GLOBAL HEALTH: VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES

September 3-9, 2023

A Global Educational Initiative by the American Austrian Foundation
31 fellows from 25 countries

3 round tables on protecting biodiversity, predicting emergences, and the impact of climate change

12 faculty members from Cameroon, Czech Republic, France, French Guyana, Italy, and Senegal,

3 conferences on understanding viral diseases emergence, mathematical modelling, and from the field to the lab

21 didactic lectures

177 seminar applications

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Anna-Bella Failloux, PhD  
(Course Director)  

Professor of Medical Entomology  
Institut Pasteur  
Arboviruses and Insect Vectors Unit  
25 Rue du Docteur Roux  
75724 Paris Cedex 15  
France  

Phone: +33-1-40613617  
Email: anna-bella.failloux@pasteur.fr  

Anna-Bella Failloux, PhD is a medical entomologist and chief of the unit “Arboviruses and Insect Vectors” in the department of Virology at the Institut Pasteur in Paris. Her work mainly focuses on arbovirus–mosquito interactions in order to decipher the factors leading to the viral emergence. She did her first move in medical entomology at the Institut Louis Malardé in French Polynesia with a PhD on the adaptation of the vector Aedes polynesiensis to local parasite populations of the filaria Wuchereria bancrofti. Then she moved to the Institut Pasteur in Paris, where as a post-doc, she developed genetic markers to uncover the complex genetic structure of the widespread mosquito Aedes aegypti, the primary dengue vector worldwide, dengue being the most important arboviral disease affecting humans. In 2011, she became the head of an independent group (tenured in 2014) which has been actively involved in defining finely the role of mosquito vectors in the last emergences of chikungunya and Zika. Her team has an international renown in transmission of human arboviruses and for its unique expertise in experimental infections of mosquitoes with class 3 arboviruses. She collaborates tightly with the Pasteur network (33 institutes covering five continents) to anchor her projects on arboviral emergences. She has authored over 200 scientific publications on vectors of alphaviruses, flaviviruses, and phleboviruses. She participates actively in teaching medical entomology as co-director of the course “Insect Vectors and Pathogens Transmission”, the course “Medical Entomology” of the Pasteur Network and the MOOC “Medical Entomology” of the Institut Pasteur.
Stéphanie Blandin, PhD is a French immunologist who specialized in mosquito/parasite interactions. She grew up on a farm in Burgundy where she had inspiring teachers who nurtured her love for science. She prepared highly competitive exams for two years and joined the “Ecole Normale Supérieure” in Paris where she studied chemistry and biology. After being awarded a bachelor’s degree, she did a six-month internship in the laboratory of Prof. Max Cooper in Birmingham, Alabama, USA. She then obtained a master’s degree in Immunology from the Institut Pasteur in Paris and moved to the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg, Germany, for her PhD under the supervision of Prof. Kafatos, who was then the head of EMBL, and Prof. Hoffmann, who was later awarded the Nobel prize in Medicine in 2011. It is at that time that she started to work on the major malaria vector, the mosquito Anopheles gambiae. During her PhD, the field underwent major advances, with the sequencing and the first transformation of the mosquito genome, and the development of functional genetic approaches. She contributed to some of these developments, provided the first proof that mosquitoes mount a potent antiparasitic response and identified a key mosquito antiparasitic gene. With exciting novel opportunities opened up by this series of developments, she decided to stay in the field and moved to the laboratory of Dr. Levashina in Strasbourg, France. She identified the first mosquito gene whose polymorphism determines mosquito resistance to malaria parasites. She is now leading her own lab at the IBMC in Strasbourg, where she continues her work on the dissection of the genetic basis of resistance, but also on the maintenance of redox homeostasis in mosquitoes and parasites, and on means to manipulate redox homeostasis to reduce malaria transmission. She was awarded the Young Biomedical Researcher prize from Sanofi & Institut Pasteur in 2012. Her lab is part of the Laboratory of Excellence ParaFrap and the international consortium Zikalliance. She has obtained additional financial support, notably from the European Research Council (ERC), the French National Research Agency (ANR) and the Region Grand Est. She is also involved in promoting a responsible and ethical research and in science outreach programs. She lives in Strasbourg with her two children. Her husband is a group leader in Cambridge, UK.
Sarah Bonnet, PhD is a parasitologist and a medical and veterinary entomologist. She began her university studies at the Université des Sciences de Nantes in the west of France, and then obtained her PhD in parasitology at the Université Pierre et Marie Curie in Paris. She then graduated from Institut Pasteur in medical and veterinary entomology. Following her PhD on "Malaria Transmission from Man to Mosquito: Measurement and Potential Blocking Strategies" performed both in France (Pasteur Institute) and in Cameroon (IRD), she worked on a vaccine candidate against malaria as a postdoc researcher at Institut Pasteur. She was then recruited at INRAE (French National Institute of Agronomy and Environment) in 2004 to develop research topics on the transmission of tick-borne pathogens by their vectors including epidemiological studies, laboratory competency analysis, tick-host-pathogen interactions studies, and anti-tick vaccines development. She now holds the position as research director at INRAE and works at Institut Pasteur in the “Ecology and Emergence of Arthropod-Borne Pathogens Unit”. Recent publications include reviews on tick-host-pathogen interaction, tick saliva or tick control strategies, and results on anti-tick vaccine candidate as a tick salivary component having an immunomodulatory effect on the vertebrate host. She participates in expert panels on arthropod vectors including ticks in numerous evaluation committees of both French national and international agencies, as well as several juries (PhD, HDR, Professor and researcher positions…), and teaches at several universities on the subject, including the coordination of a university diploma on “tick zoonosis” at University Paris XII. She is the President of the Animal Ethics Committee of INRAE Jouy-en-Josas/AgroParisTech and a member of the CNREEA (French National Committee on Animal Experimentation Ethics).
Cyril Caminade, PhD

Research Scientist
Earth System Physics Department
The Abdus Salam International Center for Theoretical Physics
Str. Costiera
Trieste, 34151
Italy

Phone:  +39-040-2240-879
Email:  cyril.caminade00@gmail.com

Cyril Caminade, PhD is a climate scientist with skills in spatial epidemiology and biogeography. Dr. Caminade obtained his PhD about climate variability in Sub-Saharan Africa at CERFACS and at the Université Paul Sabatier in Toulouse in 2006. From 2008 to 2021, Dr. Caminade worked as a research assistant at the University of Liverpool. He collaborated with biologists, statisticians, veterinarians, clinicians, climatologists, public health experts and data scientists to study the impact of climate variability and climate change on key vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, Zika, Rift Valley Fever, plague, bluetongue, fascioliasis and haemonchosis. Cyril also worked on assessing the risk posed by invasive vector species such as the Asian tiger mosquito or Ixodes ticks. Dr. Caminade is a multidisciplinary scientist with broad scientific interests, and he has worked on both human and animal health issues. He was invited to give keynote presentations at several prestigious institutions; he reviewed articles for > 50 different scientific journals and research proposals for several funding bodies in Europe and the USA. His research work is mentioned in the mainstream media and is cited in several important reports (WHO, UKHSA, IPCC, World Bank...). He also contributes to several UN activities (IGF, UNECA, UNEP, UNDP...). Cyril is now modeling the efficiency of vector control measures (Sterile Insect Technique) at the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Italy, in collaboration with colleagues working at IAEA in Austria.
Simon Cauchemez, PhD is a mathematical modeler and epidemiologist specialized in the analysis of complex epidemic data. Dr. Cauchemez studied Statistics at ENSAE (National School for Statistics and Economic Administration) in 1998-2001 before obtaining a master's degree in Biomathematics in 2002 and a PhD in Biostatistics applied to Infectious Disease Epidemiology in 2005 at INSERM. In 2005, he moved to Imperial College London to work under the supervision of Prof. Neil Ferguson. In 2007, he obtained a RCUK research fellowship. He was promoted Senior Lecturer in Statistical Infectious Disease Epidemiology at Imperial College in 2011 and Reader in 2013. In 2013, he moved to Institut Pasteur in Paris to become Head of Laboratory of the Mathematical Modelling of Infectious Diseases Unit he created. His main research objective is to develop state-of-the-art statistical and mathematical methods to address the many challenges epidemiologists are confronted with during epidemics, with the aim to increase our understanding of how pathogens spread in populations and the impact of interventions, to support policy making and optimize control strategies. He has been strongly involved in modelling activities during recent infectious disease outbreaks including the pandemic influenza in 2009, the emergence of chikungunya (2013-2014) and Zika (2015-2016) in the Americas, the West African Ebola outbreak (2013-2015) and a large urban outbreak of plague in Madagascar (2017). He was a member of the Scientific Committee advising the French government during the COVID-19 pandemic and has been nominated Knight of the National Order of the Legion of Honor in 2022 for his contribution to pandemic research and response. Dr. Cauchemez co-authored more than 200 research articles.
Mawlouth Diallo, PhD, HDR

Director of Research
Medical Zoology Department
Institut Pasteur de Dakar (IPD)
36 Avenue Pasteur
BP 220 Dakar
Senegal

Phone: +22-1-338-399-228/ +22-1-775-388-987
Email: Mawlouth.Diallo@pasteur.sn

Mawlouth Diallo, PhD, HDR is a vector biologist with 27 years of experience studying mosquitos’ borne arboviruses and malaria in Africa. His leadership abilities have helped to the conception and implementation at “Institut Pasteur de Dakar” of a brand new and well-equipped laboratory with facilities for classical and molecular entomology including a BSL-3 insectary in 2004. At the head of this unit, he has developed a basic research program on arboviruses (Dengue, Yellow Fever, Rift Valley Fever, West Nile, Chikungunya, Zika, other emerging arbovirus infections) and malaria vector bio-ecology, population genetics and virus–vector-vertebrate interactions. His research integrates also the impact of climate and environmental change on the vectors dynamic and associated viruses spill over. More recently he has integrated a modelling approach to analyze a long series of data gathered over years to predict the areas and periods at highest risks of vector pressure and further to support decision-making. He has collaborated in several projects funded by the NIH, EU-FP6/FP7 and H2020, ANR, Welcome Trust, PMI/USAID, French Ministry of Environment, Senegalese Ministry of Research, UNDP/World Bank/WHO etc.). As a WHO expert, he was deployed in more than 17 African countries for arboviral disease outbreaks investigation and/or risk assessment. He is currently author of more than 100 publications in peer-reviewed international journals. He has also supervised 7 PhD, 7 masters, and 9 Postdoc.
Claire Garros, PhD (1979) is a medical and veterinary entomologist at The French agricultural research and international cooperation organization working for the sustainable development of tropical and Mediterranean regions (Cirad), Montpellier, France. After studying biology and parasitology at the university, she obtained her PhD in Entomology from the University of Montpellier in 2005 with a work on the systematic and taxonomy of anopheline species in Southeast Asia. Then, she joined the University of California, Irvine as a post-doc followed by a second post-doc at the University of Louvain-La-Neuve, Belgium in 2007. When she started at Cirad, Montpellier in 2009 while the bluetongue and Schmallenberg viruses were touching Europe, her focus shifted towards studying the taxonomy and ecology of Culicoides biting midges. She also coordinated for 7 years the national surveillance network for Culicoides populations. In addition to national activities, she takes part in international networks and research projects related to vector-borne diseases in Europe and in Africa. From 2016 to 2019, she was localized in La Réunion Island, French territory in the Indian Ocean, where she developed research on mosquitoes and Culicoides for the whole south-west Indian Ocean region. Since 2020, she is the head of the Vector team at the joined unit ASTRE, Cirad, Montpellier, France. Today, she is leading the Entomology Group at the UMR ASTRE, Montpellier. The group is composed of 18 permanent researchers or technicians plus several PhD students based in France or overseas. The aim of the Entomology group is to investigate the role of insect vectors in virus transmission to understand how they determine the emergence, spread and persistence of virus outbreaks and how we might minimize the impact of vector-borne diseases. Claire has published more than 80 publications in peer-reviewed journals, and she is the author of 3 book chapters. She was the editor of the book "Pests and vector-borne diseases in the livestock industry", Wageningen Academic Publishers, published in 2018. She is a board member of the European Society of Vector Ecology association.
Jérémie Gilles, PhD

Director, Product Development & Supply
World Mosquito Program
France

Phone: +33-6-6525-4047
Email: jeremie.gilles @worldmosquito.org

Jérémie Gilles, PhD is a medical entomologist specializing in the bio-ecology and physiology of disease vectors such as Anopheles and Aedes mosquitoes. He has more than 20 years’ experience working on innovative methods to control mosquitoes, specializing in large-scale rearing and large-scale field implementation programs.
Anne Lavergne, PhD, HDR is a virologist who specializes in viral zoonoses and mechanisms of emergence. She has a PhD in population biology and ecology from the Université Montpellier II. Since 1999, she held different positions at the IPG (Institut Pasteur de la Guyane) working on the phylogeny of primates, genetic approaches for the management of a breeding colony of squirrel monkeys (Saimiri sciureus), an in vivo and in vitro model of P. falciparum rosetting. After a post-doctoral stay in 2003 at the Unité de Génétique des Maladies Infectieuses et Auto-Immunes at IPP, she joined the Laboratoire des interactions Virus-Hôtes for which she is the head since 2018. Since the same date, she is the head of the National Reference Center for Hantavirus, and deputy head of the NRC for arbovirus at the IPG. Her current interests focus on the role of wild mammals in the dynamics and emergence of viruses (Lyssavirus, Hantavirus and Arenavirus) by studying their prevalence and the relationship between infection and bioecological patterns of host species as well as the relationships between viral diversity and environment. She is also interested in the impact of environment on viral diversity using metagenomics approaches. In 2009, she earned her Habilitation à Diriger des Recherche at the Université des Antilles et de la Guyane. In 2015, she received the Robert Deschiens Prize from the Société de Pathologie Exotique for her work carried out on the identification of new viruses in wild rodents in French Guiana.
Petr Volf, PhD

Professor of Parasitology
Faculty of Science
Charles University
Vinicna 7
Prague 2, CZ 128 43
Czech Republic

Phone:  +420-22195-1815/ +420-725-840-969
Email:  volf@cesnet.cz

Petr Volf, PhD is Professor of Parasitology at the Charles University in Prague since 2003. He trained in Biology (MSc, 1986) and Parasitology (PhD, 1991) and has worked for over 30 years on medical entomology, biology of vectors of infectious diseases and parasite-vector-host interactions. He is internationally recognized as an expert in the biology and ecology of sand flies and sand fly-Leishmania relationship. His research activities are focused mainly on Leishmania development in sand fly midgut, immune response of hosts to sand fly bites, epidemiology of leishmaniases and other diseases transmitted by sand flies. Petr is the Head of the Laboratory for Vector Biology, presently constituted by one associate professor, three assistant professors, six post-doc assistants and seven PhD students, all on topics dealing with sand flies or sand fly-borne pathogens. The international projects of his team supported by EU (FP7, H2020, Horizon-Europe), EFSA, BMGF and MRC included the field work in various endemic areas of leishmaniases (Mediterranean countries, east Turkey, Caucasus region and Ethiopia) as well experiments with sand flies and rodents in the laboratory conditions. He established a unique collection of sand fly colonies and CL2 laboratory for sand fly experimental infections by Leishmania and phleboviruses. He has published over 240 per-reviewed articles registered on WoS, 8 reviews and 5 book chapters.
Charles Wondji, PhD

Executive Director
Centre of Research in Infectious Diseases (CRID)
LSTM Research Unit at CRID
Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
39 Rue Marcus Etoundi
P.O. Box 13591 Yaounde
Cameroon

Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellow
Vector Biology Department
Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
Pembroke Place, L3 5QA
UK

Email: charles.wondji@lstmed.ac.uk
Stéphan Zientara, DVM, PhD, HDR

Director of the Joint Research Unit in Virology
ANSES/INRAE/ENVA
Deputy Director of the ANSES-Animal Health Laboratory
14 rue Pierre et Marie Curie
94700 Maisons-Alfort
France
Phone: +33-6-8761-9859
Email: Stephan.Zientara@anses.fr

Stéphan Zientara, DVM, PhD, HDR was born on the 7th of April 1964 in Maisons-Laffitte (near Paris). He graduated as doctor in veterinary medicine in 1987 (Nantes veterinary school), in veterinary sciences (PhD) in 1995 (Nancy University) and HDR in 2001 (Lyon University). Stéphan Zientara is Director of the Joint Research unit 1161 in Virology ANSES/INRAE/ENVA. He is also Deputy Director of the Laboratory of Animal Health in Maisons-Alfort (France), Director of the European Union reference laboratory on equine diseases, Deputy Director of the European Union reference laboratory on Foot-and-Mouth disease and head of the OIE reference laboratory on EHDV. Stéphan Zientara is member of the expert committee for animal health at the French Food Safety Agency (Anses) and expert on animal health for international organizations such as WOAH (World organization for animal health), FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) and UE (European Commission) on viral diseases (African Horse Sickness, Foot-and-Mouth, Bluetongue, West Nile, …). He has participated in many EU grants. Zientara was elected in 2019 and 2021 as president of the scientific committee of the «Standing Technical Committee» of the FAO/European Union commission on the control of Foot-and-Mouth disease. He is expert for OIE on African horse sickness. His research interests cover several aspects of animal virology, especially the study of animal virus-host interactions and the evolution of viral populations through genetic recombination and reassortment in orbiviruses. He is author or co-author of more than 400 papers (292 publications in ISI web of Science (all databases), 141 in CABI (CAB abstracts and global health) (71 as first author), 293 in Scopus and 256 international publications in PubMed (2023).
FELLOWS

Hajer Aounallah
Institut Pasteur de Tunis
Department of Infectious Diseases
13, place Pasteur, B.P. 74
1002 Tunis, Belvedere
Tunisia
aounallahhajer@gmail.com

Najlaa Assaid
Institut Pasteur
Department of Infectious Diseases
1 Place Louis Pasteur
20250 Casablanca
Morocco
najlaa.essaid@gmail.com

Pavle Banović
Pasteur Institute Novi Sad
Department of Infectious Diseases
Hajduk Veljkova 1
21000 Novi Sad
Serbia
Pavle.banovic.mf@gmail.com

Ariunzaya Bat-Erdene
MNUMS University Hospital
Department of Infectious Diseases
Jamyan Street 3
976 Ulaanbaatar
Mongolia
ariunzaya.b@mnums.edu.mn

Fedwa Betka
University of Science and Technology Houari Boumediene (USTHB)
Department of Infectious Diseases
Bab Ezzouar
16024 Bab Ezzouar
Algeria
betka.fedwa@gmail.com
Alice Mets  
West Tallinn Central Hospital  
Department of Infectious Diseases  
Paldiski Mnt 66  
10614 Tallinn  
Estonia  
alicemets11@hotmail.com

Danijela Miljanovic  
Faculty of Medicine - University of Belgrade  
Department of Infectious Diseases  
Dr Subotica 1  
11030 Belgrade  
Serbia  
danjela.karalic@med.bg.ac.rs

Leticia Navarro  
Sciensano  
Department of Infectious Diseases  
99 Groeselenberg Street  
1180 Uccle  
Belgium  
leticia.navarro@sciensano.be

Thi Thanh Thao Nguyen  
Pasteur Institute in Ho Chi Minh City  
Department of Infectious Diseases  
167 Pasteur, District 3  
700000 Ho Chi Minh City  
Viet Nam  
nguyenthaoytcc@gmail.com

Temitope Ojo  
Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex  
Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
Ilesa Road  
220212 Ile Ife  
Nigeria  
linktopeojo@yahoo.com

Angela Paraschiv  
State University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Nicolaie Testemițanu"  
Department of Infectious Diseases  
165 Bulevardul Ștefan cel Mare și Sfint  
2004 Chișinău  
Moldova  
angela.paraschiv@usmf.md
Anna Piddubna
Clinical Center of Socially Dangerous Diseases
Department of Infectious Diseases
43, Kylikivska Street
40000 Sumy
Ukraine
piddubnaa346@gmail.com

Knarik Sargsyan
YSMU
Department of Infectious Diseases
153 A. Armenakyan
0047 Yerevan
Armenia
knariksargsyan7@gmail.com

Anna Shin
Rakhat
Department of Infectious Diseases
Al-Farabi str, 71
050040 Almaty
Kazakhstan
annashin86@gmail.com

Arnela Smriko Nuhanovic
Medical Diagnostics and Treatment Center
Department of Infectious Diseases
Treće Tuzlanske Brigade 7
75000 Tuzla
Bosnia and Herzegovina
asmriko@hotmail.com

Mario Sviben
Croatian National Institute of Public Health
Department of Infectious Diseases
Rockefellerova 7
10000 Zagreb
Croatia
mario.sviben@hzjz.hr

Gabrielle Trozzi
Sciensano
Department of Infectious Diseases
99 Groeselenberg Street
1180 Brussels
Belgium
gabrielle.trozzi@sciensano.be
Marine Viglietta
Institut Pasteur
Department of Infectious Diseases
25-28 Rue du Dr. Roux
75015 Paris
France
marine.viglietta@pasteur.fr

Arjana Zerja
University of Medicine Tirana
Department of Infectious Diseases
Rruga e Dibrës 372
1000 Tirana
Albania
zerja.arjana@gmail.com
"I am always happy to contribute to the knowledge of vector-borne diseases for OMI fellows. Having 31 fellows from 25 countries was an incredible chance for me, a scientist who has dedicated my career to vector-borne diseases, to help all disciplines better understand their functioning and to design control measures. In a changing world that faces growing epidemic episodes associated with globalization and aggravated by climate change, it is very timely to train the scientists of the future."

Anna-Bella Failloux, PhD
Vector-Borne Diseases
OMI VOICES

“Petr Volf gave us a state-of-the-art lecture on sandflies and leishmaniasis. It was great input for my practice back in Ethiopia, as there are several cases of leishmaniasis under my care.”

Anonymous, OMI fellow from Ethiopia

“This course has undoubtedly strengthened and broadened my knowledge base as a mosquito vector biologist by taking me out of my comfort zone. I can now better align my research questions with the one health concept, which will become more important given climate change. I cannot be grateful enough for the knowledge I have gained from this learning experience and perspective exchange.”

Cassandra Koh, OMI fellow from France

“I had been eagerly anticipating the opportunity to meet with Sarah Bonnet, an expert in ticks and tick-borne pathogens. Her lecture was nothing short of amazing, and I gleaned a wealth of knowledge from her insights.”

Hayra Aounallah, OMI fellow from Tunisia
“The roundtable discussion about protecting biodiversity to prevent new emerging infectious diseases was truly riveting. I loved hearing the different opinions and viewpoints of people from 25 different countries. The intense but civil discussion was a valuable experience to broaden our frame of thinking when approaching problems concerning global health.”

Hennel Balazs Palko
OMI Fellow from Hungary

“Stephan Zientara presented on the West Nile Virus, which is very interesting for me since it is the virus that I work with.”

Najla Abord
OMI Fellow from Morocco
Salzburg Stiftung der AAF
Schloss Arenberg
Arenbergstrasse 10
5020 Salzburg | Austria

+43 662 640 101

seminars@openmedicalinstitute.org

www.openmedicalinstitute.org

www.openmedicalinstitute.org/news

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