

Updated Outbreak Assessment #13

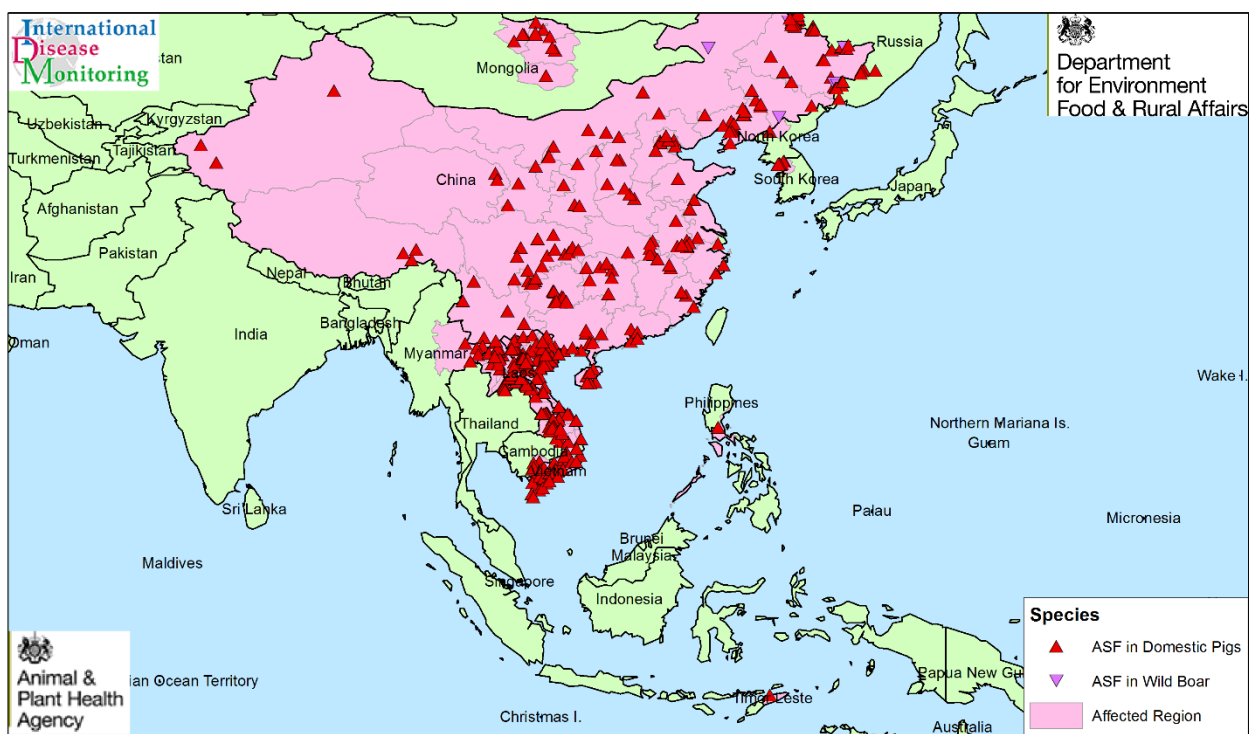
African Swine Fever (ASF) in South East Asia

02 October 2019

Ref: VITT/1200 ASF in South East Asia

Disease report

Since our last report on 23 September, East Timor has reported one hundred outbreaks of ASF in domestic swine in smallholder farms in the Dili municipality (OIE, 2019). This is an area of high pig density. The 2015 census suggests that there are more than 44,000 pigs in this region alone. There have also been unconfirmed reports of pig deaths in Baucau and Liquica municipalities. There has also been an outbreak in Myanmar in Tachileik which is close to the borders of both Thailand and Laos.



Map prepared by IDM
Date: 02/10/2019
Absolute scale: 1:42,000,000

African swine fever in south-east Asia
since August 2018

0 290 580 1,160 1,740 2,320 Km

The map shows the ASF outbreaks in domestic pigs and cases in wild boar since August 2018.

Situation assessment

East Timor

The confirmation of ASF in East Timor is of concern, both because of the significant geographical jump of the disease from those outbreaks in the Philippines and Vietnam to East Timor (2628 km and 2968 km respectively) and also because of the proximity of East Timor to the Australian mainland (588 km). East Timor's Council of Ministers issued a press release on 27 September stating that they have worked collaboratively with the Government of Australia to ensure that all necessary measures have been taken to limit the effects of the outbreak (RDTL, 2019).

The disease spread within SE Asia (unlike that of Europe) is considered to be through the vector of the domestic pig population, where there is a combination of a high density of backyard pigs, feeding with unregulated swill and the presence of ASF in the food chain. However, the concern for Australia is its significant number of feral pigs (estimated at 24 million). If disease were to occur within that population then it is likely that spread would more closely reflect that of the disease in Europe, where transmission of the disease is through the wild boar population (Quilty, 2019).

Elsewhere in SE Asia

Since our report on 23 September 2019, there have been no further outbreaks of ASF reported in North Korea, South Korea, Cambodia, Mongolia or the Philippines, though it is likely that the virus is still circulating in these areas. Taiwan remains officially free from ASF. The confirmation of African Swine Fever Virus (ASFV) in China, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Hong Kong, North Korea, South Korea, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, and now East Timor, demonstrates the potential for further spread into and within the domestic pig and wild suid populations in south-eastern Asia, where the presence of soft-bodied argasid ticks could also hinder eradication if found to be able to transmit ASFV in this outbreak. The epidemiological situation of ASF across South East Asia remains of concern. New outbreaks continue despite the control campaigns implemented, which is possibly a result of illegal movements of both animals and pork products.

There are ongoing concerns around pork products from non-EU countries entering the EU in passenger luggage and then being discarded in areas where wild boar or domestic pigs could access them. With regular direct flights to the EU and UK from China and eastern Asia, there is a risk of entry of ASFV in products of animal origin (POAO) from Asia.

Publicity campaigns are in place to inform the public and discourage individuals from bringing pork products into UK, including targeted messages to key stakeholders such as road hauliers, hunters, pig keepers and veterinarians. See: http://web.oie.int/rr-europe/eng/regprog/en_asf_depository.htm, and, <https://pork.ahdb.org.uk/health-welfare/health/emerging-diseases/african-swine-fever/>

Conclusion

The risk of ASF introduction to the UK was raised to **medium** in August 2018 as a result of the number of outbreaks of ASF being reported in Eastern Europe, and subsequent detection of ASF in wild boar in Belgium in September 2018. Despite the spread of ASF to China, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Hong Kong, North Korea, South Korea, Laos,

Myanmar, the Philippines, and now East Timor, the current risk of ASF introduction to the UK is still considered to be **medium**, although the situation is being kept under review.

We would like to highlight to all pig keepers and the public to ensure pigs are not fed catering waste, kitchen scraps or pork products, thereby observing the swill feeding ban. All pig keepers should be aware that visitors to their premises should not have had recent contact with pigs and pig premises in the affected regions. Anybody returning from any ASF-affected area should avoid contact with domestic pigs, whether commercial holdings or smallholdings, areas with feral pigs or wild boar, until they are confident they have no contaminated clothing, footwear or equipment. Pig keepers and veterinarians should remind themselves of the clinical signs for ASF. Any suspect cases must be reported promptly. Please see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/african-swine-fever> for more information.

We would like to remind the public that any feeding of meat products, including the feeding of swill, kitchen scraps and catering waste, to wild boar or feral pigs is also illegal. A poster reminding pig keepers of this is available:

<http://apha.defra.gov.uk/documents/surveillance/diseases/african-swine-fever-poster.pdf>

We will continue to monitor the situation.

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References

All disease reports are available from the OIE WAHIS database.

RDTL, 2019 (<http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?p=23034&lang=en>)

Quilty, 2019 (<https://www.beefcentral.com/news/african-swine-fever-reaches-east-timor-650-km-from-australia/>)



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