



20.10.2023

African swine fever EUVET mission to SWEDEN

(20-22 September 2023)

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Terms of Reference

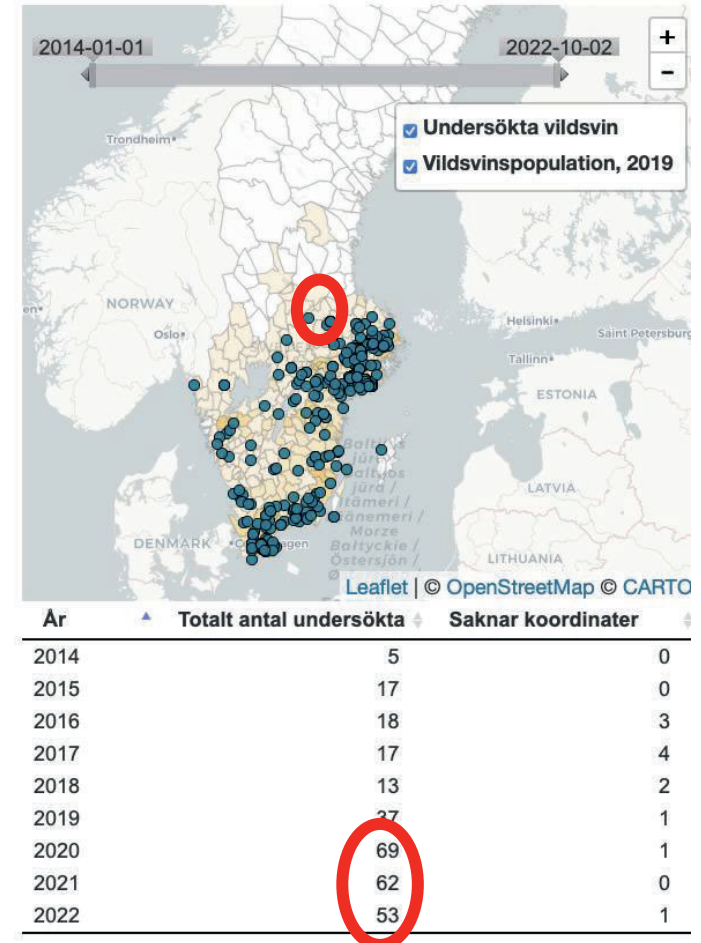
- 1. The experts should provide scientific, technical, managerial and practical assistance on the spot on the refinement of the most suitable control and eradication measures for African swine fever (ASF) under local conditions, especially as regards preparedness, surveillance, coordination efforts and eradication in wild boar, and preparedness and surveillance in domestic pigs.*
- 2. The experts should report exclusively to the Commission services and the authorities of Sweden. Continuous contact should be guaranteed between the team, the Commission services and authorities of Sweden.*
- 3. The experts should provide a written report with conclusions and recommendations aimed to the competent authority. A report to the Commission and the Member States in the framework of the Standing Committee on Plant, Animal, Food and Feed should be delivered.*
- 4. The experts shall operate under the provisions laid down in Commission Decision 2007/142/EC and based on the standard rules of procedure for groups of experts.*

Preparedness

Sweden has established an **early detection system** for ASF by organising a nationwide **passive surveillance system**.

A **risk analysis** revealed a higher probability of both introduction and spread of the virus in the southernmost area of the country (higher presence of domestic pigs and wild boars)

During the period 1.1.22-31.12.22 **53 carcasses** have been reported out of 130.000 hunted wild boars. According to EFSA standards- about 100 deaths/year should be reported.



Virus detection

25.08.2023, 2 dead wild boars were seen in the municipality of **Fagersta**;

27.08.23 another dead animal was reported at the same location and samples were taken (long bones);

06.09.2023, the animals tested positive for ASF by PCR.

07.09.2023 in total 7 animals had been found in the same area

07.09.2023, an infected zone was established

09.09.2023, an active search for carcasses was initiated

19.09.2023 - 47 wild boar carcasses were found, of which 36 tested positive for ASF (77%). 11 were tested negative;

The positive animals were mainly found close to a **waste collection centre** in the municipality of Fagersta.

Fagersta wild boar population: abundance and management

The **size** of the resident wild boar population has **increased** in the last 10 years due to the availability of food in the waste collection centre;

During the later years the availability of food has been reduced following the sorting and separation of compostable material.

Wild boars are **regularly fed** in the area (**sustaining feeding**) because - at these latitudes - the species is at the northern limit of its distribution range and would probably not be permanently present if not artificially fed.

Currently - in the entire infected zone including the Core Area – the population is estimated to **500-1000 wild boars in the pre-breeding season (0.5-1 head/km²)**.



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Affected area and main measures

Core area: 98 km² where all infected animals were identified. It is inhabited by about 100-200 wild boars and defined by artificial (roads) and natural (lakes and rivers) barriers.

Infected zone: 993 km² (including 98 km² of the core area) defined by considering the spatial continuity of the wild boar population and composed of 500-1000 wild boars (pre-reproduction estimate).

Surveillance area: is not yet fully defined but - as of the time of the mission - of about **5000 km²**.

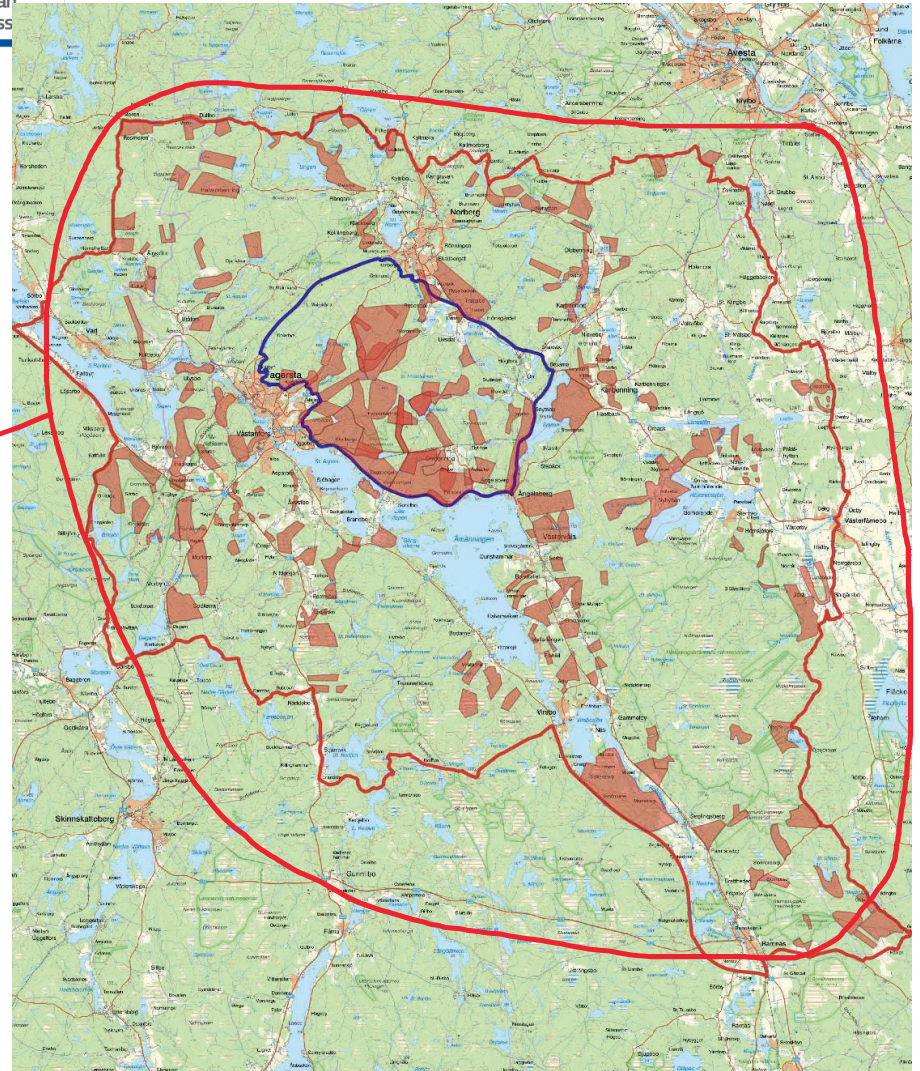
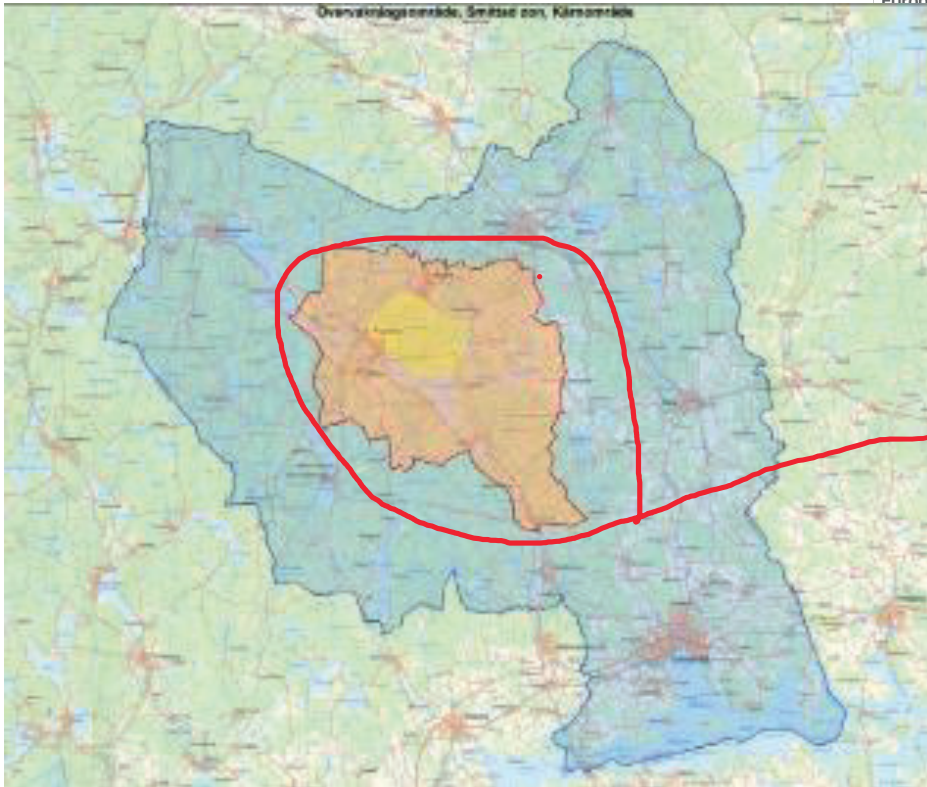
In all of the infected zone, all activities (hunting, mushroom picking, logging, dog walking, sports activities) have been temporarily suspended to minimise the possible mechanical transport of the virus outside the infected area.

Passive surveillance

After identification of the index case, an **active search for carcasses** around the positive spot was planned and implemented.

The search is organised voluntarily by local hunters (to date at approximately **550 hunters have been registered** for this task) under the coordination of the SVA and the district head of the hunting association in collaboration with the local disease control centre. The hunters are paid approx. 30 euro/hour for their active search.

At the time of the mission about half of the Core Area has been investigated as well as 1/10 of the remaining Infected zone.



Sampling and storage of wild boars found dead

A **specific collection centre has been built** and located inside the core area.

Special tents have been set up in a clearing on the property to carry out sampling on dead animals;

The **area is equipped** with electrification and the necessary facilities such as refrigerator-containers, incineration plant, toilets with showers, etc.

The functionality of the facility is considered of a **high technical level** and certainly provides the necessary biosecurity levels for carcass sampling and storage operations.



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Domestic pig population

There were six farms in the infected area with a total of 60 pigs that were immediately culled.

Diagnostic capacity of ASF

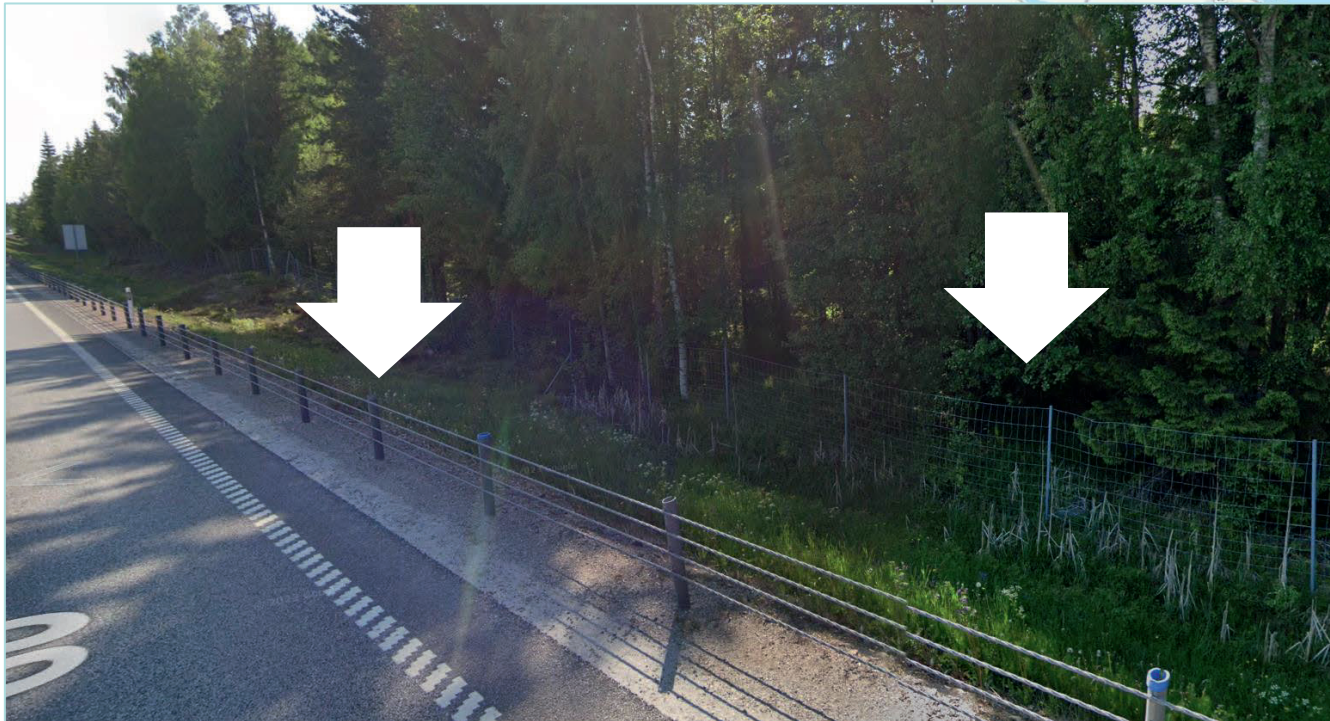
The diagnostic capacity is excellent and does not represent any obstacle for the management of the infection.

Priority actions (as defined on 22 September 2023)

- a. **Active search for carcasses** should be completed within **two weeks**
- b. **Fence off** the north-eastern perimeter of the **Core Area**; The executive design and construction of the fencing should ideally be completed by **mid-January**. An electric fence could temporarily enclose the viral circulation area.
- c. **Traps** can be set up on the immediate **outside of the Core Area**. Trapping can begin as soon as the fencing is completed.
- d. When fencing is completed, **trapping of animals** in the infected area outside the Core Area can begin; **all methods of individual hunting** can be used, including attractive baiting, cameras, etc. etc.
- e. **Active search for carcasses** throughout the Core Area should be **again** conducted at the end of **October/beginning of November**;
- f. At the latest by **15 January** the fencing and traps on the edges of the Core Area will be completed.
- g. **From 15 to 20 January** evaluation/adjustment of the strategy;



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Until 15 January ban all activities in the Core Area (including the culling of specific wild boar individuals).

Only activities of **economic importance may be authorised** in the infected zone, in each case following the biosecurity requirements provided by the SBA.

All normal **activities may be carried out** in the surveillance area.

Fences around the core area: **only metal fences**;

Suspend the wild boar sustaining feeding within the Core Area; some controlled baiting sites can be maintained for trapping within the core area, where relevant.

Constantly check the **willingness of hunters** to participate and, if necessary, to find alternative professionals who can guarantee the continuation of the planned actions.

Biosecurity measures to be maintained during all wild boar culling and trapping operations;

Include **road killed wild boars** in the surveillance activities;

Awareness in farmers and hunters and in the general public.

Pig sector:

Biosecurity measures plus specific surveillance (i.e. 2 dead animals per week/farm);

Check the culling capacity of domestic pigs against the average herd size in Sweden;

Check disposal capacities, availability of rendering plants and, if necessary, check for alternatives.

Final remark: The working atmosphere during the mission was very positive. Swedish colleagues provided all their support and assistance to facilitate a fruitful mission.

The EUVET team would like to thank all Swedish colleagues for their support and help. All requested information and explanations were promptly received by the team.