



Monitoring of Wild Animals Disease as an Element of Security to Public Health and Protection of Wild Fauna[#]

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Received June 11, 2011; Accepted December 15, 2011

Abstract: Albania is situated in the Western Balkans and has a wealth of different wildlife. This natural wealth is a great resource for the country, and is also a key incentive for the careful surveillance of wildlife diseases. As surveillance did not exist 20 years ago, Albania was classified as a European hot spot for the presence of wildlife diseases. Within this framework, we would like to stress the fact that Albania is aligned to countries that have a wide range of zoonotic diseases originating from wildlife, such as rabies in wild carnivores, tularemia in wild rabbits, avian influenza (H5N1) in wild birds, Hantaviruses in wild rodents, *echinococcosis* in fox and a large number of other non-zoonotic diseases. Taking into consideration the nearness of Albania to the European Union, regular surveillance and monitoring of wildlife diseases is not only a prerequisite for public veterinary health but also an obligation of European institutions for the integration of Albania into the EU. In the context of such an obligation a sector for monitoring and implementing a system for the surveillance of wildlife diseases has been established and operates in Albania since 2004. This modest sector consists of lecturers and scientific researchers from the Faculty of Veterinarian Medicine at the Agricultural University, researchers from the Food Safety and Veterinary Institute, experts from Albania Wildlife Disease Association, and is supported by partners from European Wildlife Diseases Association; our section is also involved as associated partners in the European project for the surveillance of wildlife diseases (Wild Tech FP7 Project). Since the establishment of this sector, and as a result of cooperation with the above-mentioned partners, several monitoring services have been carried out in terms of wildlife diseases and some interesting data were provided, demonstrating the unique importance of implementing a sound and comprehensive surveillance system for wildlife diseases.

Key words: *Monitoring services, Health, Protection, Wild fauna*

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[#]This paper has been presented at ICE-2011 Tiran, Albania