



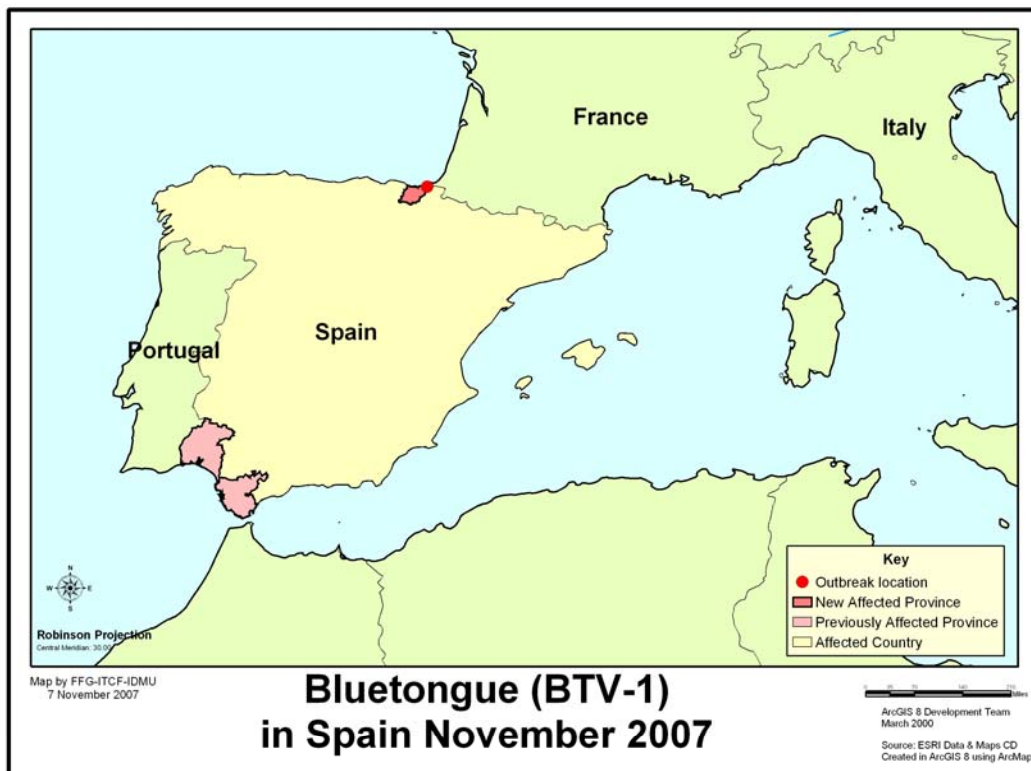
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Bluetongue (BTV-1) in Spain

Note: Defra's International Trade Core Function (ITCF) monitors outbreaks of high impact diseases around the world. Bluetongue (BT) is among those diseases of major concern.

1 Disease Report

The Spanish authorities have reported an outbreak of bluetongue (BTV-1) in sheep on a farm located in the north-west part of the country (Pais Vasco, Oiartzun) (see map). Investigations to determine the origin of infection are underway (European Commission, 2007; OIE, 2007). Disease control measures have been put in place in accordance with EU rules.



2 Situation assessment

BTV 1 was reported for the first time in Spain in mid 2007 in the areas already under restriction following the detection of BTV 4 in southern Spain in late 2004. BTV1 was also recorded for the first time in Portugal in mid September 2007.

BTV1 has been reported from countries in north-west Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia) and Sardinia in 2006. The new detection of BTV1 is in the north of Spain which is outside the already established BT zones for BTV4 and BTV1. Presence of *C. imicola* populations appears to be very low in this new affected area suggesting that some other species of *Culicoides* may be involved in the virus transmission to susceptible species.

A number of serotypes of BTV (1,2,4,9 and 16) have circulated in the Mediterranean Basin in recent years. Spain and Portugal have also been affected by BTV1 and BTV4 for the first time. An introduction of BTV8 in north-western Europe resulted in a number of EU member states being affected in 2006 and 2007. EU rules require affected member states to impose control and surveillance zones around the infected holdings (see latest developments: http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/controlmeasures/BlueTongue_RestrictedZones.jpg)

TRACES (EU electronic notification system) shows that no live ruminant animals have been imported into the UK from Spain during the last 3 to 4 months. The EU FMD safeguard measures in force on the UK since early August 2007 have prevented the import of ruminant animals from other EU member states during most of that period. The UK has received ten consignments of bovine semen from Spain. These consignments were certified in accordance with intra-Community trade rules between 13 July 2007 and 19 October 2007. All ten consignments went to two destinations that are outside the current BT zones in Great Britain.

3 Conclusions

On the basis of the information available at this stage, the likelihood of a BTV1 introduction by legal trade from the affected area of Spain to the UK is considered negligible.

We continue to monitor developments and will re-assess the situation as new information become available.

4 References

OIE (2007). ESP 06-11-07 OIE Alert Message. Received by e-mail, 6 November at 14.33.
European Commission (2007). Bluetongue – BTV-1 conformed in Northern Spain. Fax 193 (03/11/2007), Brussels D BVG (07).