

Updated Outbreak Assessment #21

African swine fever (ASF) in South East Asia

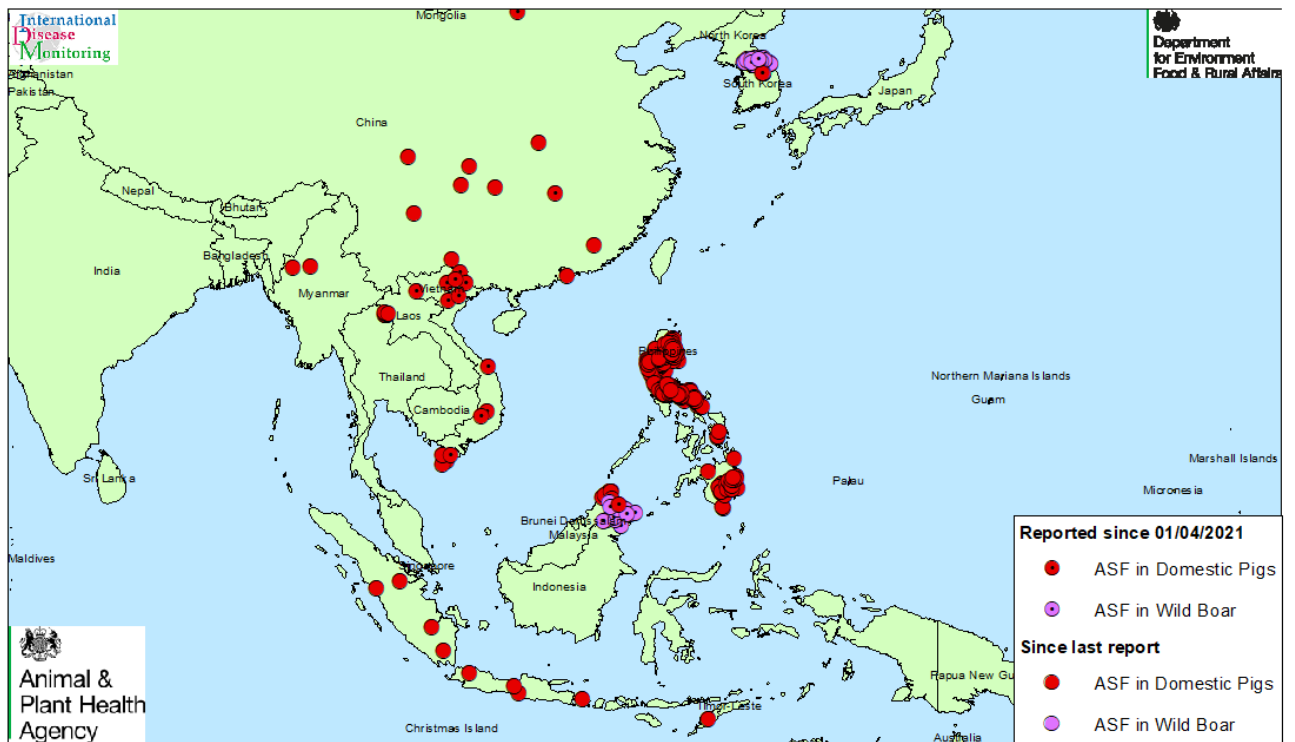
12 May 2021

Ref: VITT/1200 ASF Asia

Disease report

Since our last report on 16 July 2020, ASF has been reported in domestic pigs and wild boar in Malaysia for the first time. There have been further reports of ASF in domestic pigs in China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, South Korea, and Vietnam. ASF in wild boar continues to be reported in South Korea.

Map of OIE reports of ASF in South East Asia



Map prepared by IDM
Date: 07/05/2021
Absolute scale: 1:36,000,000

African swine fever July 2020 - May 2021

Situation assessment

Since our last report, **China** has reported twelve further outbreaks in domestic pigs to OIE. Most recently, in April 2021, a farm in the Changsha prefecture with 62 pigs was affected.

Further reports from FAO in April 2021 indicate that outbreaks have been detected in the Fourth Division of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, and Inner Mongolia

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Autonomous Region. A naturally mutated ASF virus strain with lower pathogenicity has been identified, following the testing of samples collected between June and December 2020 from domestic pigs in the Hubei, Heilongjiang and Hebei provinces (FAO 2021).

Hong Kong has reported one outbreak in domestic pigs to OIE in February 2021, on a farm with 3,989 pigs. The government's ASF contingency plan has been activated, with pig movements from the infected premises, and the three farms located within 3km, immediately suspended. This is the first reported outbreak of ASF in Hong Kong since June 2019.

According to the FAO, ASF outbreaks have been reported in **India** in the Aizawl, Lunglei, Mamit, Serchhip and Siaha districts, causing over 1,000 pig deaths according to media quoting the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying. In addition, Mizoram State has declared additional ASF affected districts since the beginning of May 2021 (FAO 2021). These reports have not yet been submitted to OIE.

In **Indonesia**, there have been a further nine outbreak clusters (representing 443 backyard holdings) submitted to OIE since our last report, with the latest outbreak reported in February 2021. Outbreaks range from the western Sumatera Barat province to Nusa Tenggara Timur province, over 3,000km away. According to the FAO (FAO 2021), there has also been over 500 ASF swine deaths in the West Papua Province in the last few months.

Since the last report in July 2020, **Laos** has reported a further ten outbreaks in domestic backyard holdings resulting in 1,170 pig deaths, all of which were reported to OIE in November 2020 and clustered in the northern Sainyabuli province, bordering Thailand.

Malaysia confirmed the first ASF outbreaks to OIE in four backyard farms and five wild boar in February 2021 in the north of East Malaysia on the island Borneo, which it shares with Brunei and Indonesia. Following the death of wild boar in Kinabatangan, the disease investigation was extended to the neighbouring district, where the first outbreak involving backyard pigs was confirmed in Pitas. An initial zone of 50km was set up and surveillance conducted. Sabah Wildlife Department then reported ASF in wild boar outside of the initial zone, leading to increasing the zone to cover the whole state. Currently, surveillance is being conducted across the whole country.

In **Myanmar**, two further outbreaks in backyard holdings with just over 900 pigs in total, have been reported to OIE since the last update, both in November 2020.

In **Papua New Guinea**, ASF spread was confirmed in the Western Highlands, Jiwaka and Simbu Provinces in January 2021 (FAO 2021), these are yet to be reported to OIE.

ASF continues to circulate and spread across the **Philippines**, with 286 further outbreaks reported in domestic pigs to OIE, the majority in backyard holdings, though there were seven reports in commercial holdings. In March 2021, the Department of Agriculture reported that ASF had spread across 12 regions and 40 provinces, to 2,425 communities in the Philippines, causing a loss of over 3 million pigs (FAO 2021).

On 28 April 2021, the Philippines announced that it had started vaccine trials in collaboration with Zoetis in areas previously affected by ASF, with 10 commercial farms participating. The trials will be conducted and monitored for 84 days (DA.GOV 2021).

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Currently, field trials of first generation live attenuated African swine fever vaccines are being conducted in **China, Philippines** and **Vietnam**. The results of these are not yet known and therefore widescale adoption of ASF vaccines in Asia is unlikely in the short term

South Korea continues to report ASF in wild boar frequently. Since our last report in July 2020, 697 ASF infected wild boar have been reported to OIE. To prepare for the spring wild boar breeding season, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) strengthened control measures for both wild boar and domestic pigs, enforcing intensive hunting and carcass searching during the hunting period (March-April) to reduce wild boar numbers. Additionally, central and local governments have fielded joint task forces to inspect and ensure biosecurity in farms nationwide, with 5,529 households visited (FAO 2021). South Korea have also reported three outbreaks in domestic pigs to OIE since our last report, most recently on 5 May (401 pigs). In October 2020, over 2,000 pigs were culled for preventative measures at two farms.

As a result of these intensive exercises, Hongcheon County (approximately 50km south of the North Korean border) reported its first ASF positive wild boar carcass in May 2021. There have been three further outbreaks in domestic pigs and 25 cases in wild boar in the south Gyeongsang and Gangwon-do provinces.

Since 16 July 2020, **Vietnam** have reported 14 new outbreaks to OIE. All outbreaks were in domestic pigs at backyard premises, involving 2,925 pigs in total. Since Vietnam's first cases of ASF, reported in February 2019, all 63 provinces in the country have been affected.

Since our last report on 16 July 2020, there have been no further outbreaks of ASF reported in **Cambodia, Mongolia, North Korea** and **Timor-Leste**, though it is likely that the virus is still circulating in these areas. **Taiwan** remains officially free from ASF, though on 4 April, a pig carcass found on the shore of New Taipei City was confirmed to be infected with ASF (FAO 2021), and nearby islands have reported ASF infected pigs washing ashore (Pig Progress). Taiwan remains on high alert for the disease conducting ongoing surveillance, with samples collected from 6,448 farms testing negative for ASF (FAO 2021).

The confirmation of ASF in multiple countries across Asia and Oceania, and the wide geographic range of infection found within these countries, demonstrates the potential for further spread of ASF into and within the domestic pig and wild suid populations in this part of the world.

As part of ongoing surveillance, Australia have been testing pork products seized at International Mail Centres in Brisbane, Perth, Sydney and Melbourne. Results found ASF virus fragments in 24% of products, and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) virus fragments in 1% of products (AWE 2021). These findings highlight the need to maintain high biosecurity standards, and the potential illegal practices (such as swill feeding) have, to bring diseases to farms.

Publicity campaigns are in place in the UK to inform the general public and discourage individuals from bringing pork products into UK. This includes targeted messages to key

stakeholders such as road hauliers, hunters, pig keepers and veterinarians. See:
<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.

The current risk of ASF introduction to the UK is still considered to be **medium**, despite the spread of ASF within Asia and Oceania.

Illegal importation of infected pork meat from affected parts of Asia and Oceania, presents a significant route of entry of ASF virus into the UK. There are also ongoing concerns around infected pork products originating from affected non-EU countries entering the EU in passenger luggage and the subsequent waste being discarded in areas where wild boar or domestic pigs could access them.

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic, direct flights to/from the EU and UK, and internationally, may be cancelled or running a very limited schedule. Relaxing COVID-19 movement restrictions of people within affected countries could now begin to impact on disease reporting. Therefore, there still remains a risk of entry of ASFV in products of animal origin from affected countries via other pathways, including from illegal imports.

All travellers are strongly advised to avoid bringing, ordering or requesting any pork products – for example, dried or cured meats, sausages, salamis or pâté – back to the UK from affected parts of Europe. Travellers from Asia and other third country areas who bring meat or dairy products can also face prosecution and a large fine.

We would like to highlight to all pig keepers, pig producers, smallholders and general public to ensure pigs are not fed catering waste, kitchen scraps or pork products, thereby observing the swill feeding ban. All pig keepers should remain vigilant and ensure that any visitors to their premises have not had any recent contact with pigs or pig premises in the affected regions.

People returning from any ASF-affected areas of the world should avoid any contact with domestic pigs in commercial holdings, smallholdings or even household pet pigs. Habitats where feral pigs or wild boar exist should also be avoided. All clothing, footwear or equipment should be disinfected before entering pig areas.

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 will continue to monitor the situation.

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