



EU policies on Vector-borne diseases

DG SANTE/G2

WOAH Regional seminar
Vector-borne diseases in the Europe Region
Teramo, 25-27 June 2025

Introduction

- Are ‘vector-borne diseases’ (‘VBDs’) a ‘category of diseases’?
- Common characteristics, common issues, for different pathogens, different hosts and different impacts
- Based on impacts / risks = EU listing / categories / rules within the Animal Health Law framework
- Need for **more / better?**... Need for more **knowledge**

‘Background’ of VBDs in EU

Faster, Further, Harder...

Epidemiological trends of VBDs

- In the last two decades, the EU has been significantly affected by various diseases of animals transmitted by arthropod vectors, such as mosquitoes (e.g. West Nile fever), flies (e.g. lumpy skin disease), ticks (e.g. Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever) or biting midges/culicoides (e.g. bluetongue, epizootic haemorrhagic disease)
- The EU is also at risk of a wide range of serious VBDs such as Rift Valley fever or African horse sickness

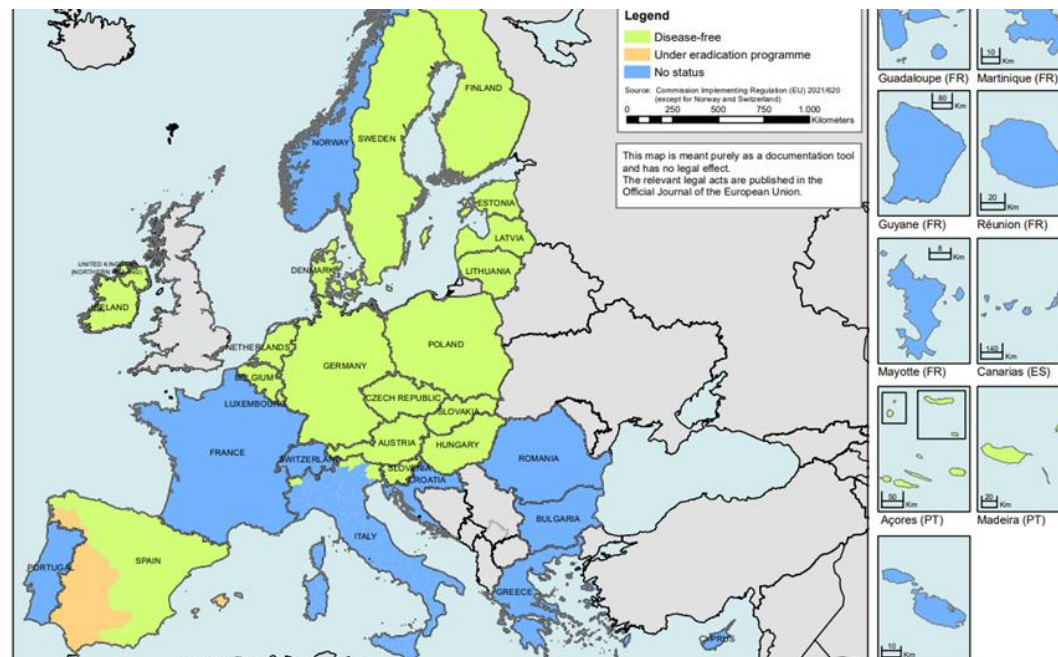
Epidemiological trends of VBDs

- Recent data and epidemiological events show the increase of such VBDs either in the vicinity of the EU, in EU trading partners, or within the EU, concomitant with the progressive widening of the geographical extent of competent vectors such as culicoides and mosquitoes, some of them being able to transmit zoonotic pathogenic agents (e.g. Aedes and sandflies)

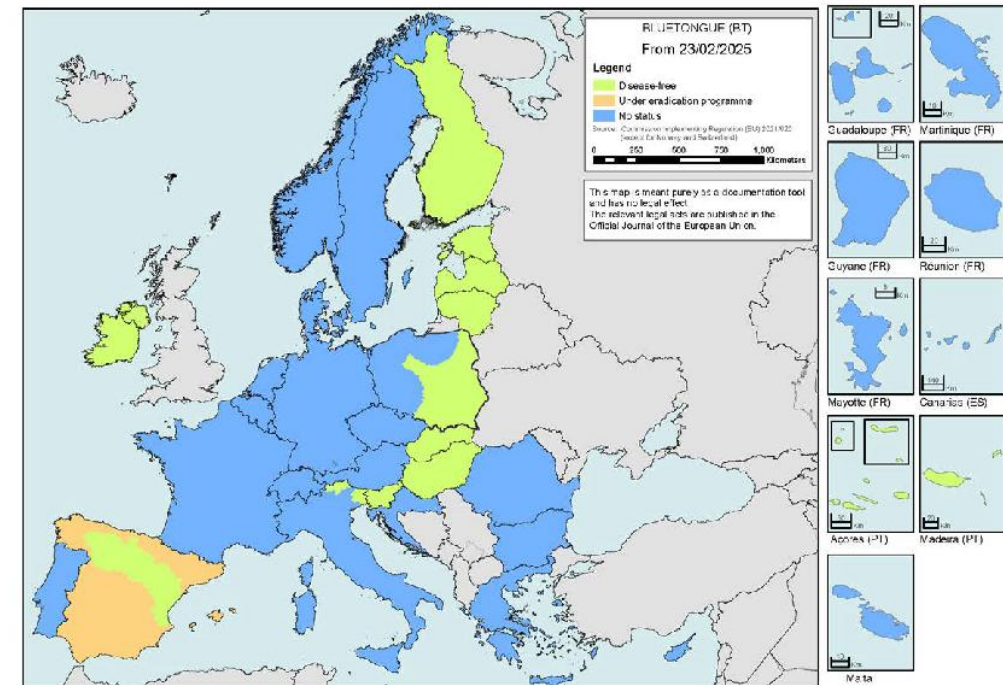
BTV-epidemiological situation: CIR (EU) 2021/620

free areas / areas with an approved eradication programme / no status

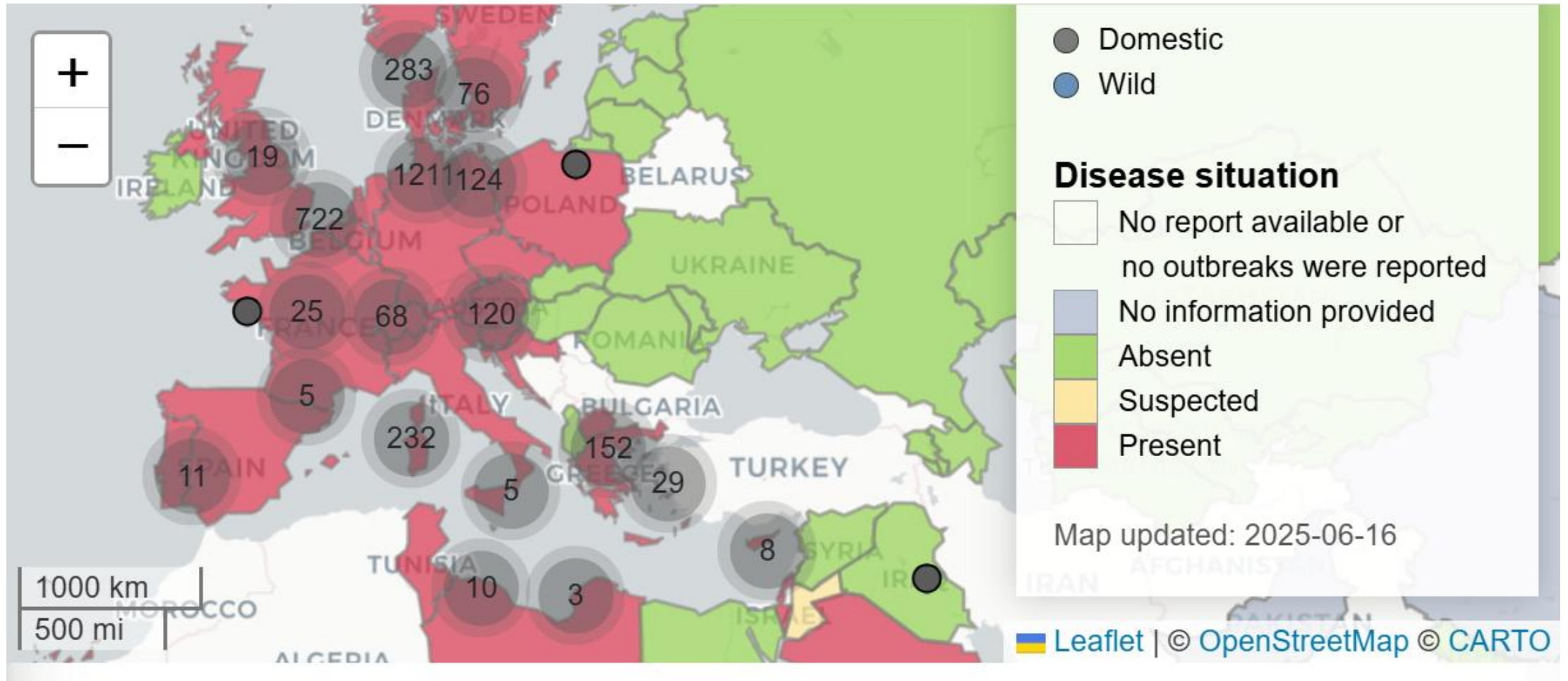
September 2023, before BTV 3



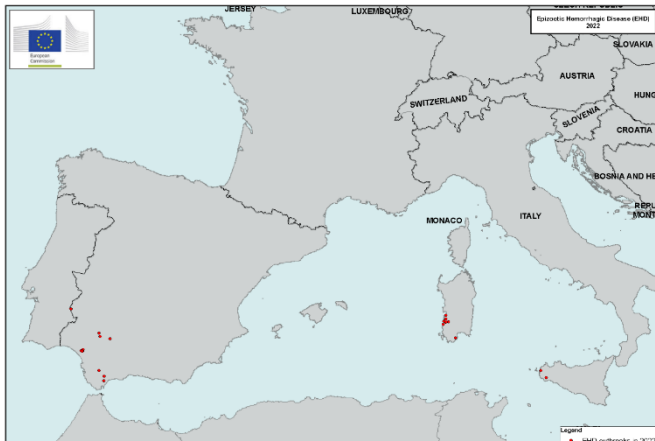
February 2025 BTV 3, BTV 4 and BTV 8 evolution



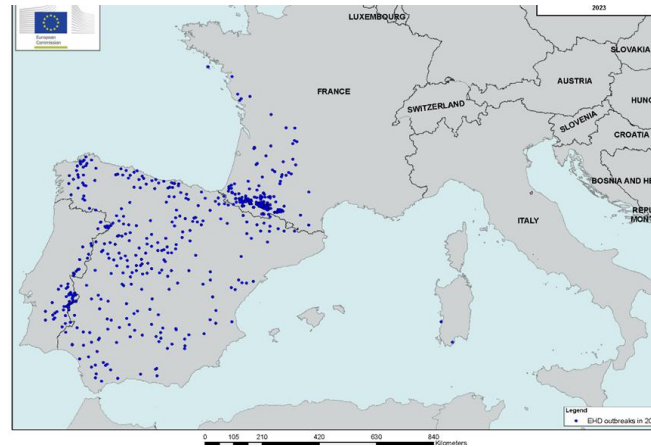
BTV-epidemiological situation (from EFSA)



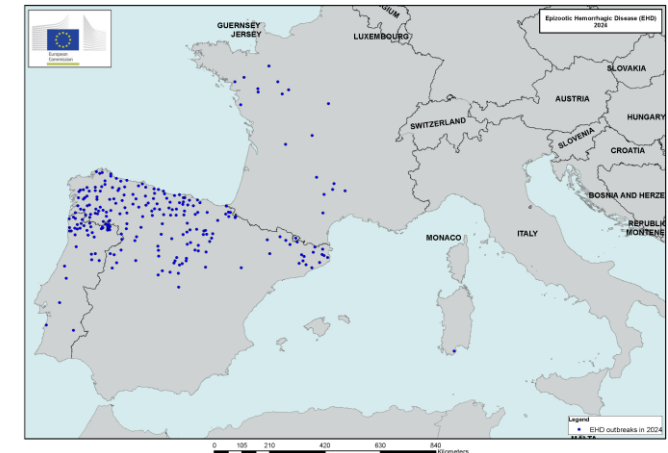
EHD-epidemiological situation (from ADIS)



2022

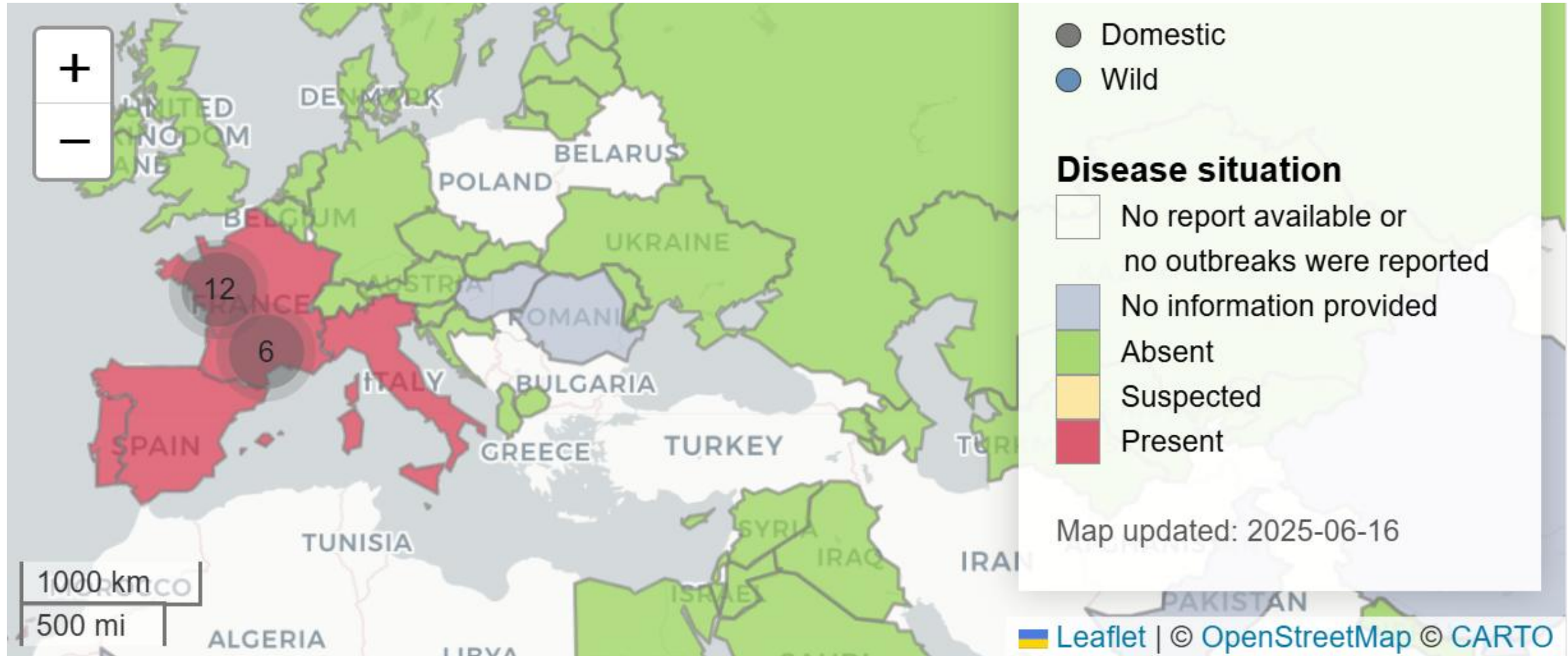


2023

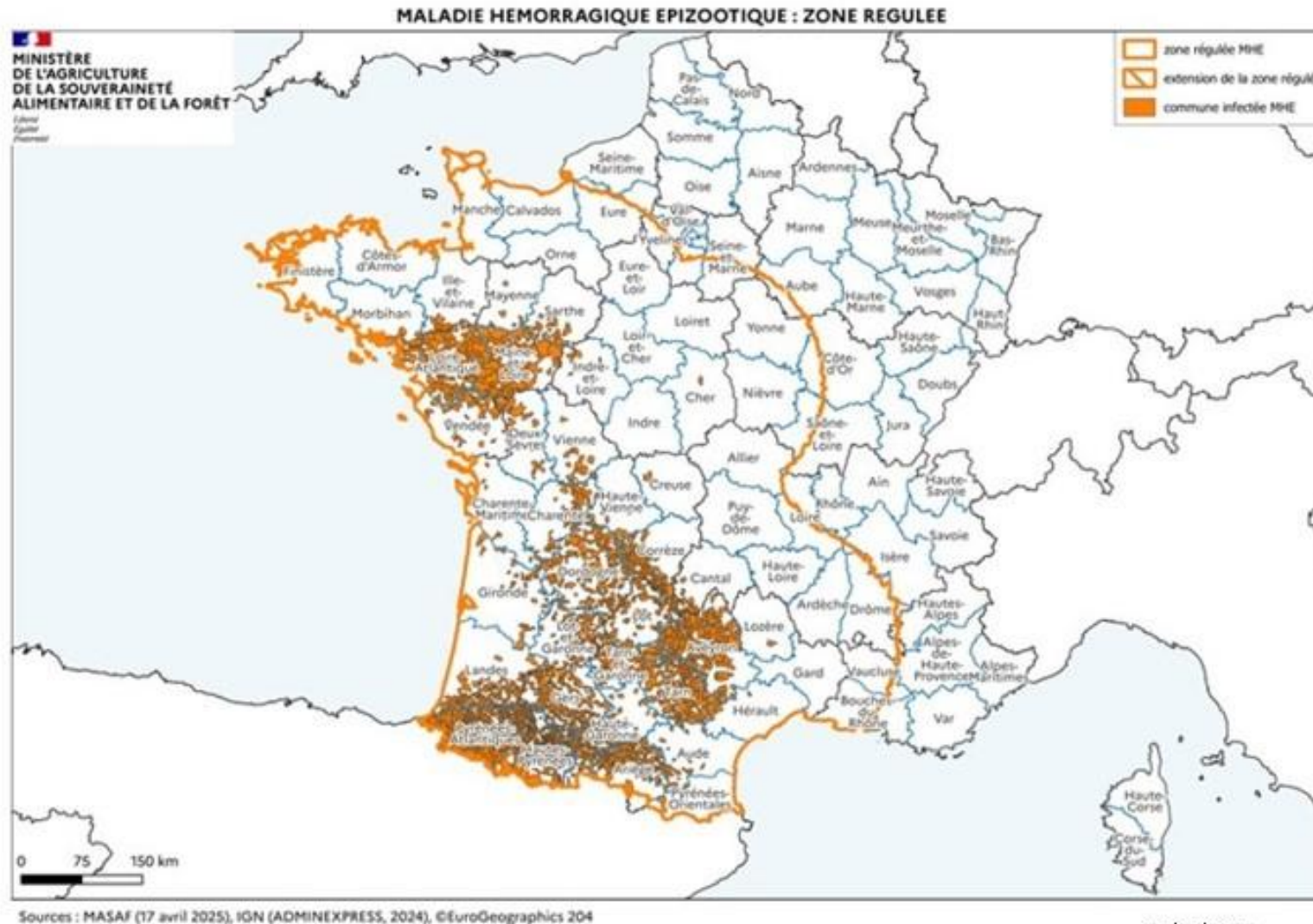


2024

EHD-epidemiological situation (from EFSA)

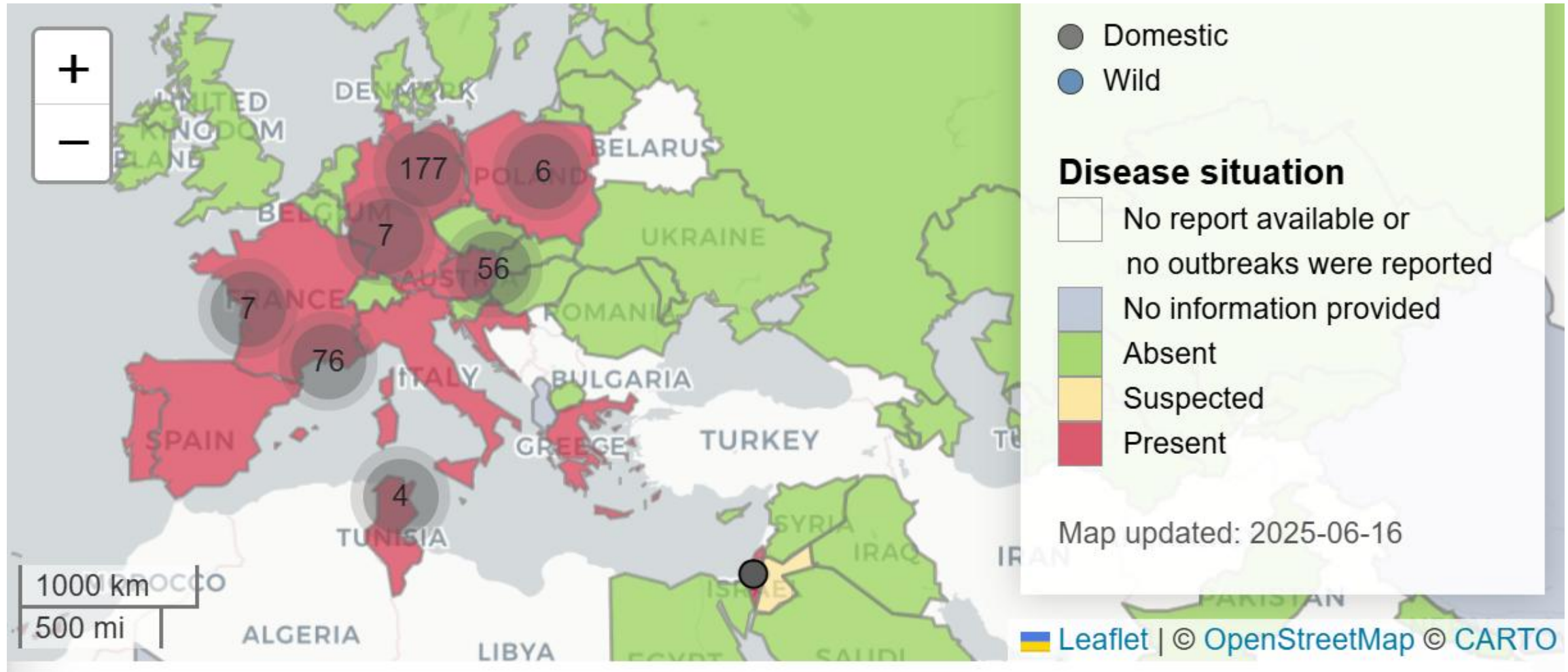


EHD-epidemiological situation (France 2025)



12/06/2025

WNF-epidemiological situation (from EFSA)



EU Policy(ies) on VBDs

In a nutshell...

EU policy and state of play for VBDs

- Since 2018, twelve VBDs listed under the Animal Health Law (Art 5 + Annex II) have been categorized by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 under various categories, depending on the level of intervention and the measures taken at EU level, and with reference to their vector species and their susceptible species
- Those disease largely differ one from another, in terms of pathogenic agents, host species, vector species, as well as in terms of impact and zoonotic potential.
- However, it may be relevant to consider them together as regards their transmission specificity and what this entails in terms of risk assessment and risk management, in view of the rapid evolution of the geographic distribution of vectors concerned. All of them may provoke severe clinical signs.

EU-listed VBDs

Pathogenic agent	A	B	C	D	E	Vector group	Pathogen present in EU	Vector(s) present in EU	Zoonotic potential	Susceptible species (principal)
RVFV	x			x	x	Culicoides	No (never)	Yes	Yes	Ruminants
BTV			x	x	x	Culicoides	Yes (serotypes)	Yes	No	Ruminants
EHDV				x	x	Culicoides	Yes	Yes	No	Ruminants
Surra				x	x	Tabanidae/Culicidae	Unsure	Yes	Unclear	Artiodactyles, Equids
JEV					x	Culicidae	No (never)	Yes	Yes	Suids
WNV					x	Culicidae	Yes	Yes	Yes	Birds, Equids (dead end)
LSDV	x			x	x	Haematophagous arthropods	No (no more)	Yes	No	Bovine
AHSV	x			x	x	Culicoides	No (no more)	Yes	No	Equids
EIA				x	x	Tabanidae	Yes	Yes	No	Equids
VEE				x	x	Culicidae	No (never)	Yes (?)	Yes	Equids, Birds
EEE / WEE					x	Culicidae	No (~ never)	Yes	Yes	Equids (dead end), Birds
ASFV	x			x	x	Ornithodoros erraticus	Yes	Yes	No	Suids

EU policy and state of play for VBDs (ctd)

- Legal background

- **Category A diseases** in CIR (EU) 2018/1882 : **RVF, LSD, AHS, ASF** – immediate eradication measures (contingency plans); zoning; emergency vaccination with specific rules for each (e.g. LSD zoning and vaccination linked)
- **Category B diseases** in CIR (EU) 2018/1882 : **None** (compulsory eradication programmes)
- **Category C disease** in CIR (EU) 2018/1882 : **BTV** – optional control/eradication programmes with the objective of gaining the disease-free status (must be from all serotypes); vaccination; rules for movements
- **Category D diseases** in CIR (EU) 2018/1882 : **EHD, surra, EIA, VEE** – rules for movements
- **Category E diseases** in CIR (EU) 2018/1882 : **JEV, WNV, EEE/WEE** – surveillance and notification
- For all categories, rules for surveillance and notification apply, as well as for entry into the EU (may apply for Cat E)
- Implementing acts to change category or susceptible species
- Delegated acts to change the list

EU policy and state of play for VBDs (ctd)

- EU policy adapted to the events, the risks and MSs priorities
- MSs have different tools to use: surveillance / early detection, vaccination, movement / trade measures
- Vaccines are a most important tool, integrated in EU rules, now also for category A diseases, included vector-borne, such as Lumpy Skin Disease and African Horse Sickness; **vaccination is under the responsibility of MSs**
- **Efforts are needed to better understand the evolution of the VBDs and the available (or needed) prevention and control tools**
- This will help adapting even more the rules

Assessment: EFSA

Get the scientific basis

More / better data – knowledge – science

- In April 2017, at the request of DG SANTE, EFSA published a scientific opinion on 36 VBDs, assessing their risk of introduction into the EU through movement of livestock or pets. This was considered a first screening, and it was already at that time recommended in the assessment that it should be updated
- In January 2020, also at the request of DG SANTE, and following reports of occurrence of the disease in North Africa, EFSA published a scientific opinion on epidemiological update and risk of introduction of Rift Valley fever (RVF) into Europe; a direct consequence was the designation of an EURL for RVF (which is in Teramo)

More/better data – knowledge – science

- It is relevant to ask support from EFSA and the relevant EU Reference Laboratories, **to analyse the situation and get scientific advice assessing animal health risks linked with VBDs.** The scientific advice should address in particular the **likelihood of introduction of new VBDs in the EU and of spread of VBDs currently affecting the EU**, the role of the climate evolution in this introduction or spread, and the potential evolution of the virulence or transmissibility of those VBDs.
- This piece of scientific advice should **propose options to mitigate the risks of introduction and to address the suitable surveillance, prevention and control of VBDs in the EU, including through vaccination**

Non EU-listed VBDs (WOAH-listed / human diseases)

Aino virus

Akabane virus

Alkhurma Haemorrhagic fever

Babesiosis

Banja

Borreliosis

Bovine Ephemeral Fever

Cache Valley virus

Chuzan Palyam

Chikungunya

Coxiella burnetii (Q-fever)

CCHF

Equine encephalosis

GETAH

Heartwater (Cowdriosis)

Hepatozoonosis

Highland J Virus

Kotonkan

Leishmaniosis

Main Drain Virus

Middelburg virus

Nairobi

Oropouche virus

Pappataci fever (sandfly fever)

Parapox

Peruvian horse sickness

Plague (Yersinia pestis)

Ross river fever

Schmallenberg virus

Shuni virus

Sindbis

St. Louis encephalitis virus

Togoto virus

TBE

Trypanosomosis (tse-tse)

Tularaemia

Trench fever (Bartonella spp.)

Vesicular Stomatitis virus

Wesselbron virus

Yellow fever

Yunnan Orbivirus

Zika virus

Usutu

Conclusion

We have tools (regulatory or not)

We need more (available or not)

For that we need to know (search and find)

Once we know we may adapt (agility of rules)

To continue be proportionate, based on science, fit for purpose and in accordance with WOAH international standards

Questions?

Thanks for your attention