



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

## DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

DESERT LOCUST INFORMATION SERVICE

*Danger Level = Serious (Central Region)*

### 29 JULY 2021. GOOD RAINS IN DJIBOUTI AND NE ETHIOPIA

**OVERVIEW.** A few small immature swarms persist in northwest **Somalia** where aerial survey and control operations continue on the plateau and escarpment. The situation is less clear in northeast **Ethiopia** because surveys are limited since many areas are difficult to access now. As good rains have fallen in the Afar region during the past week, some swarms are almost certainly present and probably ready to lay eggs. Some early egg-laying may have already occurred in parts of Afar. The situation is likely to be similar in southern **Djibouti** where unusually good rains fell in the past days. In **Yemen**, an immature swarm reached the southern edge of the summer breeding area in the interior where good rains have fallen recently.

**WHY IT MATTERS.** While effective control operations in northwest Somalia have reduced the scale of swarm migration to northeast Ethiopia, the upcoming months will be crucial in determining the continuation of the upsurge. One generation of summer breeding is expected to occur during August and September in the Afar region of Ethiopia, which is likely to extend into adjacent areas of southern Djibouti. Consequently, new summer-bred swarms could start to form from late September onwards. In the next few weeks, the situation may seem to be calm with few locust reports as the current swarms finish laying eggs and before the subsequent hopper bands are detected. Nevertheless, it is important to maintain and upscale surveys to detect the location and scale of breeding and plan control operations.

**CONTEXT.** Important infestations remain in parts of the Horn of Africa while other regions are calm.

- **SOMALIA.** Aerial control operations continue against a few remaining immature swarms on the escarpment and plateau in the northwest (Somaliland). Swarm movement remains limited due to cooler temperatures on the plateau and strong winds.
- **ETHIOPIA.** No reports of locusts due to access issues in Afar but there are unconfirmed sightings of swarms in a few areas. Other swarms are likely to be present and breeding is imminent in areas of recent rainfall. Aerial operations have shifted from Kombolcha to Dire Dawa.
- **YEMEN.** An immature swarm seen earlier in the highlands has reached the southern edge of the summer breeding areas near Ataq in the interior. Despite a lack of surveys this past week, small-scale breeding is expected to be continuing in parts of the interior where good rains have fallen.
- **SW ASIA.** No locusts seen during recent surveys in Iran, Pakistan and India.

**TAKEAWAY.** Current field operations in northern Somalia should be maintained while upscaling of surveys is needed in northeast Ethiopia, Djibouti and Yemen.

- **Central Region (SERIOUS)** – increase operations in northeast Ethiopia and southern Djibouti
- **Eastern Region (CALM)** – continue summer surveys (Indo-Pakistan)
- **Western Region (CALM)** – continue summer surveys (northern Sahel)

[www.fao.org/ag/locusts](http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts)



**CURRENT SITUATION.** Limited aerial control operations continue against a few swarms in NW Somalia while no locusts have been reported recently in NE Ethiopia due to access issues.