

Niger desert locust update for the first dekad of October, 2005

Summary:

Low density solitary adults and hoppers were seen in several places in the northern part of the country and controlled on some 125 ha during the first dekad of October. A few adult locusts will likely concentrate in areas where patches of green vegetation exist in the Air and Tamesna and possibly breed small-scale, but a significant increase in population is not expected. Survey and monitoring will continue.

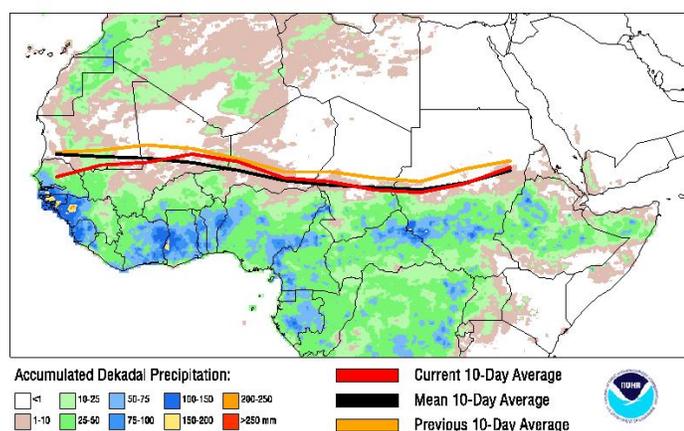
Meteorological and ecological conditions:

The ITCZ position fluctuated between 15 and 16 degrees north, but mostly remained near normal average during the first dekad of October. The harmatan has begun in the north bringing thick clouds of dry dust in Bilma and Agadez zones. A moderate shower was recorded on October 1st in the northern sector of Mount Greboun. As the summer season continued fading away, the annual vegetation was drying up leaving a few patches of green vegetation in low laying areas and the foothills of dunes in Tamesna and the Air south of the Greboun.

Current vs Mean Position of the Africa ITCZ

As analyzed by the NOAA Climate Prediction Center

October 2005 Dekad 1



Locust situation:

Low density solitary adults and hoppers were detected by ground and aerial survey teams over a total of 1030 ha in several places between 18°05'33"N and 19°41'29" N and 05°43'00"E to 08°15'42" E where favorable conditions persisted. No locusts were detected elsewhere in the country.

Control Interventions:

Patches of immature and mature adults were controlled on 95 ha in Anou Makaren and pockets of hoppers were sprayed on 30 ha in Tassos as of the third dekad of September. This brings the total areas sprayed since the current campaign began in June 2005 to 1,596 ha (**Note: 85 times as many ha or 135,688 ha were sprayed during this time last year. End note.**)

Forecast:

With vegetation drying up and conditions becoming less and less favorable, escapee adult locusts are expected to concentrate in patches of green vegetation and begin breeding on a small-scale. This may be seen particularly in the Air and Tamesna. Survey and monitoring must continue in these areas to avoid increase in locust populations.

Follow-on actions:

One aerial survey team supported by an FAO-provided helicopter and a ground survey team are dispatched. These teams were reinforced by two additional survey teams and one ground control team.

Pesticide inventory:

Niger has 187,590 liters of pesticides most of which are donations to the 2003-05 campaign. With the country and the regional moving towards preventive strategies, including early Interventions in their fights against locust and grasshopper invasions, it is anticipated that this stock should be sufficient to handle any

locust/grasshopper invasions the country may experience in the coming seasons.

External Assistance:

FAO will be dispatching two technical staff to Niger on October 14, 2005 to conduct field experiments in the northern part of the country to determine field efficacy of Green Muscle, a fungus-based biopesticide that was developed with financial assistance by donors, including USAID.

News Update

AELGA's webpage, www.aelga.net is now available to the public. You may visit us to learn more about our activities and programs. For more information, please, contact Yene T. Belayneh, at ybelayneh@ofda.net

U:\..\ybelayneh/sitrep2005/NigerLocustUpdate.
Oct. 13.05