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Newsletter

Surveillance's activities



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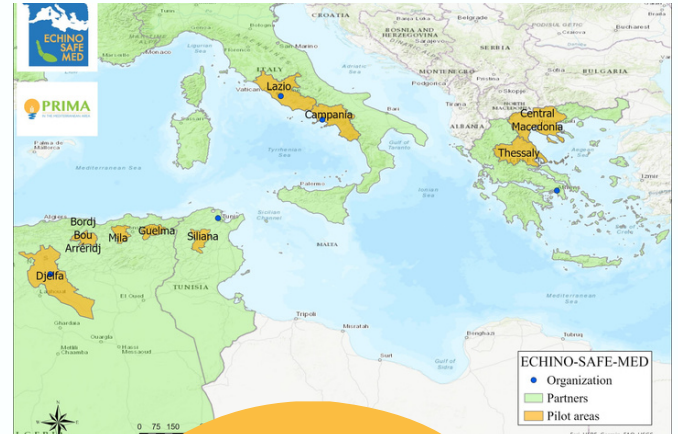


The ECHINO-SAFE-MED project aims to improve surveillance activities in four Mediterranean countries (Italy, Greece, Algeria and Tunisia) where cystic echinococcosis is highly endemic by using innovative, sustainable strategies to obtain updated data for infection of definitive hosts (dogs) and intermediate hosts (sheep) of *Echinococcus granulosus*.

Monitoring activities are performed according to the following steps:

1. Multi-scale sampling based on GIS

A multi-scale spatial sampling, based on the use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) was developed to select the sheep farms in the pilot areas of each country.



2. Questionnaire survey

A farm management questionnaire is administered to sheep farmers in the pilot areas of each country to collect information on common practices in each country/region and to assess farmers' attitudes toward sustainable helminth control and their potential acceptance of novel diagnostics and new approaches to control cystic echinococcosis (CE).

3. Monitoring of echinococcosis in dogs

Sheepdogs are confined for 48 hours in compliance with animal welfare standards. Then, all faecal samples are collected and analysed using Mini-FLOTAC and molecular analysis to identify *Echinococcus granulosus* eggs.



4. Monitoring of CE in sheep

In each selected sheep farm, all sheep are subjected to ultrasonography. In addition, on the selected farms, slaughtered animals are examined for the presence of hydatid cysts.