SITREP.12.03

SITUATION REPORT ON EMERGENCY TRANSBOUNDARY OUTBREAK PESTS (ETOPS) FOR *DECEMBER 03* WITH A FORECAST TILL MID-FEBRUARY 2004

SUMMARY

1. **Summary:** This report provides an update on the situation of emergency transboundary outbreak pests (ETOPs) in the various outbreak and invasion areas in Africa, the Middle-East, and Central and Southwest Asia in December 2003 with a forecast till mid-February 2004. The report covers locusts, grasshoppers, armyworm and grain-eating *Quelea* birds. A brief overview the status of each of these pests for the month 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. The desert locust, ***Schistocerca gregaria* (Forskal),** continued to be seen in Mauritania, Mali, southern Morocco, and Niger in December and early January. Massive survey and control operations were carried out in these countries and more than 40,000 ha were treated during this time. Control operations were also carried out in southeastern Algeria as well as the Tokar Delta and Atbara River area in Sudan where millet and sorghum plants were threatened by the pest. Locust swarms that crossed the Red Sea and moved into Saudi Arabia and those that developed locally gave rise to a significant number of hoppers where more than 26,000 ha were treated in December. Most of the other Central region outbreak areas in north-eastern and the horn of Africa, as well as the Eastern region outbreak areas in southwest Asia remained fairly calm in the reporting month.

3. Forecast: More locusts are likely to be seen in Mauritania, Mali, Niger and elsewhere in the western outbreak region and require active survey and control operations in the coming weeks. While most of the central region outbreak areas will likely remain calm, some areas, including the spring breeding areas in the interior of the Arabian Peninsula and the western part of the eastern outbreak region may experience limited locust activities.

OTHER LOCUSTS AND GRASSHOPPERS.

4. **Red locust, *Nomadacris septemfasciata* (Surville):** No reports were received on red locust in December. There exists a likelihood of limited activities in Kafue Flats, Zambia, Iku Katavi and Wembere plains, Tanzania. No major locust developments are expected unless conditions continue to improve during the forecast period.

5. **Madagascar migratory locust, *Locusta migratoria capito* (L.).** No report was received on the Madagascar migratory locust in December. Some activities might occur in the southwest and the central highland during the forecast period.

6. ***Oedaleus senegalensis*** (Krauss) (OES), the Senegalese grasshopper and ***Zonocerus variegatus*** (L), the variegated grasshopper are in recession in the western region outbreak areas. Over-seasoning solitary adult *Oedaleus* were observed in several places in Senegal in December. No reports were received on ***Anacridium melanorhodon*** (Walker), tree

locust, brown locust, ***Locustana pardalina*** (Walker). *Oedaleus* will remain in recession and *Zonocerus* may commence hatching during the forecast period.

7. The Italian locust, ***Calliptamus italicus*** (L), Moroccan locust, ***Dociostaurus maroccanus*** or migratory locust, ***Locusta migratoria migratoria*** activities in Central Asia are still in recession. Limited activities may commence sometime in spring. AELGA will continue monitoring the situation in collaboration with its partners at the FAO's Migratory Pest Unit (MPU).

8. **Armyworm, *Spodoptera exempta* (Walker).** Armyworm activities were not reported in December in the traditional outbreak areas. Limited activities may be seen during the forecast period.

9. **Red-billed quelea, *Quelea quelea* (L.).** No updates were received on Quelea birds at the time this report was compiled. It is likely that quelea populations have begun showing in the traditional breeding areas in Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia and the southern Africa regions. During the recent field visit to the various ecozones in Senegal, the author observed some quelea activities in the northern and north-central parts of the country. No crops were threatened as it was the off season. End of Summary.

ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION: WEATHER AND ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

10. Significant precipitation was not reported in the western and northwestern outbreak areas in December. However, as a result of heavy rains that fell over large areas in October and sporadic light showers thereafter, conditions remained fairly favorable and locusts continued to breed and persist in parts of southern Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Mali, southwestern Algeria and a few other places.

11. Light showers were reported in a few places along the Red Sea coasts in Eritrea and Saudi Arabia. Vegetation in the Central region outbreak areas was mostly dry except in a few wadis and low laying areas where favorable conditions still exist.

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12. The Eastern region outbreak areas remained dry and unfavorable conditions persisted throughout December.

13. Light to heavy rain fell in a number of places in the south-central and southern Africa regions. Zambia and Zimbabwe reported heavy (up to 150 mm) rains and South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Malawi and Tanzania recorded light rains (up to 60 mm) in late December.

DESERT LOCUST ACTIVITIES

14. **Western and Northwestern Africa Outbreak Region:** The desert locust, ***Schistocerca gregaria* (Forskal),** situation continued to further develop in northwestern Mauritania, northern Mali, southern Morocco, and Niger throughout December. Adult groups and hopper bands were seen and treated on more than 40,000 ha in Mauritania, Morocco, Mali, Niger, and Algeria. Other countries in the region remained fairly calm.

15. Forecast: It is likely that locust numbers could increase and give rise to more swarms and groups in the coming months and the situation could become more serious if conditions improve.

16. **Eastern Africa, Northeastern Africa, and the Near East Outbreak Region:** Adult

mature and immature locust populations and hoppers were controlled in the Tokar Delta and Atbara River areas in Sudan where more than 2,000 ha were treated in December. Locust swarms that crossed the Red Sea and moved into Saudi Arabia and those that were already there increased and treated on more than 26,000 ha in December. A few scattered adult locusts were seen on the Red Sea coasts of Eritria, northern Somalia and Yemen. Other countries in the region remained fairly calm.

17. Forecast: Limited scale breeding may occur in a few places in southeastern Egypt, in the Tokar Delta, Sudan and along the Red Sea coasts of Saudi Arabia, Eritrea, and Yemen. Some locusts may also move inland and into Western Iran.

18. No locusts were reported in December in the Eastern outbreak region along the Indo-Pakistan borders.

19. Forecast: Significant locust developments are not likely during the forecast period.

OTHER LOCUST AND GRASSHOPPER ACTIVITIES

20. ***Oedaleus senegalensis*** (Krauss) (OES), the Senegalese grasshopper and ***Zonocerus variegatus*** (L), the variegated grasshopper are in recession in the western region outbreak areas. Over-seasoning solitary adult *Oedaleus* were observed by the author of this report in several places in Senegal in December. No reports were received on ***Anacridium melanorhodon*** (Walker), tree locust, brown locust, ***Locustana pardalina*** (Walker) or other locusts in December.

21. Oedaleus will remain in recession and *Zonocerus* may commence hatching during the forecast period

22.. The locust season in Central Asia came to an end several months ago and no locusts were reported in December.

23. Forecast: The Italian locust, ***Calliptamus italicus*** (L), Moroccan locust, ***Dociostaurus maroccanus*** or migratory locust, ***Locusta migratoria migratoria*** situation will remain calm during the forecast period and the eggs that were laid in late summer/early fall will continue to stay dormant. Hoppers may begin to appear in spring. AELGA will continue monitoring the situation as it evolves.

Note: Inadequate technical skills, resources and infrastructure will continue to impede the capacity of the Afghan national crop protection unit to conduct regular survey and monitoring as well as organize and launch control operations without external support. Thus, locust control in this country will continue to rely largely on external assistance for some time.

24. **Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)**. No report was received on ETOPs from LAC countries in December.

25. Forecast. No forecast can be made due to a lack of sufficient information.

26. **Red locust, *N. septemfasciata* (Surville):** No reports were received on the red locust in December.

27. **Forecast:** Limited locust activities may be seen in Kafue Flats, Zambia and Iku Katavi and Wembere plains, Tanzania. No major development is expected unless conditions improve in the traditional outbreak areas during the forecast period.

28. **Madagascar migratory locust, *L. migratoria capito* (L.).** No report was

received on the Madagascar migratory locust in December. Some locust activities may be seen in the southwest and the central highland during the forecast period.

29. **Brown locust, *L. pardalina* (Walker)**: No reports were received in December and no major activities are expected during the forecast period.

ARMYWORM ACTIVITIES

30. **Armyworm, *S. exempta* (Walker).** Armyworm activities were not reported in December in the traditional outbreak areas.

31. Forecast: Armyworm activities may be seen in a few places in the traditional outbreak areas, but significant developments are not likely during the forecast period.

QUELEA BIRD ACTIVITIES

32. **Red-billed quelea, *Quelea quelea* (L.).** No updates were received on Quelea birds at the time this report was compiled. It is likely that quelea populations have begun showing in the traditional breeding areas in Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia and the southern Africa regions. During the recent field visit to the various ecozones in Senegal, the author observed some quelea activities in Richard Toll and Lac Guerr areas in the northern north-central parts of the country, but no crops were threatened as this is the off-season.

33. Forecast: Quelea birds will likely continue appearing in Richard Toll and other places in Senegal. The birds will likely continue breeding in the traditional outbreak areas, in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Ethiopia, Sudan, Tanzania and Kenya.

RECOMMENDATIONS

34. Favorable ecological conditions that were created as a result of unusually heavy rains that fell over large areas in the western outbreak region gave rise to a significant increase in the desert locust populations in Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Algeria, Sudan and Saudi Arabia. Control interventions have been and are still being implemented in most of these countries. If left unaddressed, the situation could further deteriorate and result in serious losses of crops and pasture. Given the fragility of the ETOP ecosystems, a slight shift in the externalities, such as end of drought, could trigger pest proliferation and significantly offset the already precarious food security in most of the ETOP-prone countries. **Hence, regular survey, monitoring, reporting and early control interventions are essential to avert any unexpected pest-related disasters.**

The Assistance for Emergency Locust/ Grasshopper Abatement project, formerly known as Africa Emergency Locust/ Grasshopper Assistance (AELGA), under the USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), continuously monitors ETOP situations in close collaboration with its partners, including the UN/FAO-MPU and EMPRES Regional Programs, DLCO-EA, IRLCO-CSA, host-country counterparts, etc. and provides assistance and updates.

ACTION REQUESTED AND CONTACT INFORMATION

36. USAID field Missions with portfolios on food security, agriculture, environment, and conflict are solicited to encourage host country counterparts to send us regular updates on ETOP activities. FEWS field personnel are

solicited to share with us information they may obtain on ETOP activities. Regional organizations with ETOP mandates and host country partners are kindly requested to send us their updates by the last day of the reporting month or within the first three days of the forecasting months. **Unsolicited reports and/or information on ETOP situations and activities in your region or country are always warmly welcome and much appreciated**.

Please, forward reports, updates, questions, and/or requests to:

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USEFUL LINKS

For more information on the weather conditions, you may visit the following web sites:
http://www.fews.net/http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/english/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/
http://www.dmc.co.zm

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

37. UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Pesticide Stewardship Workshop**
- **Trainer Training Course on Alternative Application Strategies and Tactics (AAST) for acridid control.**

If interested, please contact: Dr. Yene T. Belayneh

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