



BLUE TONGUE AND EPIZOOTIC HEMORRHAGIC DISEASES: current epidemiologic scenarios and prevention innovations

Vector-borne viral diseases, infectious, non contagious, of wild and domestic ruminants.

Blue Tongue (BT) and Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD); both are vector-borne diseases (Culicoides) caused by viruses belong to the family Reoviridae, genus Orbivirus, and have immunological cross reactivity. They are considered as significantly important pathologies due to their health and economic impacts on livestock globally, as well as in Mediterranean countries. Both the diseases are **listed into the WOAHP Terrestrial Animal Health as Notifiable diseases. Both diseases have no public health risk “No Zoonotic importance”.**

BT affects sheep, goat, cattle and wild ruminants. Clinically, infected sheep show severe haemorrhagic symptoms, while in cattle, infection occurs in a mild form. On the other hand, and a part from wild animals, **EHD** causes severe clinical symptoms in cows, and infection in sheep and goats is usually subclinical.

Animal movement and global warming strongly contribute to the spread of these diseases (the viruses are maintained in areas where the climate will allow biting midges to survive over winter), threatening the Mediterranean basin and Europe, where competent vectors are present. **Given the unpredictability of virus introduction, there is an urgent need to fill the scientific gaps by developing large regional research programmes to build efficient predictive models and to implement early warning systems and sustainable surveillance systems for Northern African countries.**

This webinar aims to provide an update on the current epidemiological status of the diseases, with a special focus to the differences between the two pathologies and how vectors spread infection in livestock and wildlife. Participants will stand upon the news and innovations regarding recent diagnostic methods and procedures of prevention and control of these diseases. **At last, this webinar aims to increase the awareness of participants to fulfil the One Health concept.**

12th September 2023 | 10.00 - 13.00 (CET)

Language: English and French

Scientific Responsible: Cristina Casalone Scientific Director – STOR office, Palermo

PROGRAMME

10.00 – 10.20

WELCOME

Rachid Bouguedour (WOAH SRR-NA)
Mohammed Bengoumi (FAO SRR-NA)
Cristina Casalone (STOR-REMESA)

CHAIRPERSONS

Dr Montserrat Agüero
Directora Técnica del
Laboratorio de Sanidad Animal
Laboratorio Central de
Veterinaria, Madrid



Dr Hafsa Madani
Head of virology department at
the Laboratoire Central
Vétérinaire, Institut National de
la Médecine Vétérinaire, Algeria



10.20 – 10.40

BT: INTRODUCTION AND EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION IN EU

Dr. Elena Garcia Villaceros

Head of service of the
epidemiology department-
Subdirectorate of Animal Health,
Hygiene and Traceability, at the
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries
and Food, Spain



10.40 – 11.00

EHD: EMERGENCE IN EUROPE

**Dr Stephan Zientara, ANSES,
France**

Head of the Joint Research Unit
ANSES/INRAE/Vet school of Alfort in
Virology, Maisons-Alfort, France



11.00 – 11.30

EHDV AND BT EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION IN NA AND ME

**Dr Soufien Sghaier
FAO/IRVT**

Consultant on Animal health in
the FAO Subregional Office for
North Africa



11.30 – 12.00 **COFFEE
BREAK**

12.20 – 12.40

BT AND EHD: ETIOLOGICAL, CLINICAL, PROPHYLAXIS AND DIAGNOSTIC SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Dr Giovanni Savini

Head of the WOAHP Reference
Laboratory for Bluetongue, IZS Teramo



13.00 - **CLOSURE OF
THE WEBINAR**



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Elena García Villacieros

Coordinates and elaborates “prevention, control and eradication plans” of animal diseases (Bluetongue, EHD, Avian Influenza, Newcastle, Bovine Rinotracheitis, Equine diseases,..). National administrator for RASVE (health database for outbreaks and surveillance results) and National focal point for Wahis and ADIS. Elaborates procedures on animal health, contingency plans and intra EU trade animal movement.

Stéphan Zientara

He was graduated as doctor in veterinary medicine in 1987, in veterinary sciences (PhD) in 1995 and HDR in 2001. He is Director of the Joint Research unit 1161 in Virology ANSES/INRAE/ENVA. He is also Deputy Director of the laboratory of Animal health in Maisons-Alfort (France), Director of the European Union reference laboratory on equine diseases, Deputy Director of the European Union reference laboratory on Foot-and-Mouth disease and head of the OIE reference laboratory on EHDV. He is member the expert committee for animal health at the French Food Safety Agency (Anses) and expert on animal health for international organizations such as WOA (World organization for animal health), FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) and UE (European Commission) on viral diseases (African Horse Sickness, Foot-and-Mouth, Bluetongue, West Nile, ...). He has participated in many EU grants. He was elected in 2019 and 2021 as president of the scientific committee of the « Standing Technical Committee » of the FAO/European Union commission on the control of Foot-and-Mouth disease. He is expert for OIE on African horse sickness. His research interests cover several aspects of animal virology, especially the study of animal virus-host interactions and the evolution of viral populations through genetic recombination and reassortment in orbiviruses. He is author or co-author of more than 500 papers (264 international publications in PubMed, 2023).

Soufien Sghaier

He started as a veterinarian at the virology department of the Veterinary Research Institute of Tunisia (IRVT). His professional activity is mainly based on the diagnosis and molecular characterization of arboviruses and their vectors. He participates as coordinator and team member in various research and cooperation projects at national and international level, also carrying out training activities on laboratory diagnosis of major viral animal diseases. He is member of the reference group created to support the Observatory project on the implementation of WOA standards and member of the animal health experts committee. Since 2022, he is consultant on Animal health in the FAO Subregional Office for North Africa. He is co-author of over 40 articles published on peer reviewed international journals.

Giovanni Savini

In 1986, he began working in the serology department of the Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell’Abruzzo e del Molise, where he initiated collaborations with international entities such as Murdoch University, Australia. During this period, he dedicated four years to studying epidemiological, clinical, anatomopathological, and laboratory aspects of parasitosis in various animal species. At the end of this period, he obtained a PhD from the same university. He specialized in Animal Health, Livestock Hygiene, and Animal Production at the University of Pisa. In 1999, at the Institute in Teramo, he became the Head of the Virology department. In 2005, he was appointed as the Head of the Reference Laboratory for Bluetongue by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). He supervised the technical secretariat of the OIE BT global laboratory network. Since 2010, he has been a member of the Community Veterinary Emergency Team, a task force established by the European Commission to address animal health emergencies in Europe and third countries.