

ONE Health: Human HEALTH

Climate change is a driver behind the spread of neglected tropical diseases, like leishmaniasis. Globalisation, alongside the increase in international trade and travel, is playing a significant role in bringing vectors and their pathogens closer together in Europe.

Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD's) gaining a foothold in the EU

Although the impact of tropical infectious diseases is not as severe as in tropical countries, the effects on European public health are already being felt. People are contracting (and sometimes dying from) neglected infectious parasitic diseases that were once confined to the tropics.

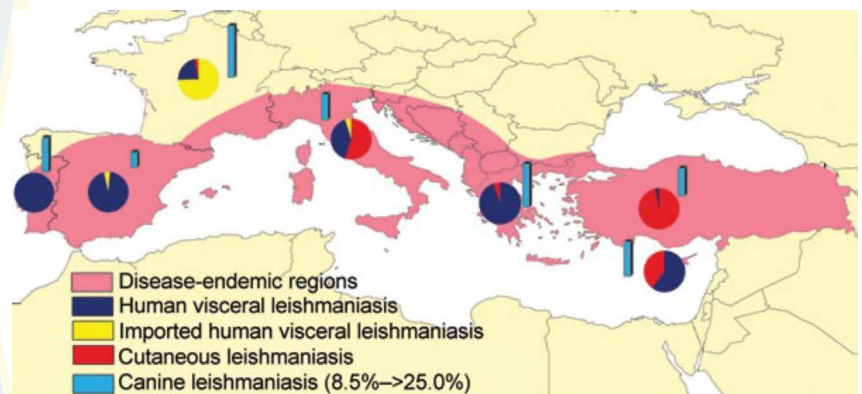
Cases of vector-borne diseases already endemic in Europe, such as leishmaniasis, are on the rise. **For leishmaniasis, there is no vaccine or safe and effective treatment.**

Europe is not alone. Some parts of the non-tropical world that until now have had the luxury of not worrying about neglected tropical diseases — including the USA's Gulf Coast — are facing similar problems.

Globalization and NTD's

The globalization of neglected tropical diseases requires a change in how they are perceived. **Historically, they have been largely ignored by funding agencies** and left out of health programmes. These diseases primarily affect people living in low-income countries, and supporting the fight against these diseases was **seen as a philanthropic endeavour.**

However, the distinction is blurring as **NTD's begin to affect high- and middle-income countries.** It is now in the "best interest of all G20 countries" to support efforts to combat those diseases.



Leishmaniasis gaining a foothold in the EU.

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Awareness in Europe

European doctors must be aware that neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) can be contracted as local infections, not just when travelling abroad. It is crucial to avoid missing or incorrect diagnoses. Doctors must also recognize that diseases traditionally thought to affect only animals can and do spread to humans.

Future Needs

NTDs are becoming truly global and more needs to be done, not only to understand the complexity of the vector-environment relationship, but also to **develop vaccines, diagnostics and treatments for these diseases to help people in all countries.**

The **risks** that NTDs pose not only to **public health**, but also to **economic well-being**, could finally **motivate governments in wealthy countries to do more** to mitigate the effects of NTDs on people around the world.



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