



animals



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Infectious Diseases in Animals: Community Ecology and Pathogen Dynamics

Guest Editor:

Dr. João R. Mesquita

1. Abel Salazar Biomedical Institute of Sciences (ICBAS), University of Porto, Porto, Portugal
2. EPIUnit–Instituto de Saúde Pública, Universidade do Porto, 4050-313 Porto, Portugal

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Message from the Guest Editor

Since the beginning of time, animal pathogens have circulated worldwide, with many causing severe disease and death. Many of these diseases are known to be transmitted between animal species and between animals and humans, of which smallpox is a good example, having evolved from pathogens circulating in wildlife. Ecological changes can drive evolution and change the complex interplay between hosts–environment–pathogens, ultimately favoring transmission. A good example can be seen in the El Niño events of the 1990s that led to the emergence of human hantavirus cases in the US through an ecological cascade. Increased precipitation led to a growth in vegetation, which sustained increased populations of rodents, facilitating hantavirus transmission between rodents and from rodents to humans. These ecological changes can apply to the dynamics of pathogens within individual hosts, where pathogens evolve in a complex interaction with other microbes within a host.



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Special Issue



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Prof. Dr. Clive J. C. Phillips

1. Institute of Veterinary Medicine
and Animal Sciences, Estonian
University of Life Sciences,
Kreutzwaldi 1, 51014 Tartu,
Estonia

2. Curtin University Sustainability
Policy (CUSP) Institute, Kent St.,
Bentley 6102, Australia

Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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Contact Us

Animals Editorial Office
MDPI, St. Alban-Anlage 66
4052 Basel, Switzerland

Tel: +41 61 683 77 34
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