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Pathogen Detection Through Wildlife Mortality Surveillance in Taï National Park, Côte d'Ivoire

Inhalt

Global health and biodiversity conservation face increasing threats, with the emergence of infectious diseases posing a critical challenge. Especially regions of high biodiversity are thought to harbour numerous known and novel pathogens. Carcass monitoring of wildlife populations in these regions, combined with advanced diagnostic techniques, provide an opportunity to gain deeper insights into the pathogens present, their impact on wildlife mortality, and the broader implications for ecosystem and global health.

As one of West Africa's last major biodiversity hotspots, the tropical rainforest of Taï National Park, Côte d'Ivoire, provides a unique setting for long-term wildlife health surveillance and pathogen detection. Since 2002, veterinarians at the Taï Chimpanzee Project (TCP) have performed necropsies on all carcasses found within the study area. On site veterinary staff conduct comprehensive pathological assessments and collect biological samples from each reported case. To date, more than 450 necropsies and 14,000 biological samples have been added to the TCP necropsy collection. Here, we present the RNASeq workflow used for pathogen detection and highlight infections of rainforest anthrax (caused by *Bacillus cereus* biovar *anthracis*) and monkeypox virus in wildlife of Taï National Park.

Keywords

Emerging infectious diseases; RNASeq; wildlife disease; monkeypox virus; rainforest anthrax

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209

Professional Status of the Speaker

PhD Student

Junior Scientist Status

Yes, I am a Junior Scientist.

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