

11-13th June 2013 - Reunion island  
NORDEV Congress Center in Saint-Denis

# Press Folder



## 1<sup>st</sup> International Forum Public Health Watch and Response in island territories Surveillance, Investigation and Vector Control strategies

[www.forum-veille-sanitaire-oi.org](http://www.forum-veille-sanitaire-oi.org)



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## Press contacts

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## Health watch and response in insular territories : issues and perspectives

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**The Indian Ocean Committee (IOC), ARS-IOC and CIRE OCEAN INDIEN, sponsored financially by the AFD, will be organizing the 1st international Forum « Health Watch and Response in Insular Territories » from the 11th to the 13th June 2013 at the Nordev Congress Centre in Saint-Denis, Reunion Island**

This event is proposed to meet the need of insular territories to exchange and share strategies of health surveillance and response to be applied in particularly sensitive epidemiological contexts.

Indeed, insular territories are particularly at danger from the emergence of infectious diseases, caused mainly by the increase in the traffic of goods and passengers between these territories. However, the presence in or the colonisation of the territories by virulent strains of vectors (such as the Tiger Mosquito *Aedes albopictus*), the change in the environment ; urbanization, and even climatic change are also contributing factors.

Some of these diseases are well known in our territories. In the past, they have caused dramatic epidemics (outbreaks of Dengue Fever and Chikungunya) and even today they still present a very serious epidemic risk.

Other diseases have become the centre of specific interest and media coverage because of their epidemic potential (Influenza H7N9, new Coronavirus, ..).

Finally, other diseases, as yet not commonly known but present in the world, are capable of invading our islands at any moment (Sindbis virus, Wesselsbron, Nipah, Zika, West Nile, Japanese Encephalitis, ..)

To meet this major challenge of public health, surveillance systems of greater and greater precision are being set up in the territories to assure early detection of any health threat for the population. These systems are reinforced by networks on line, enabling countries to exchange information and epidemiological data as soon as it is processed.

Early detection of a threat is essential to find the most effective response possible : preventive measures for the population, vaccinations, vector control.

Finally, a fair number of these emerging diseases are zoonoses (communicable from animals to man and vice versa). This observation makes it necessary today to reinforce the collaboration between human health, animal health and the management of the environment, within a new concept called « One Health ».



# 1<sup>st</sup> International Forum Public Health Watch and Response in island territories

*Surveillance, Investigation and Vector Control strategies*

**All these topics, among others, will be pursued during this 1st international forum : Health Watch and Response in Insular Territories**



## The SEGA network at the centre of the Health Watch Program in the Indian Ocean.

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The Chikungunya epidemic, which affected hundreds of thousands of people in the area between 2005 and 2006, came as a revelation to the IOC countries' members (Union of the Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, France, and Seychelles). Had they been better informed, they would have been able to apprehend and limit the impact of the disease.

Infectious diseases, which can have tragic economic and social consequences on the population, spread very rapidly from one island to another. As the health risks are the same for all the countries in this area, the response should apply to the whole region.

The Ministry of Health of the IOC, aware of these issues, has committed itself to share a common network of public disease surveillance services, in order to develop a dynamic health watch and to reinforce its actions. SEGA (Disease Surveillance & Alerts) as the project has been baptised works along 3 main lines :

- Setting up a common network on line for the Health Representatives to enable them to share tools, and experience to communicate health information and to decide on a management program and the common tools to be used.
- Reinforcing a health watch to keep under control the epidemiology of diseases. This involves detecting potential threats in the Indian Ocean, calculating their risk factor and identifying the most vulnerable sector of the population to facilitate their protection.
- Initiating a course in epidemiological action to reinforce national and regional competences in the prevention and control of epidemics.

4 years on, the SEGA network is today well organised with a clear strategy. The aim now is to make this network into a more ambitious public health program, where doctors, veterinary surgeons, biologists, entomologists and environmental experts will all work together.

The plan is to integrate, by 2013, regional areas of surveillance and alert expertise into public and veterinary health. By 2017, a new unity of Health Watch will be set up to work permanently within the IOC with the help of regional experts. This will become the base of a future regional Public Health Department.



## Anti-vectorial control, a vital response to a permanent vectorial threat

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The Chikungunya epidemic of 2005-2006 in the Indian Ocean and the recurrent Dengue Fever epidemics in the Caribbean, all show the importance of having a permanent, efficient and specific anti-vectorial control in the tropical insular territories. This anti-vectorial control is vital for our territories to cope, not only with the permanent epidemic risks of Dengue Fever, Chikungunya or Malaria, but also with that of numerous other viral threats transmitted by vector insects, notably mosquitos.

Anti-vectorial control is often wrongly seen as being restricted to insecticidal control. In fact, it covers a wide range of means of actions including entomological surveillance, control of larvae and also social awareness. This last point is vital as the population must be implicated in the regular destruction of larvae nests and in the protection against mosquito bites.

New situations are emerging which hinder anti-vectorial control actions : for example, the phenomenon of resistance to insecticides, the restrictions on the number of molecules allowed, a growing awareness of the non-intentional side effects of insecticides and even changes in human behaviour.

It has, therefore become necessary to develop the strategies and techniques of anti-vectorial control to adapt to these new constraints and threats.

One of the newest technological innovations, invented as an alternative to chemical control is that of the technique of sterile insects (TIS), now being researched in Reunion Island and in the Indian Ocean.

This first International Forum « **Health Watch and Response in Insular Territories** » will be the **occasion to exchange strategies and courses of action as well as new developing technologies in anti-vectorial control in insular territories.**



## The aims of the Forum

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For this 1st International Forum, scientists and decision-makers from all over the world, have been invited to share their knowledge and experience with others within the territories.

The main objective of the forum is to permit an exchange of experience, of means, of results in the field of health watch, alert, investigation, anti-vectorial control and relevant research projects in tropical territories and insular countries, particularly those of the Carribean, the Indian and the Pacific Ocean.

## What are the organisers' ambitions ?

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**Loïc Flachet, Coordinator of the RSIE project IOC**

« The SEGA project owes its existence and coordination to the team working for the Health Watch Unity of the IOC, the very kinpin of the project. The Forum will provide an opportunity for the representatives from the different territories to get together. The experience of our counterparts in the Pacific (the South Pacific Community Secretariat was created in 1947 and is composed of 22 countries and island territories) will be unvaluable to the Indian Ocean Committee in the establishment of a permanent Health Watch Department (organisation, financial provision, relations with its sponsors). Our Pacific counterparts are particularly interested in our program of training operative epedemiologists which they would like to see implemented in their own regions.»

**Dominique Polycarpe, Director of Health and Security Watch, ARS-OI**

« The Forum is a unique occasion to bring together the partners and experts of health watch and anti-vectorial control in the Pacific, the Carribean and the Indian Ocean, in order to share their experience and exploit their skills to help those populations confronted with health threats. It is also a great moment for the SEGA network, which has successfully brought together the skills and expertise of the islands of the Indian Ocean, when it can communicate and exchange experience with other networks. As a partner of the SEGA network, ARS OI has been actively implicated within it, finding the necessary expertise to strengthen its ability to detect and respond to the health threats in the countries of this area. Of great momentum is also the fact that ARS OI has invited the ARS OI and health services of countries sharing the same health problems. Health and security surveillance watch is a vital issue for ARS OI fully implicated in the organisation and financing of this Forum with the support of the French Ministry of Health. During this Forum, not only will scientists be able to confer together, but the decision makers, on whom depends the implication of measures to be taken



in the face of an epidemic, will be playing their role too ! The ambitions of this Forum remain, then, to strengthen the combined efforts of the staff and experts of the health watch, be it in human or veterinary health, in anti-vectorial control, or in active research. This pluridisciplinary, international and collective expertise can then benefit populations needing it

**Laurent Filleul, Representative of the CIRE OCEAN INDIEN, InVS**

« Two to the assignments of the Institute of Health Watch are to calculate health risks and detect any threats for the population. In addition to the daily activity of the health watch conducted by the CIRE O.I by means of its surveillance systems and its networks of local partnership, the SEGA network has been made a profitable contribution to our work.

It was, in fact, during the Influenza pandemic of 2009 that the SEGA network became a recognised operational organisation. In every country concerned the Surveillance systems provided information enabling the mobilisation of the different services necessary in that exceptional health situation. Today, confronted with new threats (notably the H7N9 Influenza, which, as OMS stresses, in a recent report, carries the potential risk of transmission from man to man), it is vital that this network should become known outside the Indian Ocean area, since viruses, as we all know, do not respect frontiers. This is the main ambition of this first International Forum organised in Reunion Island.

It will also give us the opportunity of sharing our experience and, our epidemiological tools and of forming new partnerships to ensure an optimal health watch ready to respond to the emergence of diseases »

## **The opinion of AFD, a financial sponsor of the event.**

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**Christophe Paquet, Head of project at the Health and Social Protection Dept. Of AFD**

«AFD has been financing the development of the SEGA network ever since its creation in 2008. Today, not only is this network of prime importance in the field of surveillance and epidemiological control, it is also a promoter of regional cooperation between specialised organisations in France and neighbouring countries.

The objective of this 1st Forum is to ensure this valid experience is shared with others. For AFD, who also finance other health projects in the Comoros and in Madagascar, it provides an opportunity to encourage exchanges between the key figures in health concerns in the Indian Ocean »



## The organisation of the Forum

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The International Forum will take place in the Nordev Congress Centre in St Denis from the 11th to the 13th of June. During these 3 days, participants will contribute on different themes in the form of open meetings, accompanied by scientific posters. The topics presented will be at the same time varied and of an exceptional scientific level, encouraging animated discussion, and a fruitful exchange of experience.

Over the last few months, a scientific committee of 32 experts has selected nearly 70 oral presentations in French and in English and about 60 posters. About 300 participants are expected.

The papers to be presented deal with different topics :

- the surveillance network in insular territories
- Surveillance, alert, response : the contribution of the network ?
- E-Health tools for surveillance and watch in insular territories.
- Specific/non specific surveillance : from informing to action
- Watch and surveillance of vectorborne diseases and zoonoses
- Entomological surveillance
- Innovations and new technology in anti-vectorial control
- Prevention and control of vectorborne diseases and zoonoses
- Response study and epidemic management

The oral presentations will be grouped by theme in open sessions in the morning and 2 panel sessions in the afternoon.

A series of scientific posters, displayed in a special areas will accompany the presentations



## International experts attending the event

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This first Forum Health Watch and Response in Insular Territories is a international event with numerous territories present (The Carribean, the Pacific, the Indian Ocean), among the furthest of which, and therefore rarely represented in scientific meetings in the Indian Ocean, can be found the Fiji islands, the Salomon islands, the Sanoa islands, Micronesia, Cuba, etc...

Among the numerous topics, all equally exciting, can be noted, the surveillance networks set up in the Indian Ocean, the Pacific and the Carribean and their main results, E-Health type surveillance projects based on new internet and computer technology, projects of surveillance prevention and control in the territories (Malaria, tuberculosis, leptospirosis, vectorborne diseases ), results of research into epidemic outbreaks (plague and hemorrhagic fever in Madagascar, food poisoning the Comores), the latest innovations in anti-vectorial control, etc...

Here are some of the great international experts who will attend this event :

- **Doctor Patrick Bastiansen**, in charge of the OIE program, the World organisation for Animal Health, will be presenting the concept « One Health », sustained by 6 international organisations, banks and ISC (Influenza Surveillance Coordination). This concept proposes an international and interdisciplinary approach for the surveillance, the follow-up, the prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases.
- **Doctor Sylvie Briand**, Head of the department of pandemics and epidemics at OMS Geneva. She will give us the latest data on the H7N9 Influenza virus from which China is currently suffering, on the new coronavirus which concerns the Middle East and of them becoming an International risk. She will remind us of what is to be learnt from the last H1N1 pandemic as regards risk and response evaluation. Finally she will inform us about the new international instruments, already in place for any global emergency.
- **Doctor Mike Ryan**, professor of International Health at the Institute of Public Health of Dublin University. He will be talking on emerging and zoonotic diseases in the insular context, particularly on water and foodborne diseases, on environmental change and resistance to antibiotics.
- **Doctor Didier Fontenille**, director of the National Centre of Vector Expertise. He will talk about the problems of anti-vectorial control on an international level, about what is currently known of the biology of vectors, the latest developments in research on the new technology in prevention and control of vectors, and what can be expected in the development of new tactics of control particularly adapted to insular territories.



## Presentation of the different organisations

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### The Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

The Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) is an intergovernmental organisation created in 1982 in Port Louis (Mauritius), and institutionalised in 1984 by the Victoria Agreement (Seychelles). 5 countries of the Indian Ocean area belong to it (Union of the Comoros, France/Reunion Island, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles). Its main purpose is to consolidate the bonds of friendship and solidarity between the people of the Indian Ocean and to draw up regional long term projects which will protect and improve their living conditions, and preserve the natural resources they are so dependant on. The CIO is unique in that it is the only African regional organisation to be composed exclusively of islands, and as such, is a defender of their interests on the regional and international level, promoting a more secure, long term development. As regards health matters, the IOC is in a prime position to reinforce cooperation. It role is to promote mutual resources and manpower, the exchange of information, skills and practical experience so as to significantly reduce the health risks to which the inhabitants of the region covered by the IOC are exposed

**Find more information on:** <http://www.coi-ioc.org>

### Agence de Santé de l'Océan Indien (ARS), Representative of French Ministry of Health

As one of the 25 other Regional Health Agencies created on the 1st of April 2010, in accordance with the HPST law, the Indian Ocean Agency decides on and engages in a regional health strategy according to national policy and with the team of health workers. Each island has its own base manned by a health team and backed by the Department of Health ans Security Watch, coordinating with its local National Health Watch Institute, the Indian Ocean CIRE, to detect any outbreaks presenting a real or potential risk for human health. The base coordinates response action to alert situations in an attempt to predict and check the spread of disease on a local and international level. The ARS OI is also reponsible for the implication of tactics of surveillance, prevention and control of mosquito vectors using the anti-vectorial control services, present on the two islands.

**Find more information on :** <http://www.ars.ocean-indien.sante.fr>



## **L'Institut de Veille Sanitaire (InVS)**

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, the Institute, a public institution works on assignments of surveillance, vigilance and alert, in all fields of human health. The InVS was originally created in accordance with the law of 19th July 1998 concerning the reinforcement of health security measures relative to products for human use. On 9th August 2004, the InVS was given more responsibility by a new law of Public Health Security, to respond to the new issues arising from recent health crises and emerging risks.

Its assignments are :

- the surveillance and permanent observation of the state of health of the population
- health watch and vigilance
- health alert
- management of situations of health crises

The CIRE CIO is behind any assignments conducted by the InVS in the Indian Ocean.

**Find more information on [http:// www.invs.sante.fr](http://www.invs.sante.fr)**

## **L'Agence Française de Développement (AFD)**

The AFD has been working in the fight against poverty and for development in the countries of the South and Overseas for the last 70 years as a public department in the French Plan of Cooperation. By means of subventions, loans, guarantee funds and contracts and the development of debt recovery contracts, the Agency is able to finance different projects, programs and studies and help its partners in the South to have stronger resources. The main field of action of the Agency in the health sector is the improvement of mother and child health, but it is also active in preserving health security considered today as a worldwide public benefit.

**Find more information on: <http://www.afd.fr>**