



# DLCO-EA QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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## REGIONAL STAFF MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP; 16<sup>TH</sup> - 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2015, MACHAKOS, KENYA

DLCO-EA held a Regional Staff Management Workshop at Garden Hotel in Machakos, Kenya from 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Seventeen Regional Staff composed of Base Managers from Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, The Director, Operations Coordinator, Chiefs of Divisions and other Regional Staff attended the workshop.

The main objectives of the workshop, among others, were to:

- i. Brief staff on the main outcomes of the 60th Council session that had been held in Entebbe, Uganda in September 2015.

- ii. Review DLCO-EA Manuals and Policy Documents which included the Service Regulation, Financial Regulation, Personnel/Human Resource Policy and Procurement/Property Handbook.
- iii. Obtain updates on the proposed projects and workplans of various Control Reserve Bases and Divisions.



*Group photo of DLCO-EA Regional Staff that attended the workshop; in the centre is the Director (Navy Blue Suit and Red necktie)*

Consequently, the Base Managers and Division Chiefs briefed the meeting on the activities of their respective Bases/Divisions outlining their plans, programs and challenges encountered during the execution of their activities.

The meeting, among others also discussed matters affecting staff such as Medical Insurance Cover, improvement of the air fleet of the Organization, specific research activities, improving the infrastructure of

Bases and Base Manager's operations. In addition, the meeting proposed amendments to the Service Regulation, Personnel/Human Resource Policy, Financial Regulation and the Procurement/Property handbook.

In his workshop closing remarks, the Director appreciated staff for having fruitfully participated in the deliberations and encouraged the staff to work towards the attainment of the Organization's goal of ensuring food security for the region.

### **DLCO-EA PUTS MORE AIRCRAFT ON STANDBY FOR ITS FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVES IN THE REGION**

Following the El-Niño rains in Eastern Africa, more pests and diseases are anticipated in the region. Along this line, the DLCO-EA is ensuring that more spray aircraft are ready and available for the various pest control tasks. A few aircraft have been operational due to wear and tear. The 5Y-BCK a DHC-2 Beaver has been in the skies controlling Desert Locusts, Tsetse flies and Quelea birds for the last 37 years, thanks to the dedicated DLCO-EA Engineering team and Pilots that have kept them airworthy. BCK has saved Member Countries losses that would accrue as a result of pest incursions worth billions of US Dollars over the nearly four decades.

Before undergoing the current check III, BCK had been deployed in Ethiopia to control migratory Quelea bird pests, which operation ended in August 2015, just in time for a major service check that is usually performed either after 1000 hours or 37 calendar months, whichever comes first.

The addition of BCK to the operational fleet now translates into a total of four DLCO-EA standby Agricultural Spray Aircrafts.



*The engineering team doing final touches on BCK before a test flight*

On another note, the 5Y-DLA, a Cessna Caravan which is engaged in Revenue generation through hire to the UN-WFP for humanitarian assistance got a new lease of life; an Engine replacement. The Engine was fitted on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 and immediately flew for duty the following day.

### **THE AIR UNIT PASSES OUT CAPT. GEORGE MWANGI AS CERTIFIED AGRICULTURAL SPRAY PILOT**



**Capt. George Mwangi after his maiden Quelea Pest Control Operation in Kombolcha and Zeway, Ethiopia**

Agricultural Spray Pilots are one of the most specialized Pilots requiring many years of training so as to obtain the required conversion from commercial to Agricultural Spray Pilots.

After two years of capacity building as a trainee Pilot under the guidance of Senior Capt. Juma Mulimba, Capt. Mwangi was finally checked out in October by the Chief Pilot, Capt. Leperes and certified as an Agricultural Spray Pilot.

George's addition to the Organization's Agricultural Spray team of Pilots is a welcome venture given the rarity of such specialized Pilots. Capt. Mwangi had earlier on worked with the Kenya Wildlife Service as a Pilot. Congratulations George and the DLCO-EA Spray team!

**FLIES IN UGANDA THE DLCO-EA CONTRIBUTES TOWARDS THE ELIMINATION OF BLACK**

In November - December, 2012, the DLCO-EA, in a joint project with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uganda, successfully executed the aerial dozing of water bodies in Northern Uganda, that were suspected to be harboring black flies (*Simulium spp*). The Ministry of Health has reported that there are no new cases of the nodding disease syndrome to-date, due to the successful execution of the project, and that Uganda is among the few countries that are meeting the target towards eliminating the black flies that are suspected in the syndrome and river blindness.



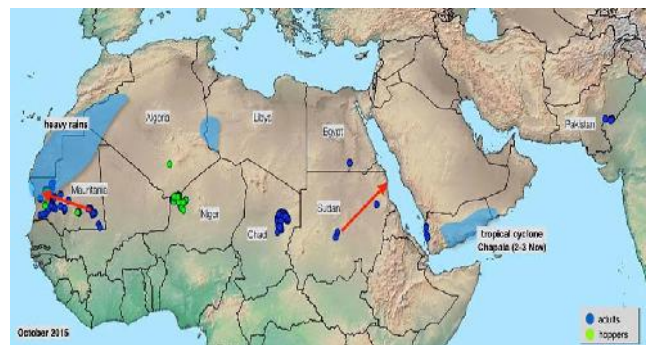
***DLCO-EA team and the Aircraft that participated in the inaugural aerial spraying of black flies in Uganda in December 2012***

The DLCO-EA is acknowledged for its contribution in the success of this project.

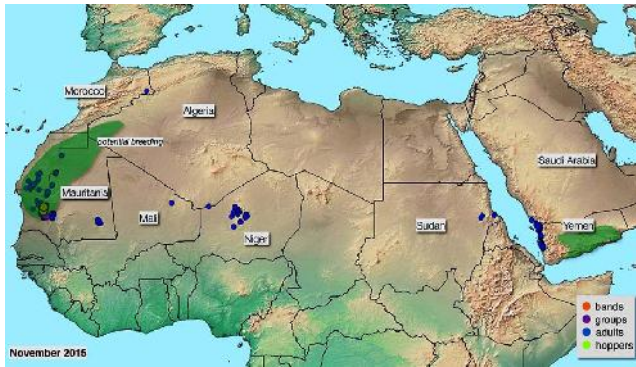
**MIGRATORY PESTS SITUATION  
OCTOBER - DECEMBER, 2015**

**DESERT LOCUST:**

During October to December, the Desert Locust situation remained calm in the central region, mainly across both sides of the Red Sea coast. However, some scattered adults were present in few places of the winter breeding areas in Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. It is likely that breeding and development of the Desert Locust to continue due to the current rainy season and the favorable ecological and weather situations created along the Red Sea.

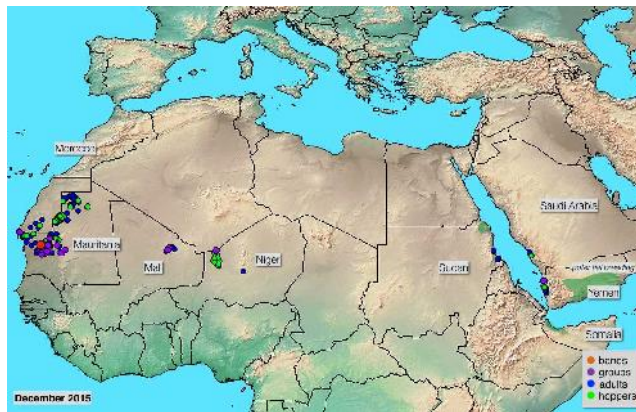


***Areas showing some locust activities in October 2015 FAO-DLIS***



**Areas showing some locust activities in November 2015, FAO-DLIS**

**Areas showing some locust activities in**



**December 2015, FAO-DLIS**

### **GRAIN EATING BIRDS (*Quelea quelea* spp)**

Quelea outbreaks and control operations continued mainly in the Rice growing areas in the western parts of Kenya, in the Southern, Oromiya and Amhara regions of Ethiopia and in 10 States in the Republic of Sudan during October – December, 2015. Consequently, the DLCO-EA Management has deployed Spray Aircraft to each of the affected Member Countries and in collaboration with the respective Member Countries’ Plant Protection Services was able to save several thousand tons of crops and irrigated Rice, which were under threat by the birds. During the operations, it was estimated that millions of the birds have also been killed.

### **AFRICAN ARMYWORM (*Spodoptera exempta*)**

Though, favorable weather and ecological conditions existed in the region, however, no infestation was reported during October – December, 2015.

### **STUDY TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF DAM CONSTRUCTION ON QUELEA POPULATIONS IN GASH BARKA REGION OF ERITREA**

The study was conducted with the objective to investigate and monitor the impact of constructed dams on Quelea populations in the lowlands of Eritrea. It was conducted from 11<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2015.

During the study the following activities were carried out:

1. Surveillance for Quelea colonies/roosts and associated grain eating birds in the traditional breeding areas of Guluj and Omharjer sub zones was conducted.
2. Surveillance around the five constructed dams and associated irrigated cereal crops for Quelea birds, roosts and colonies were undertaken.

The study was conducted in Gash Barka Zone and the specific study areas within Gash Barka zone were:

1. The traditional breeding areas of Arbateasher, Guluj, Medesis, Bademit, Omhajer and villages (sites) of Ashagala, Kachero, Saminite, Engulit, Tinney and Aytefere.
2. The established dams namely; Alighider, Gerset, Fesco, Fanco Rawi and Bademit including and surrounding farm areas where small

grain cereals (Sorghum and Millet) are traditionally grown.

The approaches used in the assessment were briefs and interviews to relevant technical personnel in the Ministry of Agriculture in Asmara and Barentu; and terrestrial field surveys in the known different breeding areas including conducting sample trapping regimes using mist-nets in specific sites to obtain the required bird population data.

During the study it was found that the preferred habitat for Quelea and associated grain eating birds to breed and roost were prevalent in the study areas and these included small grain wild grasses, the thorny *Acacia* sp bushes, *Typha* grass and reeds in some places that are usually used for nest construction. There was plenty of grass seed such as wild sorghum, Sudan grass, wild millets (*Pennisetum* spp) among others that serve as preferred food source for Queleas and other associated small grain eating birds.

In most of the study areas the rain was below average during the season and there were also crop failures except for around Alighidir dam where the sorghum crop was irrigated. Water is an important resource for the survival of grain eating birds such as Queleas and they breed and roost near water sources, for they require lots of drinking water after a seed meal. The five dams (Alighider, Gerset, Fesco, Bademit and Fanco-Rawi) served as the main sources of water since most seasonal rivers in the study areas were completely dry.

Because of the prevalence of dry situation, very few flocks of weaver birds were observed in the farms from 15<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 where they caused some damaged and thereafter they

disappeared. Overall, the Quelea situation and associated grain eating birds in the study area was calm during the study period with respect to crop damage except for a few isolated areas that received considerable rains where bird presence had been reported.

It was observed that at the traditional breeding sites of Guluj, Bademit, Gurmo-gurmo, Medesis and Arbateasher, there was no evidence of birds having established colonies apart from transient roost in some instances. With the exception of Fesco dam site all the other four dams (Alighider, Gerset, Bademit and Fanco-Rawi) did not have any colonies or roosting sites of the birds.

The abundance and species composition of the birds were also determined after a total sample of 86 birds was caught using mist-net and identified. Majority of the birds (46.5%) were Cardinal Queleas (*Queleacardinalis*), 26.7% Red-billed Queleas (*Queleaquelea*), 22.1% Red-headed Queleas (*Q. erythropeus*), 2.3% each were Bishops (*Euplectus* sp) and Black headed weaverbirds (*Ploceus* sp.). The Quelea birds and associated grain eating birds were few in abundance, which may be attributed to poor rains and the failed crop in most of the traditional breeding areas.



**Trapping of Birds by using the mist net at Fesco Dam site**

**DLCO-EA AIRCRAFT SITREP AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER, 2015**

<b>A/C REG.</b>	<b>5Y-BCJ Beaver</b>	<b>5Y-BCK Beaver</b>	<b>5Y-BCL Beaver</b>	<b>5Y-KRD Beaver</b>	<b>5Y-DLA Caravan</b>	<b>5Y-DLO Baron</b>	<b>5Y-BBB Islander</b>	<b>5Y-DLD Turbo Beaver</b>
<b>C OF A DUE DATE</b>	23/4/2016	IN PROGRESS	24/9/2016	IN PROGRESS	19/2/2016	1ST TEST FLIGHT	<b>DUE</b>	13/8/2016
<b>CHECK III</b>	05/4/2017	IN PROGRESS	<b>01/7/2018</b>	IN PROGRESS	N/A	01/07/2018	<b>DUE</b>	02/03/2017
<b>PROP. 5 YR OVERHAUL</b>	28/7/2016	29/7/2016	10/2/2018	IN PROGRESS	28/5/2018	01/07/2020	<b>DUE</b>	21/07/2017
<b>A/F HOURS</b>	259:30	624:20	47:15	<b>00:00</b>	3746.7	01:00	<b>00:00</b>	74:55
<b>ENGINE (S) HRS</b>	414:25	227:50	<b>931:15</b>	<b>00:00</b>	Loaner Engine 153.3	PORT: 01:00 STBD: 01:00	<b>PORT: 1556:10 STBD: 1556:10</b>	410:30
<b>PROP. HRS</b>	259:05	344:15	347:55	<b>00:00</b>	1412.9	PORT: 1347:25 STBD: 1279:05	PORT:216:00 STBD:216:00	293:20
<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>LOCUST SUDAN</b>	<b>NAIROBI MAINTENANCE</b>	<b>QUELEA ETHIOPIA</b>	<b>UNDER ACCIDENT REPAIR</b>	<b>MWANZA UNHCR</b>	<b>MAINTENANCE NAIROBI</b>	<b>MAINTENANCE NAIROBI</b>	<b>QUELEA SIAYA KENYA</b>

**NB**

 **IMMEDIATE ATTENTION**

 **TO BE NOTED**

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