

Mapping Helps Eradicate Asian Bush Mosquito



The ESA's Vecmap initiative tests the accurate mapping of mosquitoes in Europe, especially mosquitoes that carry diseases. Now, the Asian bush mosquito is about to bite the dust in Belgium. First observed there in 2002, it can spread viruses such as Chikungunya, Dengue and West Nile.

Vecmap provides a one-shop stop that simplifies the entire mosquito mapping process by defining key habitats based on field data and delivers risk maps for a wide range of users. It consists of both software and supporting services, combining inputs from measurements taken during field work as well as data from Earth observation satellites. Data such as vegetation type, land temperature and soil moisture are used.

Field measurements are entered by inspectors into a smartphone, which pinpoints their location using satnav. Data is then transferred to a central database. Depending on the user's needs, a variety of graphs and interactive research can be made through this database.

Avia-GIS was asked to coordinate a programme to eradicate the Asian bush mosquito from Belgium after authorities reviewed a risk assessment made by the Scientific Institute of Public Health with experts from Belgium's Modirisk project.

Avia-GIS is working with ESA to develop Vecmap and will be using the system for the surveying requirements of the Belgian eradication programme.

Mosquitoes will continue to be tracked until the end of the season and the project may continue in March 2013.