is important that regular monitoring, surveillance and reporting are maintained and the results communicated promptly to the appropriate bodies within the national, regional and international structures.

Note: The end of the current drought and/or dry spell in Southern Africa and other outbreak regions could, likely trigger serious ETOP developments in most of these areas and could lead to massive infestations and subsequent crop loss. Therefore, regular survey, monitoring, and reporting are highly recommended to avert any such invasions.

ACTION REQUESTED AND CONTACT INFORMATION

34. The Africa Emergency Locust/ Grasshopper Assistance (AELGA) project, previously managed by the USAID's Bureau for Africa (AFR), has been transferred to the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) and is currently being managed by the Office for U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). AELGA continuous to work closely with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's Migratory Pest Unit and its other entities, USAID bilateral and regional missions, DLCO-EA, IRLOC-CSA, host country ministries, and research establishments, and Southern Africa Development Community Drought Monitoring Center (SADC/DMC). Information on ETOPs is regularly collected from these and other sources, including the Information Core for Southern Africa Migratory Pests (ICOSAMP) to continuously monitor and analyze the potential risks for large-scale emergency outbreaks, and compile and disseminate as [AELGA] SITREPS to all interested parties. Unsolicited reports or information about ETOP situations and

activities in your region or country are always warmly welcome and much appreciated.

35. **Missions with programs and portfolios on food security, agriculture, environment and related activities are solicited to encourage their host country counterparts to send us updates on ETOP activities as often as possible. FEWS field personnel are also solicited to send us any information they may secure on ETOP activities in their countries and/or regions of responsibility. Regional organizations with ETOPS mandate and host country partners are kindly requested to forward their reports by the last day of the reporting month or within the first three days of the forecasting months. Please, forward reports, information, questions, and/or requests to**

Dr. Yene T. Belayneh: ybelayneh@ofda.net FAX: 202-347-0315 (USA). A copy to Drs. Joe Vorgetts, jvorgetts@usaid.gov and Harry Battenberg, hbattenberg@afr-sd.org is appreciated.

For more information on the weather conditions, you may visit the following web sites:

http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/economic/engslish/esahel/sehtoc.htm

http://www.fews.net

For more information on ETOP activities, you may visit:

http://www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhom.htm/

http://www.english/newsroom/news/2002/5000-en.htm/

http://www.web.agr.ac.uk/directory/NRI/pcs/

http://www-web.gre.ac.uk/directory/NRI/quel/

http://icosamp.ecoport.org/

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT AELGA'S ACTIVITIES, VISIT US AT OUR WEB SITE: WWW.AELGA.NET

UPCOMING EVENT

Interregional Trainer Training Course on Alternative Application Strategies and Tactics (AAST) for acridid control. **Those interested can contact Dr. Yene T. Belayneh, at ybelayneh@ofda.net or phone: 202-661-9374 and FAX: 202-347-0315 (USA)**

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