The presence of swarms and groups of locust adults copulating and laying over large surface areas distributed especially between Trarzar and Adrar, and in a lesser extent in the Inchiri and the H. Chargui was signaled in Mauritania (fig.1)

This phase of the Desert locust recurrence could lead to an outbreak if it is not quickly controlled. This situation is the result of the sudden increase of locust populations in the summer breeding areas of Southern Mauritania that resulted in locust adults groups from mid-September. Some hatching were observed and a recurrence is likely to be observed during the next weeks, with a possible formation of small hopper bands and swarms... As for 4th October 2016, over 4,200 hectares have been treated by terrestrial teams.

Figure 1: Locust population dynamic in Mauritania (Source FAO).
Infestations reaching the western part of Mauritania are the result of the summer breeding in the South, where good distribution of rainfall has been recorded these last months driving the greening of the vegetation much further north than normal (fig 2). In addition, a reproduction certainly took place in Northern Mali but neither its size nor its importance could be confirmed by surveys due to insecurity.

In Niger, the locust populations have recently increased in the Tamesna plains and over the western slope of the Air Mountains, where at least an immature adult group is formed. In Chad, locusts are concentrated in the North-East, where a small group of juveniles is signaled.

With the vegetation drying in these areas, adult groups and some small swarms will probably migrate to the north-western part of Mauritania and breed in the recent rainfall areas, extend up to Southern Morocco, therefore, juveniles and adults groups as well as hopper bands and small swarms are expected to be formed during the three coming months.

Survey and control operations should be continued and emphasized by the coming weeks. Therefore, it is necessary to assist the Desert locust front line countries (Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad), in particular Mauritania in the control efforts that have already started.

This warning on locust had been launched by CILSS through the press release from the regional technical consultation on food and agricultural perspectives in the Sahel and West Africa (PREGEC), held from 19 to 21 September 2016 in Lomé Togo and also by the Commission of the Desert locust control in the western region (CLCPRO) and by FAO.

For more informations about this situation, please read the Desert Locust bulletin on line in the web site: www.agrhymet.ne