



# Mission of the EU Veterinary Emergency Team (EUVET) to France

(17-19 October 2018)

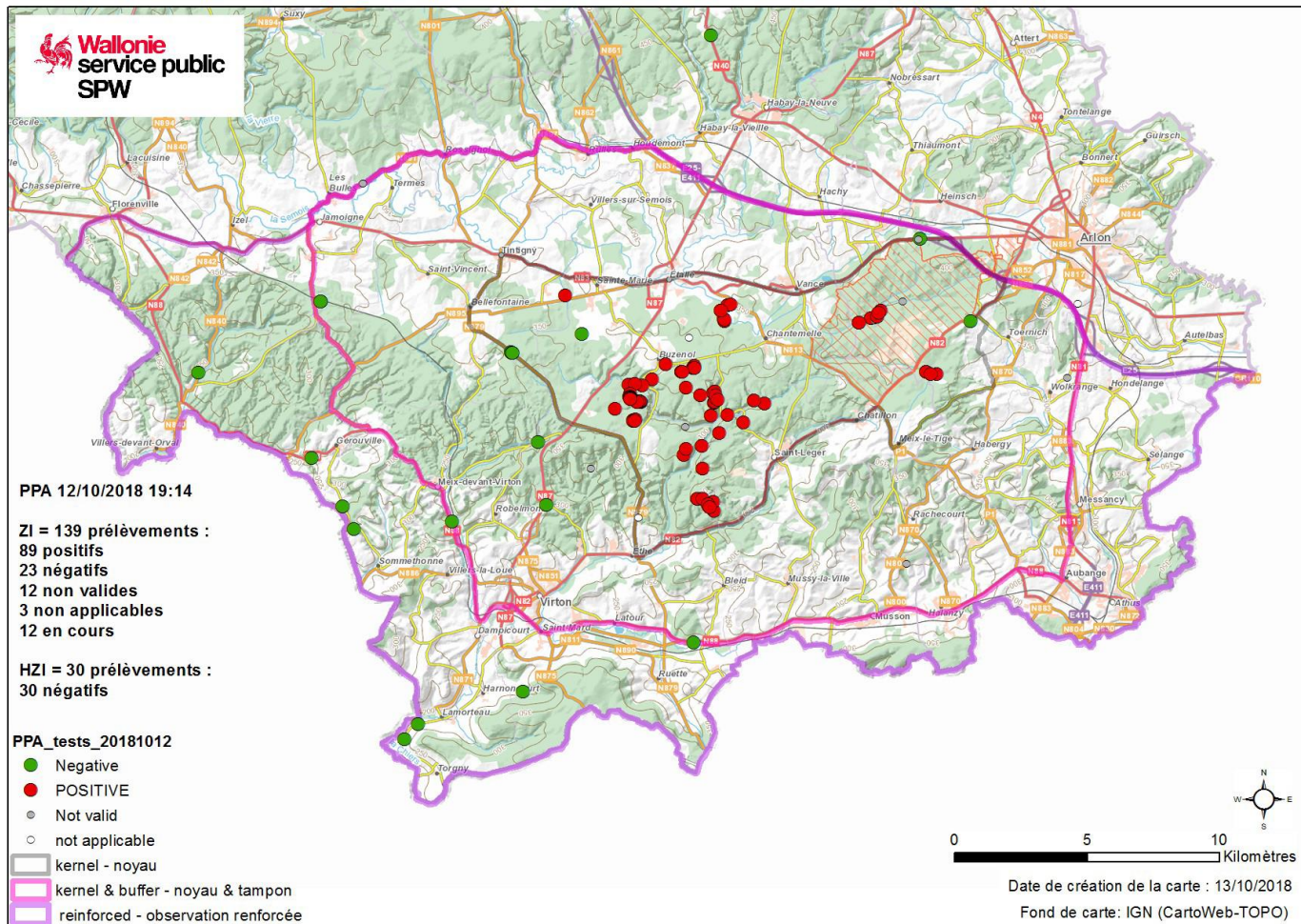
PAFF Committee, 23rd November 2018

# Objective

**Reason:** On 13th September 2018 ASF was confirmed in wild boar in southeast of Belgium in the forest of Etalle municipality, about 20 to 40 kilometres away from the border to Luxemburg and France.

**ToR: Provide assistance,** provide scientific, technical, managerial and practical assistance on-the-spot on the refinement of the most suitable measures for African Swine Fever (ASF) under local conditions, **especially as regards preparedness, surveillance and coordination efforts.**

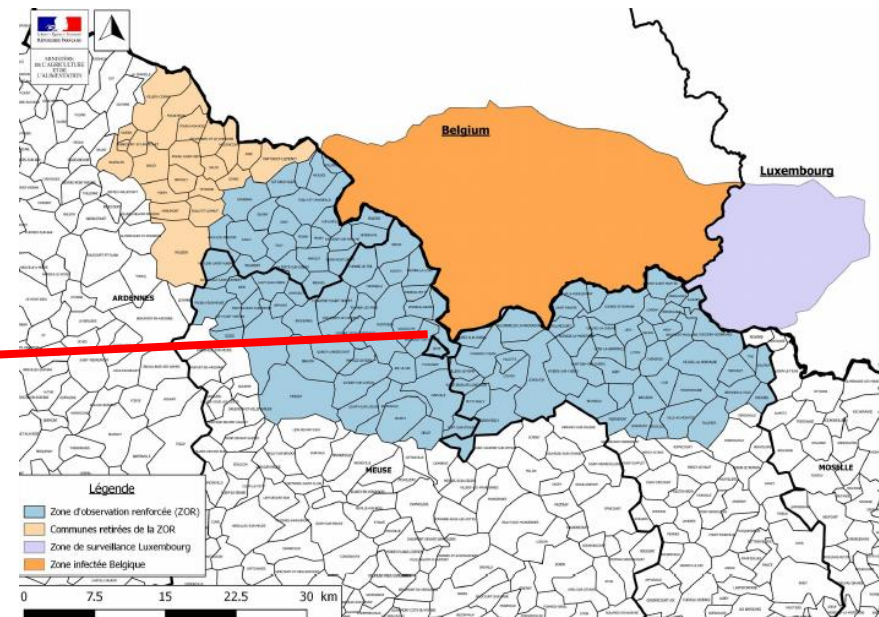
# Background



# Findings

## Actions taken by French authorities:

- When mid-September the disease was notified in Belgium the French authorities started also disease control measures at the border to Belgium due to the close vicinity to the places where positive carcasses were found in South of Belgium.
- The districts of Ardennes, Meuse, Meurthe-et-Moselle and Moselle were involved in the disease control and surveillance measures.



# Findings

## **Actions taken by French authorities:**

Initially, it was not clear how large the ASF infected area in Belgium might be. It was not possible to exclude that neighboring regions in France are free of ASF.

**Initial measures for one month** – similar to those in Belgium in the core and buffer areas (no hunting, no feeding, no forest work activities, etc.).

# Findings

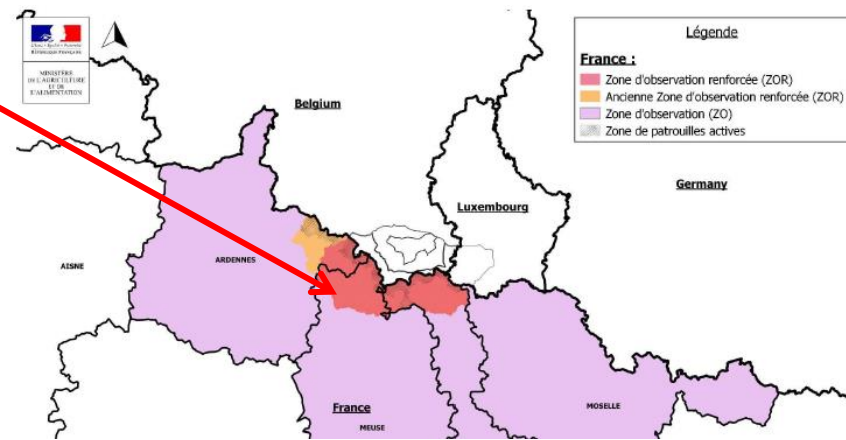
## Actions taken by French authorities:

### Measures in high risk areas:

- All wild boar found dead including the road accidents have to be collected and tested.
- Active search for carcasses by professional hunters and rangers (hunters/ranger patrols on the voluntary basis);
- A public awareness campaign was started: „do not touch call us“;
- A crisis telephone number for the general public was launched;
- An electric fence was started to be erected at the border to Belgium by the hunter`s association.

**16 carcasses found in high risk areas during one month – all tested negative!**

The main scope of these measures was to early detect ASF and to prevent ASF introduction from Belgium to France.









# Findings

## The fence and wild boar





# Conclusions and recommendations (1) (wild boar)

- The region in North of France bordering the ASF restricted areas in Belgium has, from an epidemiological point of view, the same status and quality as the regions outside the core and buffer areas in Belgium.



- ASF measures conducted in Belgium outside the core and buffer areas (that is the bordering area to France) and the area in France on the other side of the border should be synchronized with neighboring countries and be the same.
- Two main activities are recommended on both sides of the border in that particular area:
  - (i) intensive search of carcasses (enforced passive surveillance) to enable an early detection of ASF;
  - (ii) effective reduction of the wild boar population (incl., female hunting).

## Conclusions and recommendations (2) (wild boar)

- Currently established system that is based on active carcass search by **voluntary** patrols (hunters/rangers) **should be replaced by permanent and trustable system**. Incentives should be considered to persons involved to increase their motivation. Passive surveillance has to be constantly carried out not only within the restricted areas but also in the rest of France.
- Involved **hunters should be informed** about procedures to reduce the possible spread of the virus; **carcasses have to be properly reported, sampled, collected and disposed**. Sampling should be done by an authorized veterinarian.
- Introduction of **feed ban is recommended** in the areas where measures are applied.

# Conclusions and recommendations (domestic pigs)

- A **census of holdings and pigs** in the areas at risk has to be carried out (updating the database);
- **Enhanced passive surveillance**: each dead adult pig (post weaned) and at least 2 dead piglets per week within an epidemiological unit (e.g. stable) have to be tested for ASF irrespectively of the suspected cause of death;
- **Reinforcement of the biosecurity measures in the domestic pig farms including backyards**. The whole biosecurity procedures have to be revised considering the high risk posed by potentially infected wild boar. The Competent Veterinary Authorities should check farm biosecurity regularly.



# Conclusions and recommendations (general awareness)

**Awareness** has to be enforced for the **main stakeholders**:

- **General public** should be aware of the risk of further spreading of the virus. The affected area is a recreational area with many people visiting the forest;
- Recreational, cultural and sport activities should be limited considering the risk of ASF;
- Information campaigns with **hunters** are essential focusing on the necessity of reporting dead wild boar, reasons to ban hunting or enforce hunting, understanding the control strategies; compliance with biosecurity measures during culling and hunting activities;
- **Farmers** (commercial and not commercial) should report suspect cases, increase their biosecurity measures at farm;
- **Private veterinarians**: prompt actions to be taken in case of suspects (including sampling and lab testing).



**Thank you for your attention!**