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ANTIZOONS - Cascading effects of climate-induced forest conversion on zoonotic pathogens in mammals

Inhalt

Forest ecosystems provide habitat for numerous wildlife reservoirs of zoonotic pathogens and are currently undergoing profound changes: The consequences of climate change—such as droughts, storms, and pest infestations—are causing widespread damage and require large-scale reforestation efforts using tree species that can withstand future climatic conditions. These habitat changes are likely to influence the interaction between environmental conditions, wildlife reservoirs, and zoonotic pathogens to an unprecedented extent.

The aim of the collaborative ANTIZOONS project is to investigate the cascading effects of climate change-induced forest conversion on wildlife reservoirs and zoonotic pathogens. At 21 forest restoration sites in Hesse, which differ in their tree species composition, the habitat characteristics, the diversity and composition of the mammal community, and their zoonotic pathogens are being studied using an interdisciplinary approach. Changes in the composition of diets and gut microbiomes will be addressed as possible mediating mechanisms between forest conversion, infection status of wildlife and infection risk of the human population. As some of the most important reservoirs for zoonotic pathogens are also major forest pests, the ANTIZOONS project also serves to optimize forest pest management and thus support plant protection efforts as part of the planned large-scale forest conversion measures.

Keywords

Zoonotic pathogens, wildlife, small mammals, rodents, forest conversion, biodiversity, climate change

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Postdoc

Junior Scientist Status

No, I am not a Junior Scientist.

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