

Collaborative Management Platform for  
detection and Analyses of (Re-) emerging  
and foodborne outbreaks in Europe

# Infectious disease detection in the era of next generation sequences: opportunities, challenges, and the COMPARE project

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This project has received funding from the *European Union's Horizon 2020*  
*research and innovation program* under grant agreement 643476



## Severe Respiratory Illness Associated with Enterovirus D68 – Multiple States, 2014

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Distributed via the CDC Health Alert Network

September 12, 2014, 17:00 ET

CDCHAN-00369

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**CDC HEALTH ADVISORY**

# *Enterovirus 68*

## *MERS CoV*



Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV)

*Avian influenza  
H7N9 China  
H5N1 Egypt*

13 June 2014

Update on MERS-CoV transmission from animals to humans, and interim recommendations for at-risk groups

## Statement on the 1st meeting of the IHR Emergency Committee on the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa

WHO statement  
8 August 2014

## WHO statement on the meeting of the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee concerning the international spread of wild poliovirus

WHO statement  
5 May 2014

# Infectious disease situation 2015

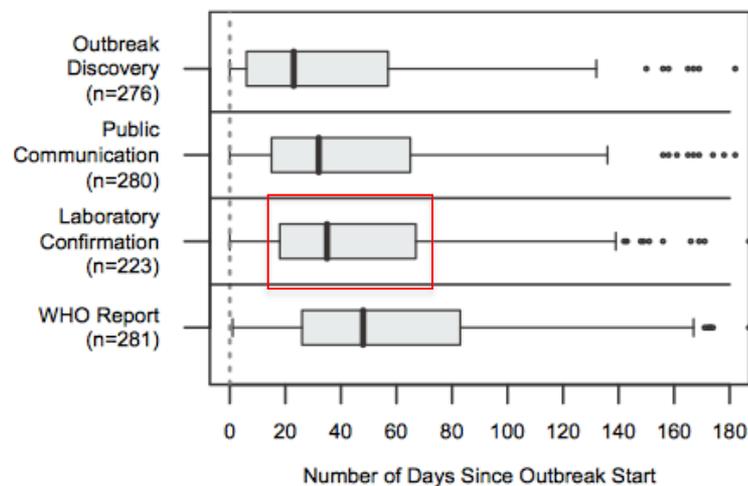
- Dynamics of common infectious diseases are changing
  - Demographic change, population density, anti vaccine movement, AMR, etc.
- New diseases emerge frequently
  - Deforestation, population growth, health systems inequalities, travel, trade, climate change
- Effects are difficult to predict due to complexity of problems
- Public health and clinical response depend on global capacity for disease surveillance

# Global capacity for emerging infectious disease detection

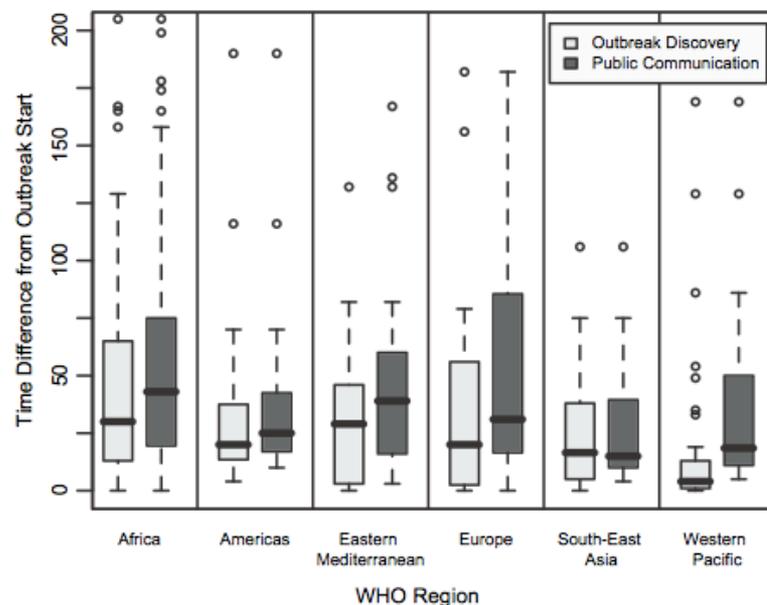
Emily H. Chan<sup>a,b</sup>, Timothy F. Brewer<sup>c,d</sup>, Lawrence C. Madoff<sup>c,e</sup>, Marjorie P. Pollack<sup>c</sup>, Amy L. Sonricker<sup>a,b</sup>, Mikaela Keller<sup>a,b,f</sup>, Clark C. Freifeld<sup>a,b</sup>, Michael Blench<sup>g</sup>, Abba Mawudeku<sup>g</sup>, and John S. Brownstein<sup>a,b,d,f,1</sup>

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Edited by Burton H. Singer, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, and approved October 29, 2010 (received for review May 10, 2010)



**Fig. 2.** Box plots of the median time between estimated outbreak start and various outbreak milestones for a subset of WHO-confirmed outbreaks, 1996–2009. Public communication refers to the earliest date of the public being informed about the existence of cases. WHO report refers to the date of WHO's *Disease Outbreak News* report about the outbreak. Some extreme outliers are not shown. *n*, sample size.



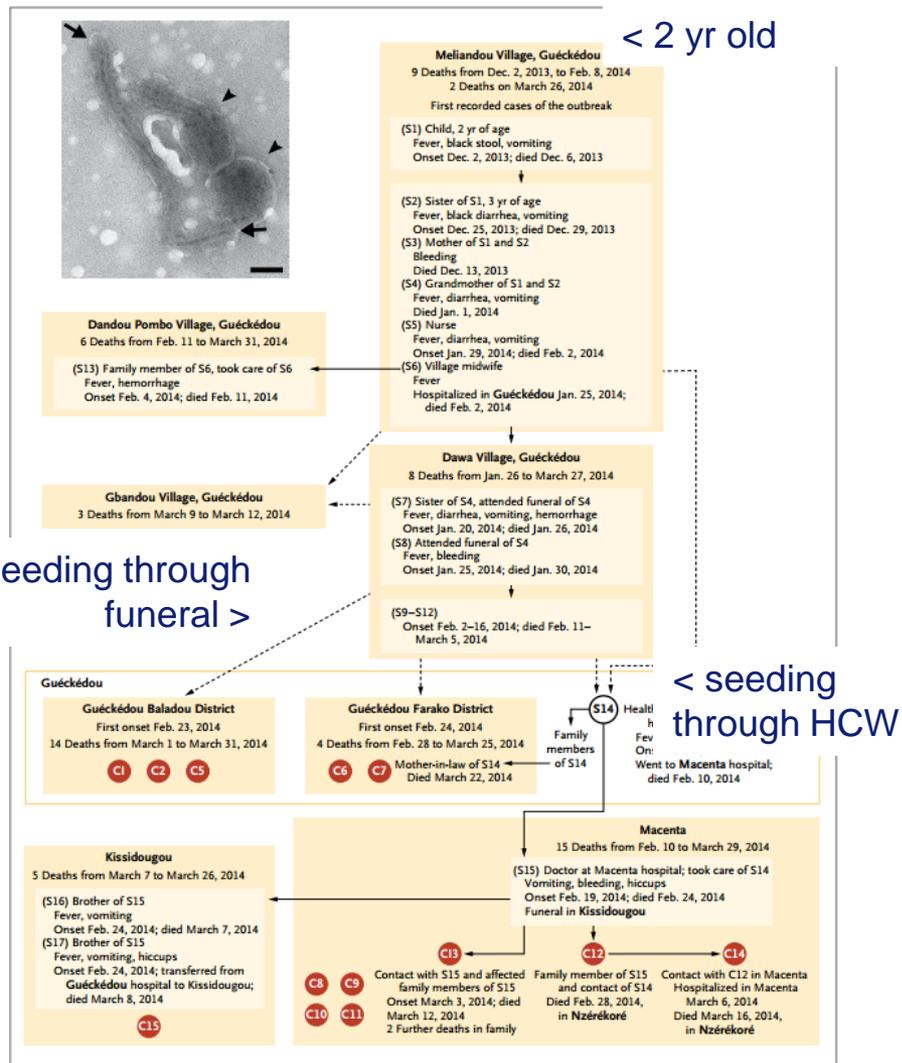
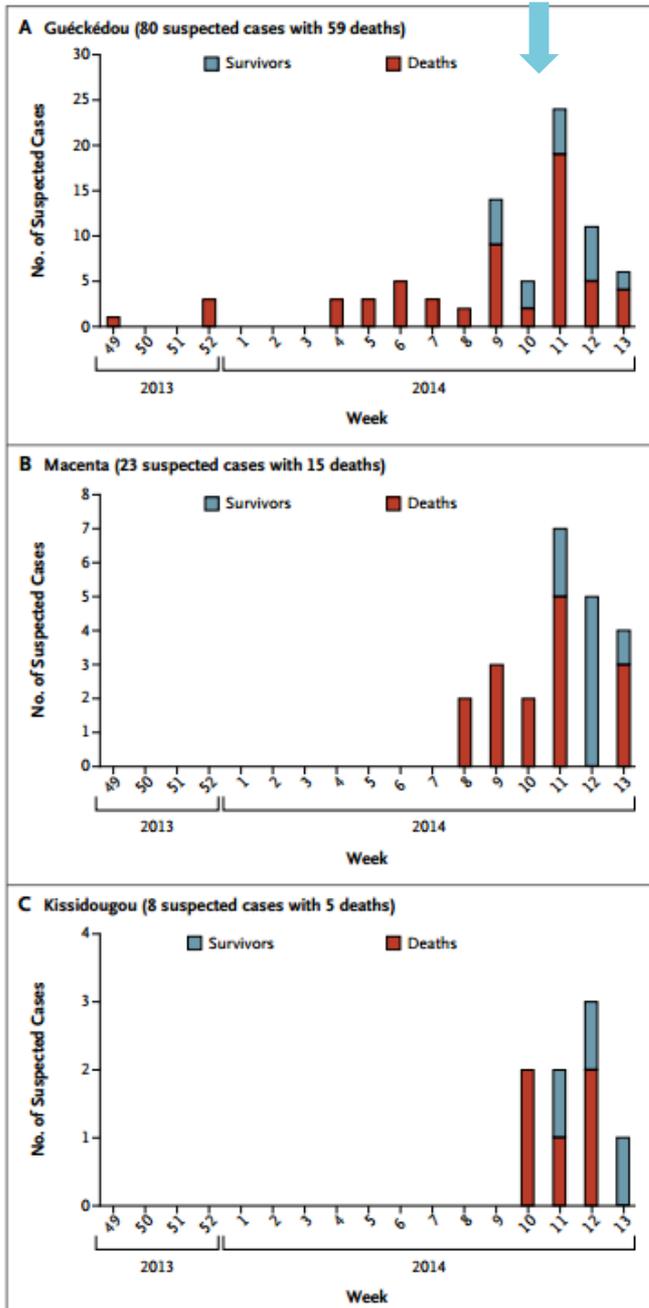
**Fig. 4.** Box plots of the median time difference from estimated outbreak start to outbreak discovery and public communication about the outbreak for selected WHO-verified outbreaks, 1996–2009, across various WHO regions. Extreme outliers are not shown.

# Start outbreak EBOV

- March 10, 2014 notification unknown disease characterized by fever, severe diarrhea, vomiting and high fatality rate in Guéckédou and Macenta in Guinea.
- March 22, EVD reported by Guinea to WHO.
- March 27, EVD suspected cases in Liberia and Sierra Leone related to outbreak in Guinea.
- April 3d: ZEBOV Dx



# Diagnosis



# Animal surveillance, Gabon 2001-3



Figure 2. Field watertight clothes equipped with air filtration equipment, used for high-risk wild animal necropsy. Odzala National Park, Republic of Congo, June 2003. Photo: P. Rouquet.

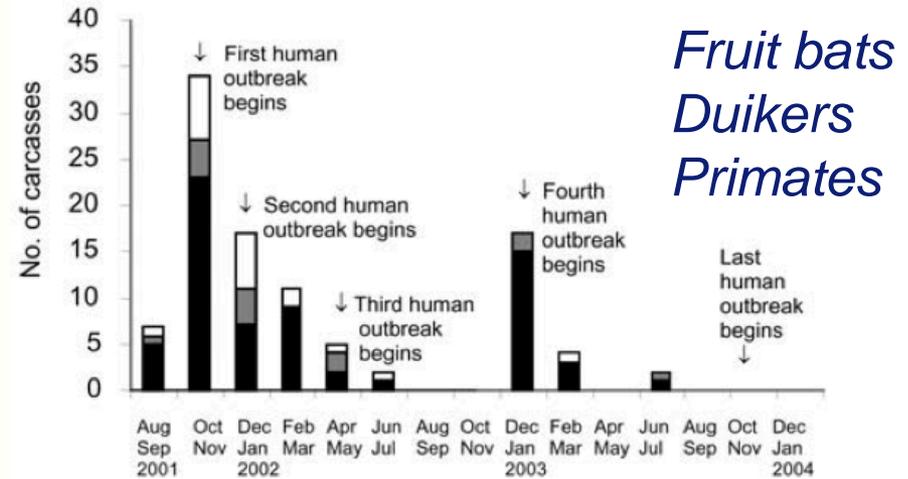
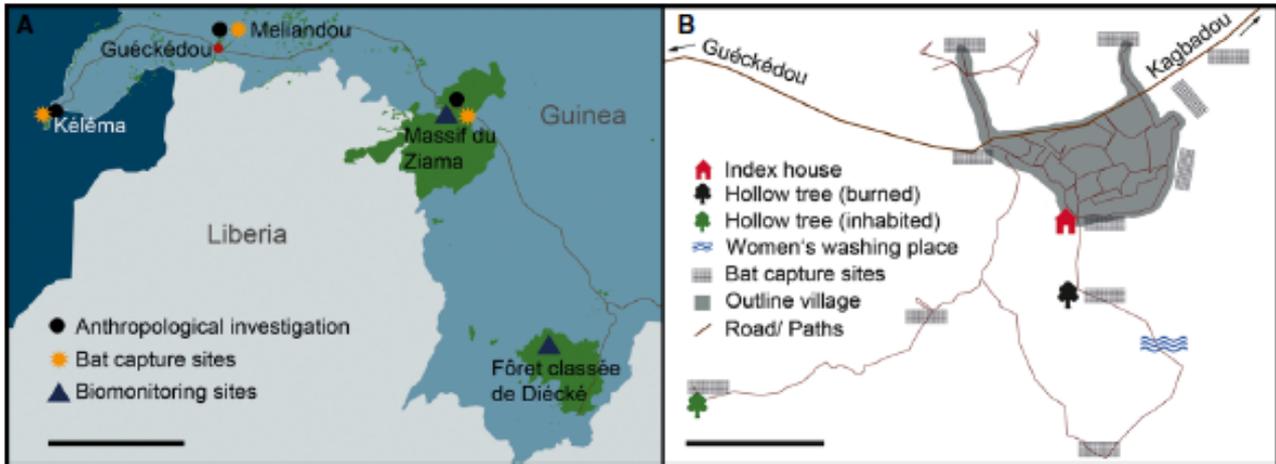
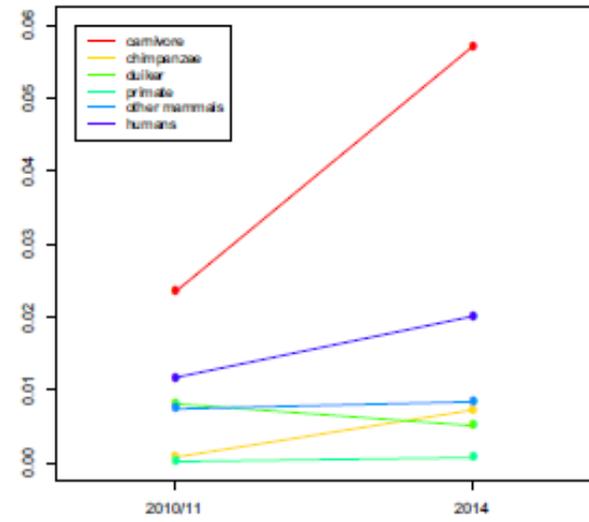


Figure 4. Temporal distribution of carcasses found in the forest straddling the border between Gabon and the Republic of Congo (2001–2003). Two peaks of mortality were observed: the first occurred in the Ekata region (Gabon) from November to December 2001 and the second from December 2002 to February 2003 in the Lossi gorilla sanctuary (Republic of Congo).

*Outbreaks in animals detected prior to (4/5) human disease outbreaks*

*Convincing evidence for bushmeat related introductions*

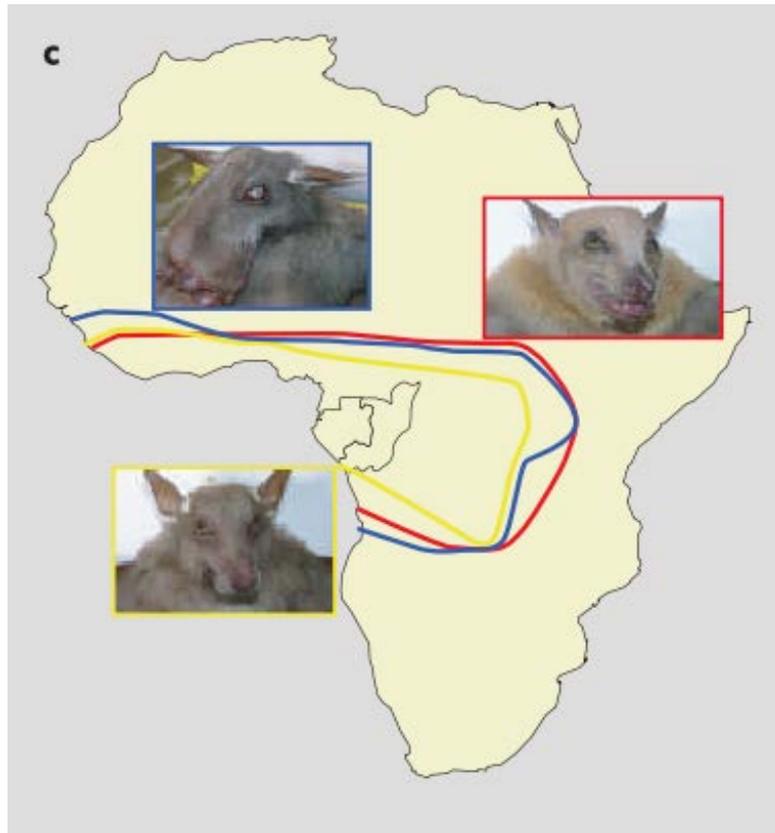
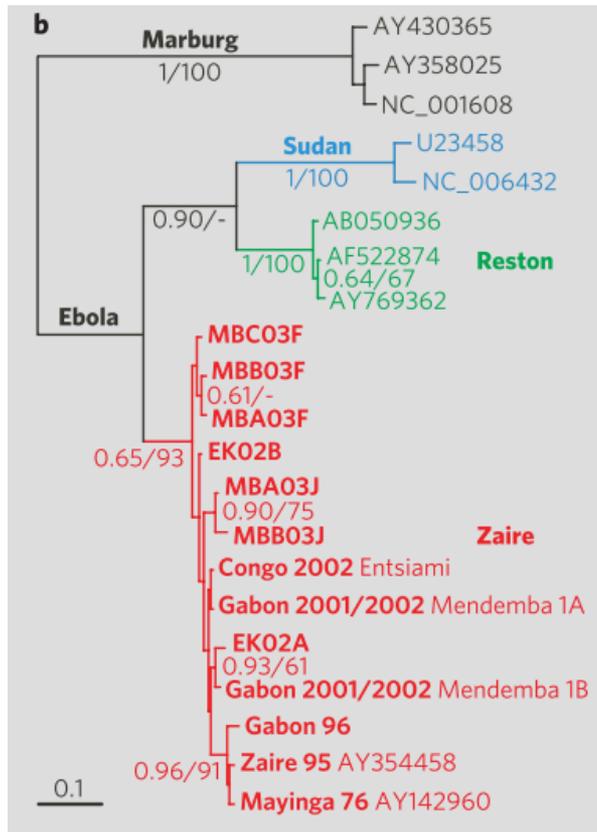


Single zoonotic event in Meliandou, bat-borne, followed by human2human transmission

*Saez et al., EMBO Mol Med, 2014*



# Fruit Bats as reservoir for EBOV



- Overlapping ecological niche
- No symptoms
- Infection cyclical
- Potential source of introduction into West Africa

# Potential under-reporting of Ebola

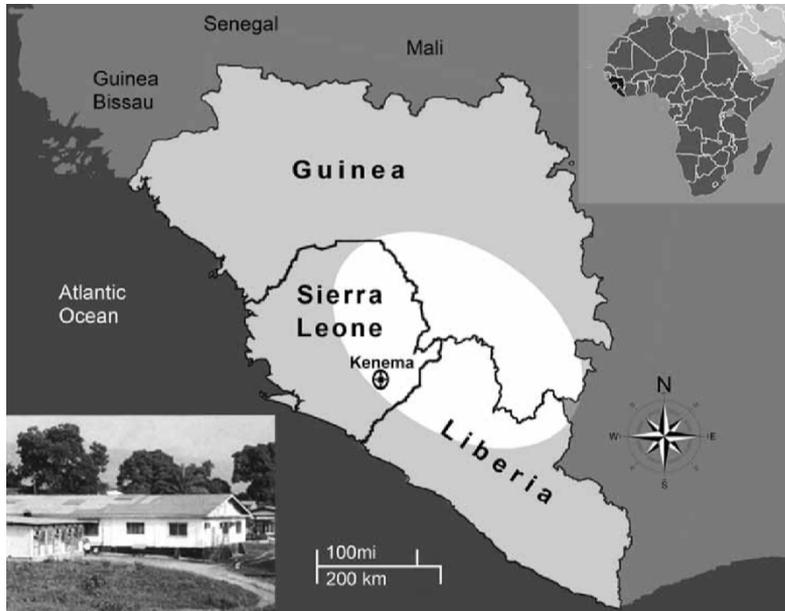


Table 2. Patients' antibody reactions to arthropod-borne and hemorrhagic fever virus antigens, Lassa Diagnostic Laboratory, Kenema, Sierra Leone, October 2006–October 2008\*

Virus	No. positive /total (%)	No. IgM only positive/total (%)
Dengue	11/253 (4.3)	6/250 (2.4)
West Nile	7/253 (2.8)	3/250 (1.2)
Yellow fever	5/201 (2.5)	5/201 (2.5)
Rift Valley fever	5/253 (2.0)	5/253 (2.0)
Chikungunya	10/253 (4.0)	5/253 (2.0)
Ebola	19/220 (8.6)	18/219 (8.2)
Marburg	8/220 (3.6)	7/219 (3.2)
Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever	0/220	Not tested
<b>Total</b>	<b>65/253 (25.7)</b>	<b>49/253 (19.4)</b>

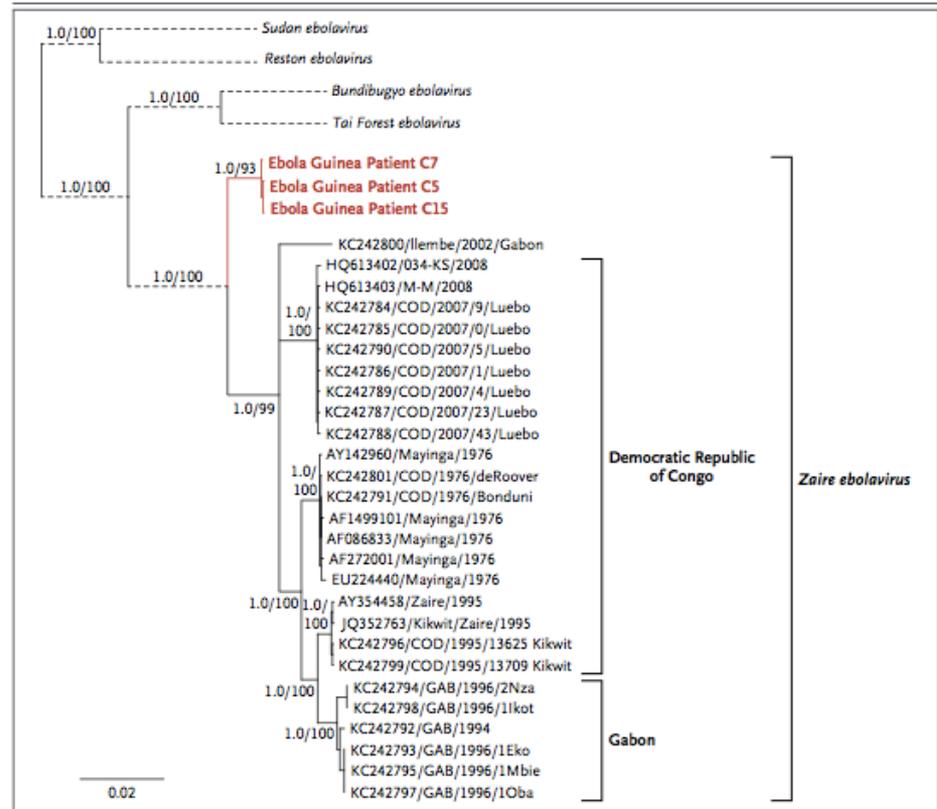


# EBOV disease detection issues

- Delayed diagnosis
- Lack of understanding of possible zoonotic threats from wildlife
- Lack of surveillance recognizing unusual clinical syndromes
- Lack of routine and reference laboratory capacity for evaluation of (unusual) disease
- Change in outbreak profile from rural to urban > rapid spread

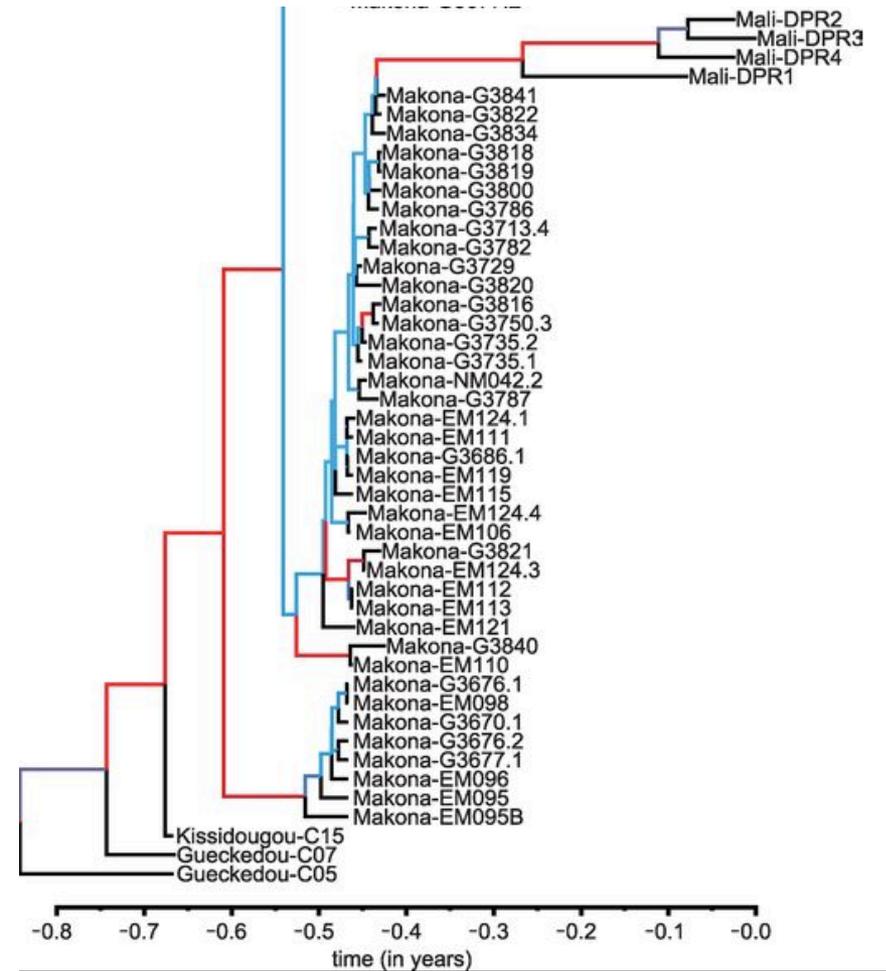
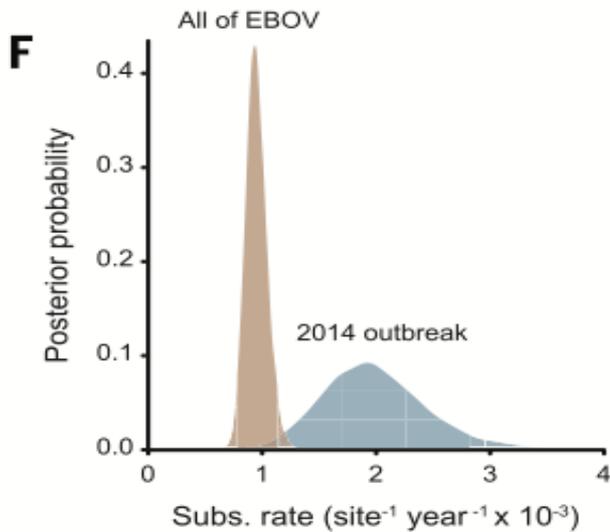
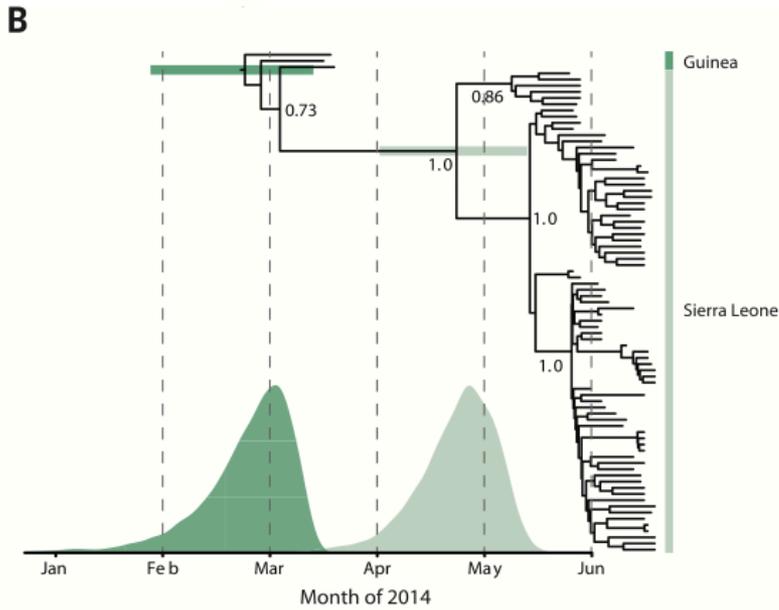
# Potential added value of genome sequencing

1. Zaire-like virus
2. Single introduction
3. Two introductions into Guinea

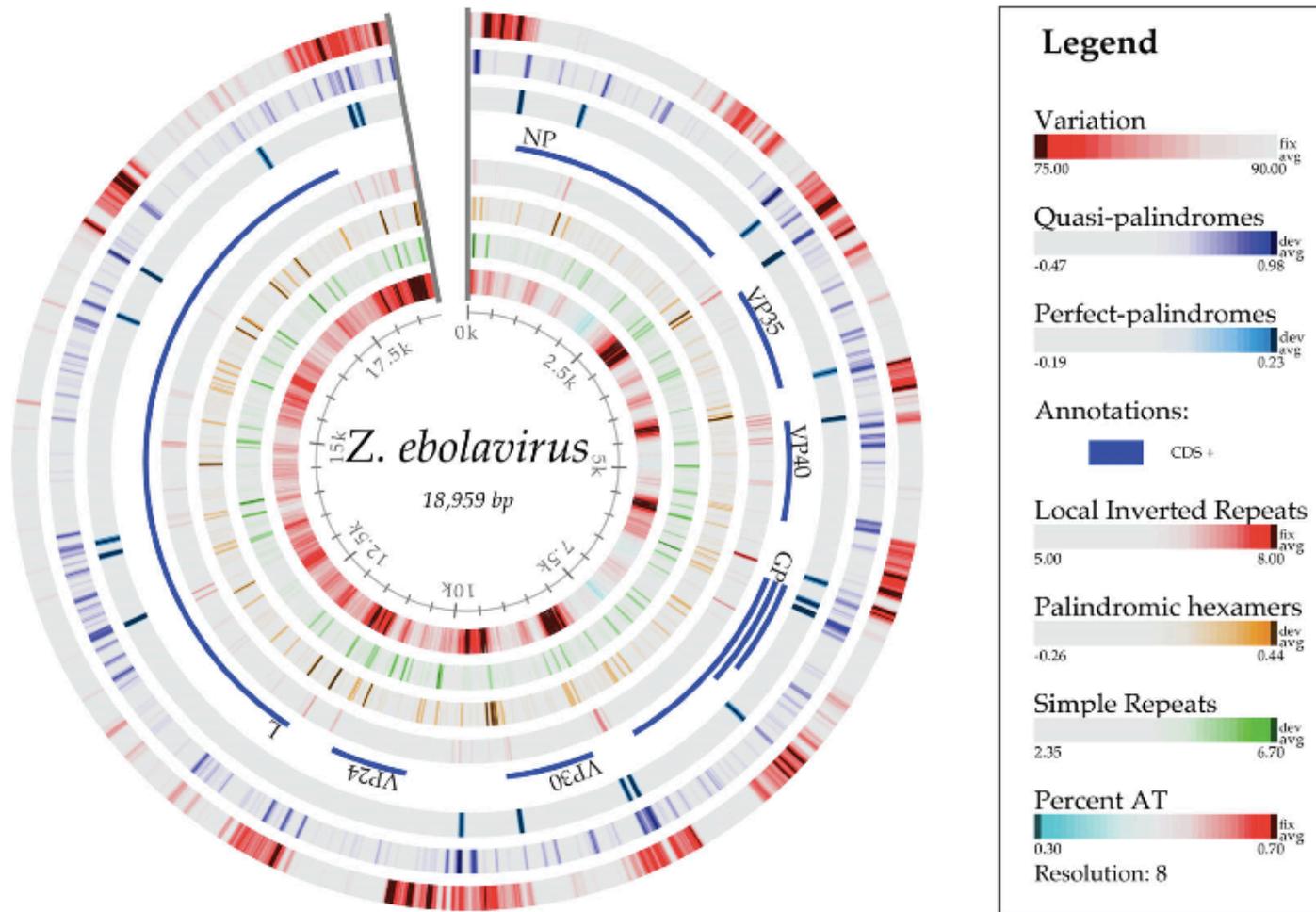


**Figure 3. Phylogenetic Analysis of the Ebolavirus Genus, Including the EBOV Strains from Guinea.**

The phylogenetic tree was inferred with the use of the Bayesian Markov Chain Monte Carlo method. A second tree that was inferred for the same set of sequences with a maximum-likelihood method confirmed the Bayesian tree (data not shown). Bayesian posterior probabilities and bootstrap percentages (1000 replicates of the maximum-likelihood tree) are shown on the branches. For clarity of presentation, the branches for the non-EBOV species were shortened and condensed (dashed branches). The GenBank accession number, strain designation, country of origin, and year of isolation are indicated on the EBOV branches. The EBOV Guinea strain is available from the European Virus Archive ([www.european-virus-archive.com](http://www.european-virus-archive.com)).

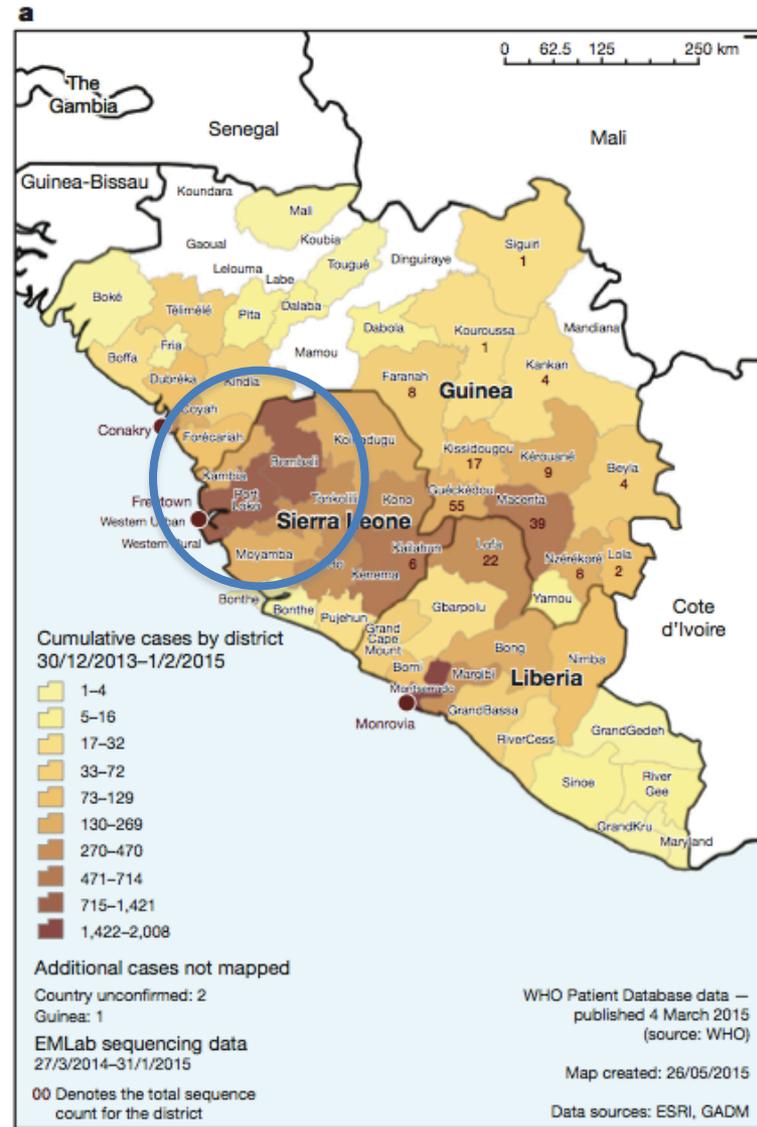
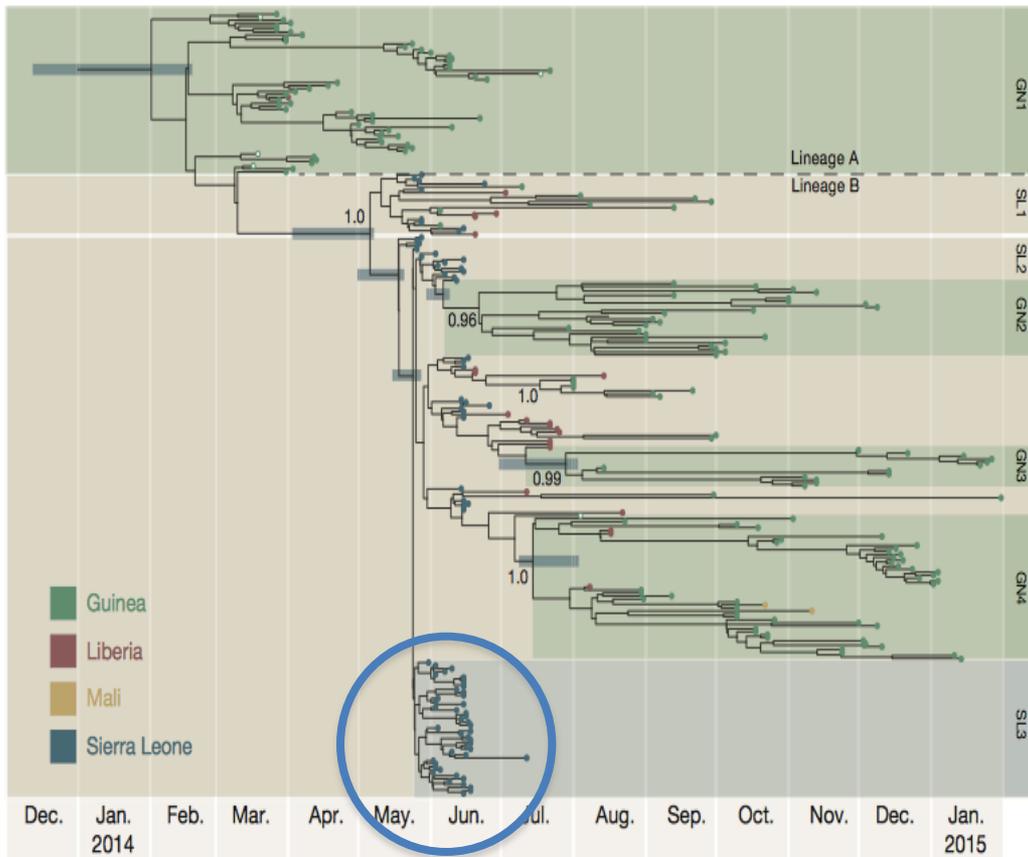


- Diversification of virus
- Geographic lineages > tracking possible
- Effect of mutations on molecular Dx, therapeutics, vaccines unknown



**Figure 5.** Atlas of the genome of ebolavirus KJ660347, showing, from the outer ring inwards, variations within 84 other ebolavirus genomes, structural cruciforms and palindromes (van Noort et al. 2003), the coding sequences, local inverted repeats, palindromic hexamers, simple repeats and AT content. The conservation percentage (%) is defined as the number of genomes with the same letter on a multiple sequence alignment normalized to range from 0 to 100% for each site along the chromosome of Ebola KJ660347.

Incomplete information, many parties involved, no data sharing system

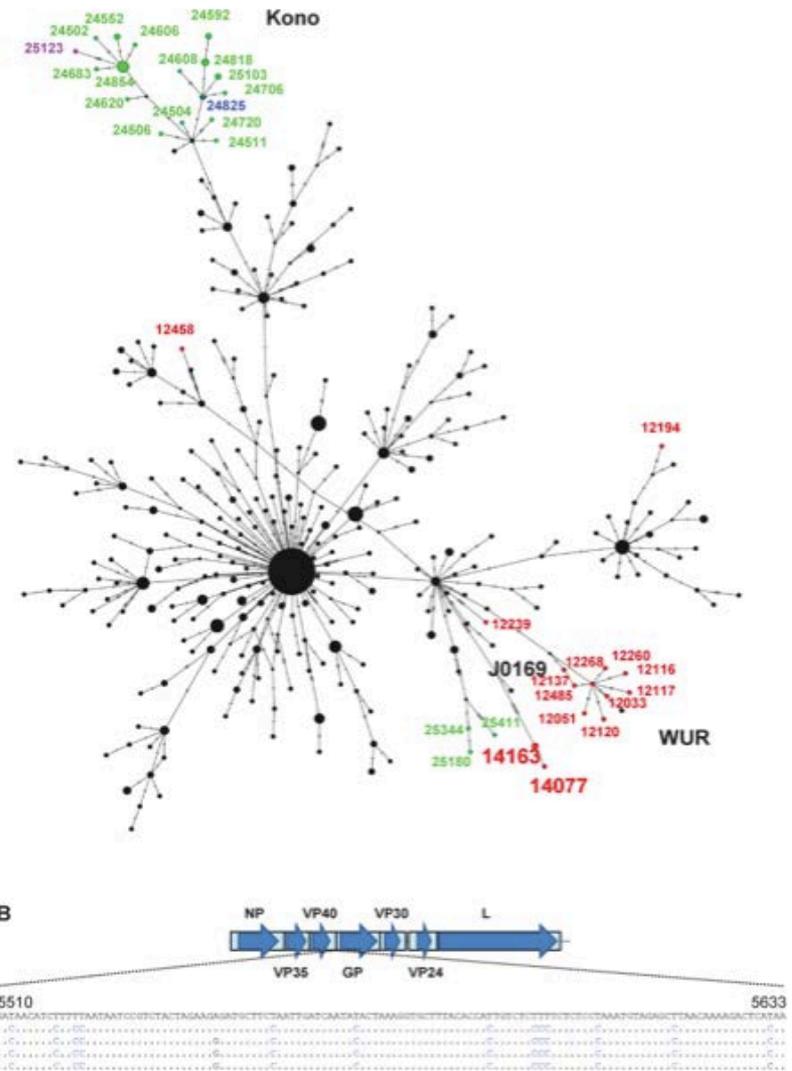
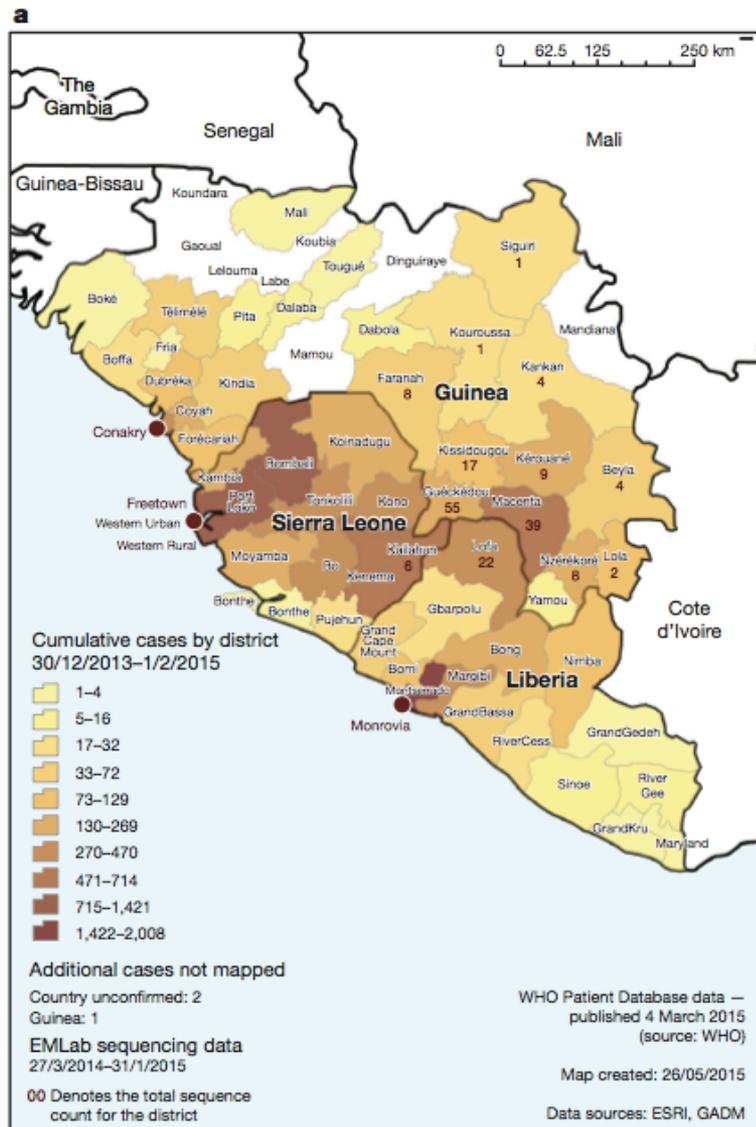


6 AUGUST

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Carroll et al., August 2015

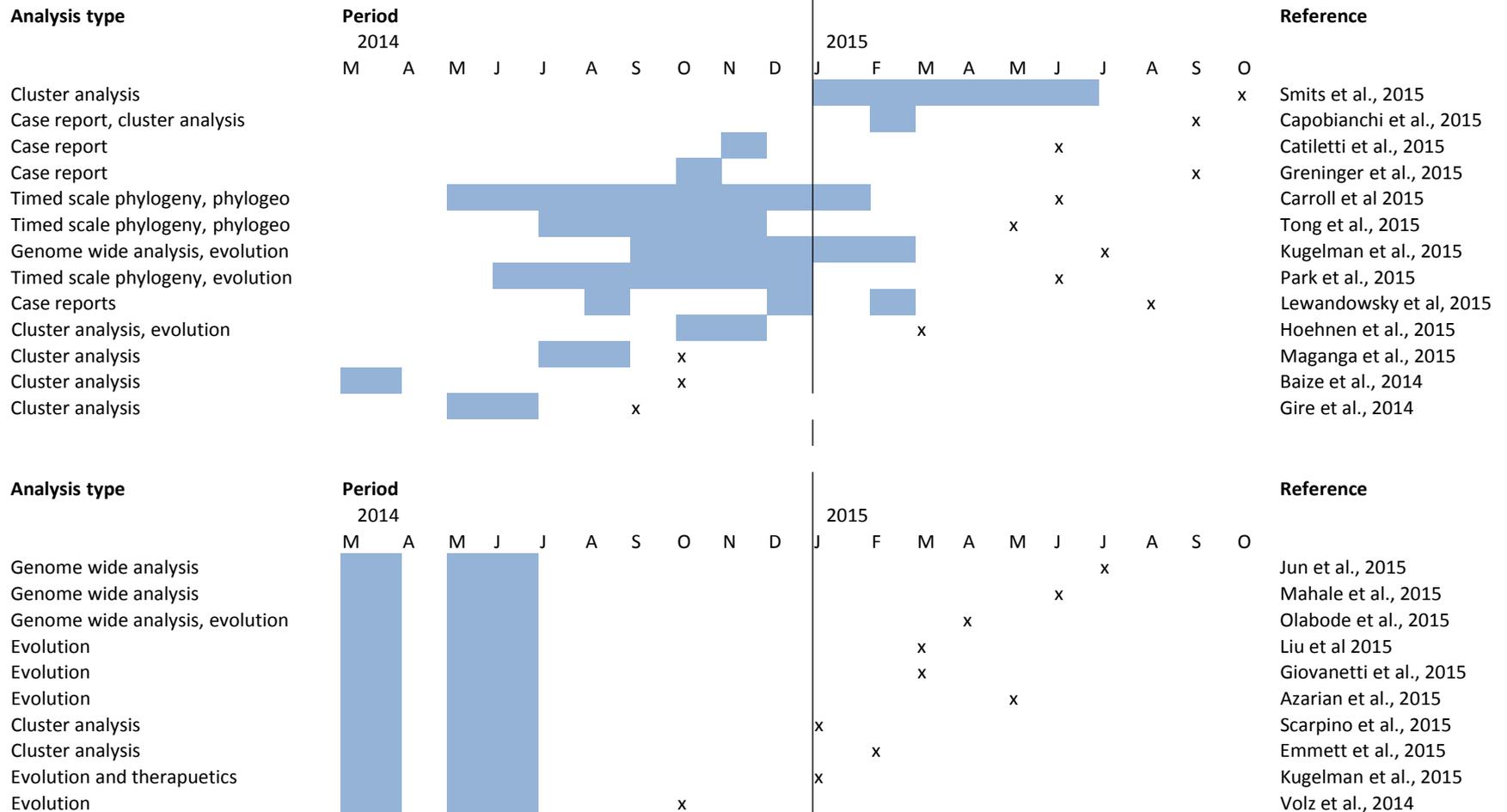
Figure 1 | Geographical location, sequence read depth, and read depth vs  $C_T$  value of patient samples. a, Geographical location of patient samples. The

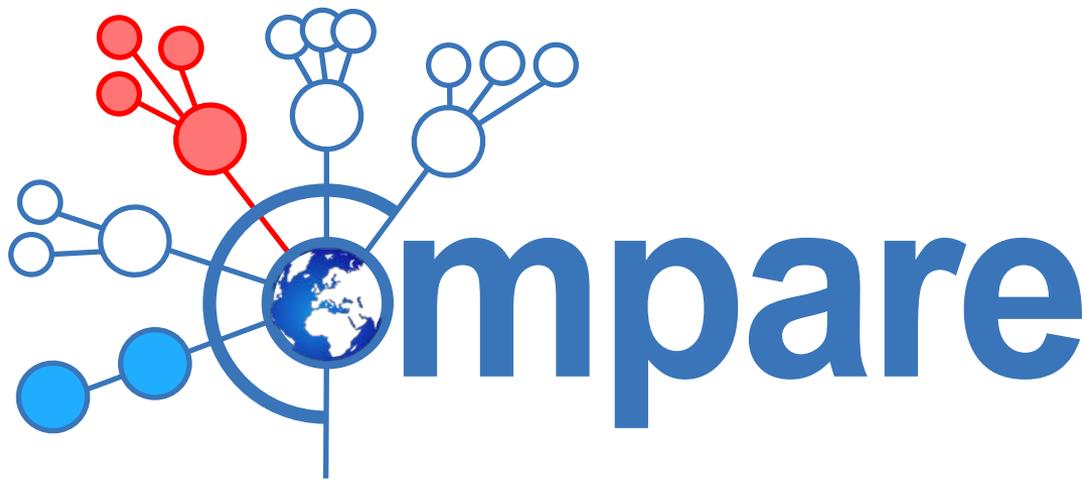


**Figure 1 | Geographical location, sequence read depth, and read depth vs  $C_i$  value of patient samples. a, Geographical location of patient samples. The**

**b** GP: glycoprotein; L: RNA-dependent RNA polymerase L; NP: nucleoprotein; VP: virus protein; WUR: Western Area Urban district.

# Timeliness of sequence-based disease detection and analysis





Collaborative Management Platform for  
detection and Analyses of (Re-) emerging  
and foodborne outbreaks in Europe

A global platform for the sequence-based  
rapid identification of pathogens

Prof. Frank M. Aarestrup, coordinator (Technical University of Denmark)

Prof. Marion Koopmans, deputy coordinator (Erasmus Medical Center, the  
Netherlands)

This project has received funding from the *European Union's Horizon 2020*  
*research and innovation program* under grant agreement 643476



# Background

- Laboratory diagnostics increasingly rely on (pathogen) genomic information
  - RNA / DNA are common across pathogens, therefore, methods to analyse pathogen genomes potentially are universal
  - Next generation sequencing capacity is developing fast, and costs are becoming competitive
- 
- Capturing NGS developments may provide a universal language that can be harnessed for early detection of outbreaks across disciplines and domains
  - If the technology keeps developing, less equipped labs may leapfrog

# COMPARE basics:

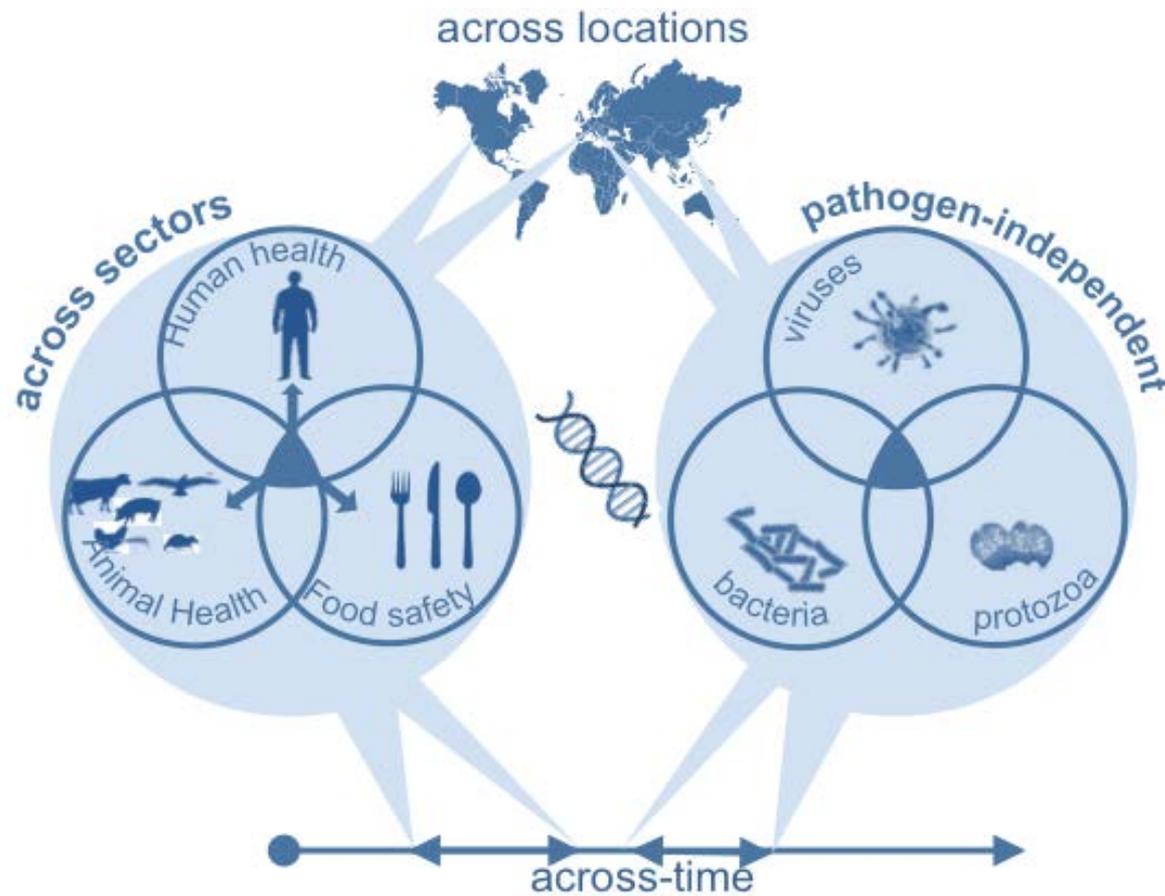
## original call text

**PHC 7 - 2014) Improving the control of infectious epidemics and foodborne outbreaks through rapid identification of pathogens (see also SC2)**

Specific challenge: Human and animal health worldwide is increasingly threatened by potential epidemics caused by existing, new and emerging infectious diseases (including from antimicrobial resistant pathogens), placing a burden on health and veterinary systems, reducing consumer confidence in food, and negatively affecting trade, food chain sustainability and food security.

The increasing incidence and more rapid spread of such diseases are facilitated by modern demographic, environmental, technological and societal conditions. Many of these infections are zoonoses, necessitating an integrated, cross-border, “one health” approach to research and public health measures in the human and veterinary field, including the food chain.

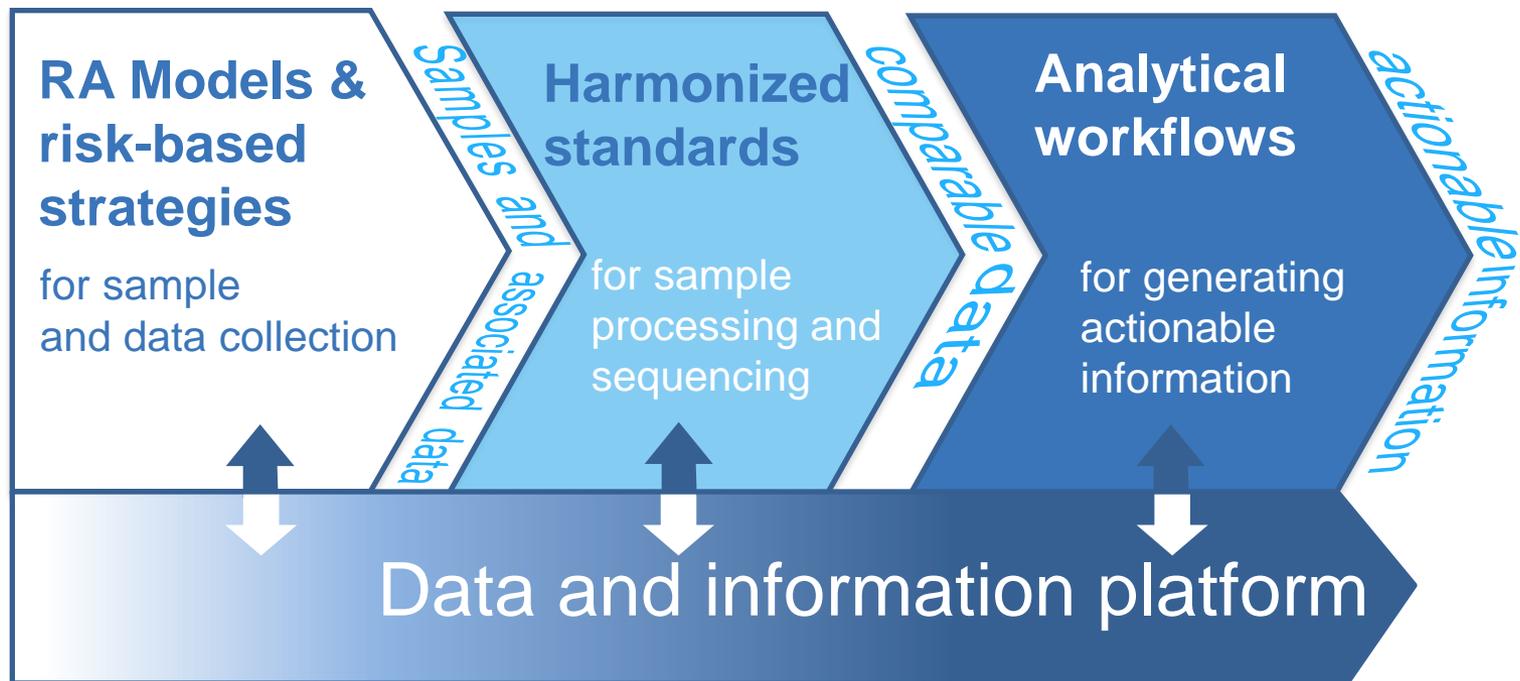
# Our vision: to build one system that serves all



# COMPARE principles

- COMPARE is a sector, domain and pathogen-**independent** system;
- analyzing **sequence-based pathogen data** in combination with **associated (clinical, epidemiological and other) data**,
- Building on **established infrastructures**
- COMPARE is a **user driven system**, designed with the information needs of its intended diverse group of future users and other stakeholders in mind;
- COMPARE will make **optimal use of existing and future complementary systems, networks and databases** ensuring compatibility where needed;
- COMPARE is a **flexible, scalable and open-source based** information-sharing platform.
- 1 December 2014 – 31 November 2019

Analytical framework and globally linked data and information sharing platform.



# WP1

From question to samples and associated data:

Goal: to develop Risk Assessment (RA) models and risk-based sampling and data collection strategies for Next Generation Sequencing (NGS)-based analyses of food-borne and (re-) emerging infections

(research) question

**RA Models &  
risk-based  
strategies**

for sample  
and data collection

*Samples and  
associated data*

**Emma Snary**

WP-leader



**Christian Gortazar**

WP co-leader



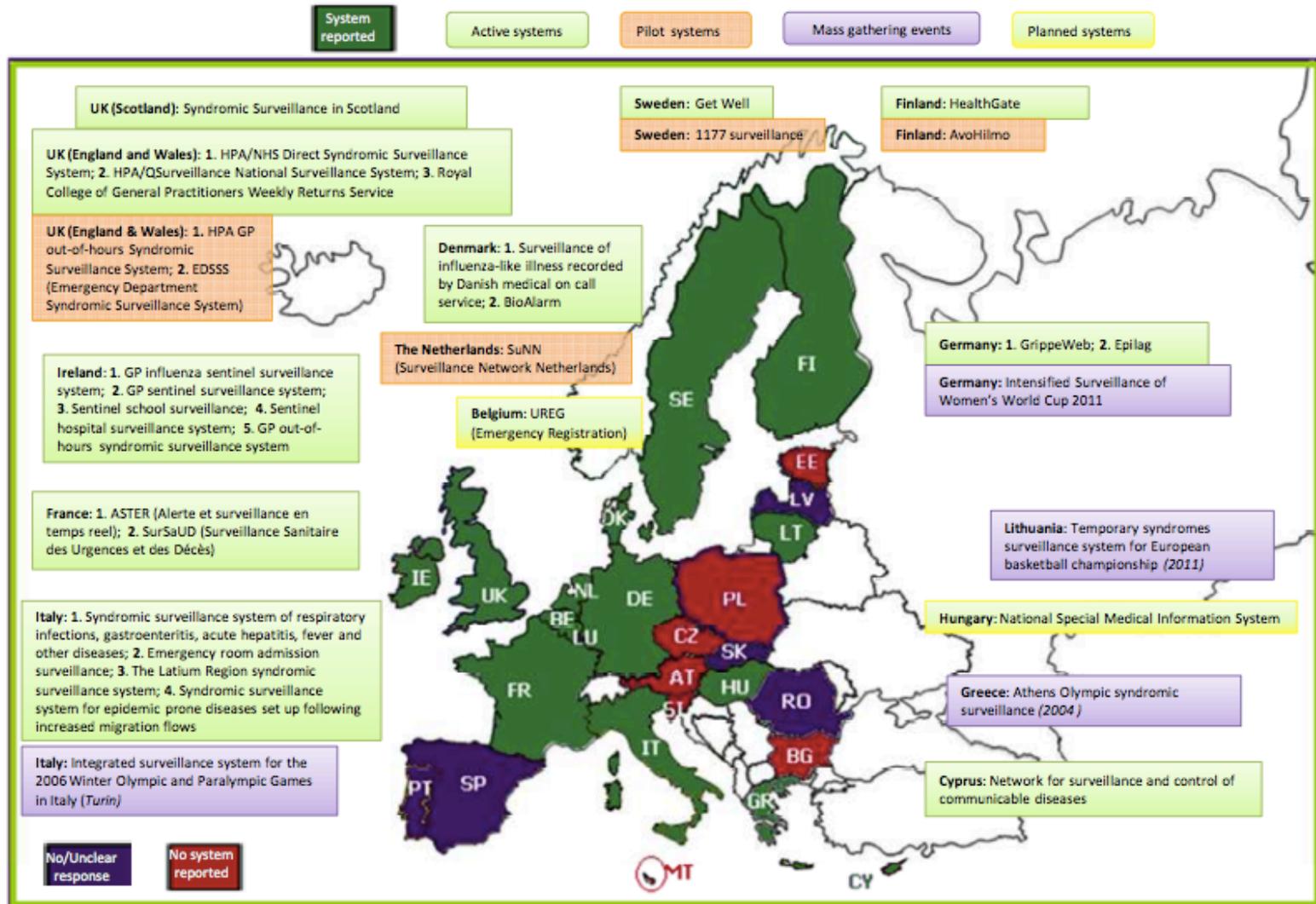
Scenario's:

- Novel airborne disease, respiratory syndrome
- Foodborne disease, enteric syndrome
- Vectorborne disease with fever/rash syndrome

**Figure 1. Map of Europe showing names and locations of syndromic surveillance systems and their status.**

# TRIPLE...S

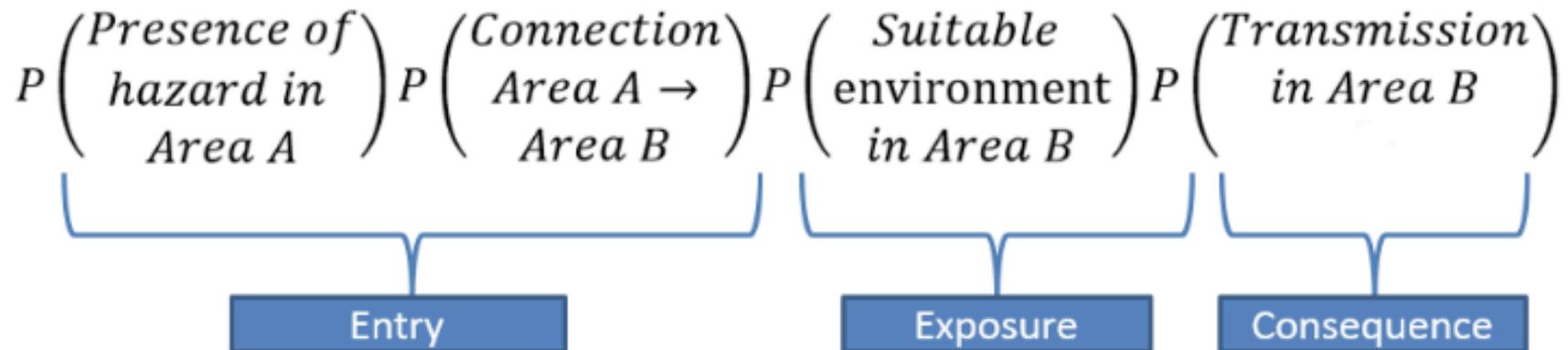
Syndromic Surveillance Systems in Europe



# Task 1.1: Generic framework



- Risk of infection in area **B** due to presence of hazard in area **A**



# Task 1.1: Generic framework



- Risk of infection in area **B** due to presence of hazard in area **A**

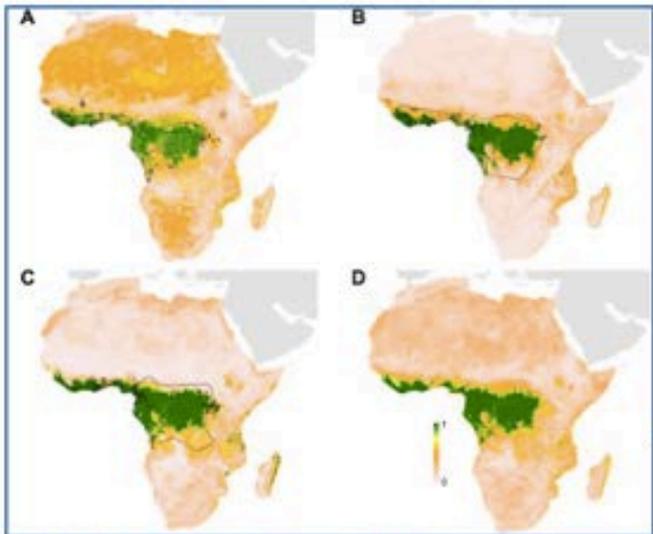
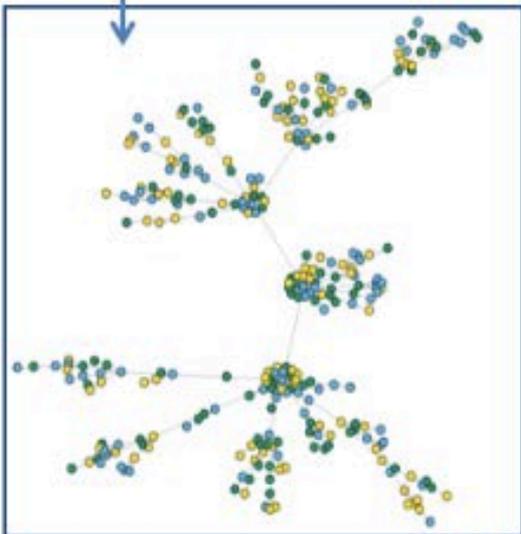
$$P\left(\begin{array}{c} \textit{Presence of} \\ \textit{hazard in} \\ \textit{Area A} \end{array}\right) P\left(\begin{array}{c} \textit{Connection} \\ \textit{Area A} \rightarrow \\ \textit{Area B} \end{array}\right) P\left(\begin{array}{c} \textit{Suitable} \\ \textit{environment} \\ \textit{in Area B} \end{array}\right) P\left(\begin{array}{c} \textit{Transmission} \\ \textit{in Area B} \end{array}\right)$$

Summarising & visualising movement data

Entry

Exposure

Consequence



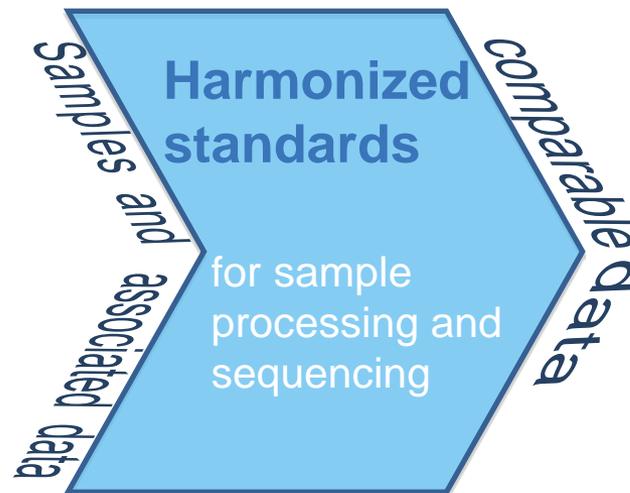
Ecological niche modelling



# WP2

From samples and associated data to comparable data

Goal: to develop harmonised analytical workflows for generation of high quality NGS data in combination with relevant metadata for pathogen detection and typing across sample types, pathogens and domains.



**Martin Beer**

WP leader



**Simone Caccio**

WP co-leader

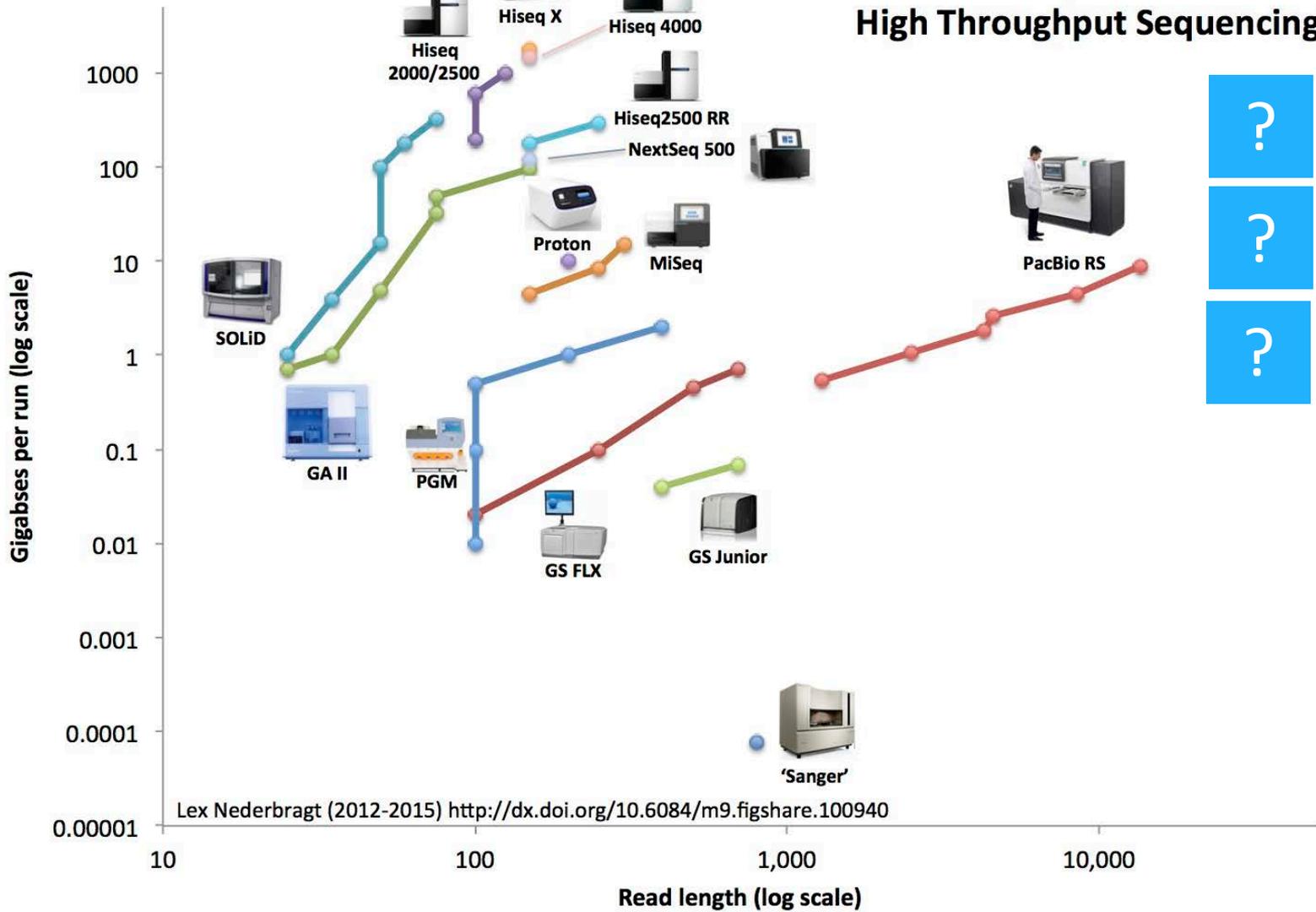


**Paul Kellam**

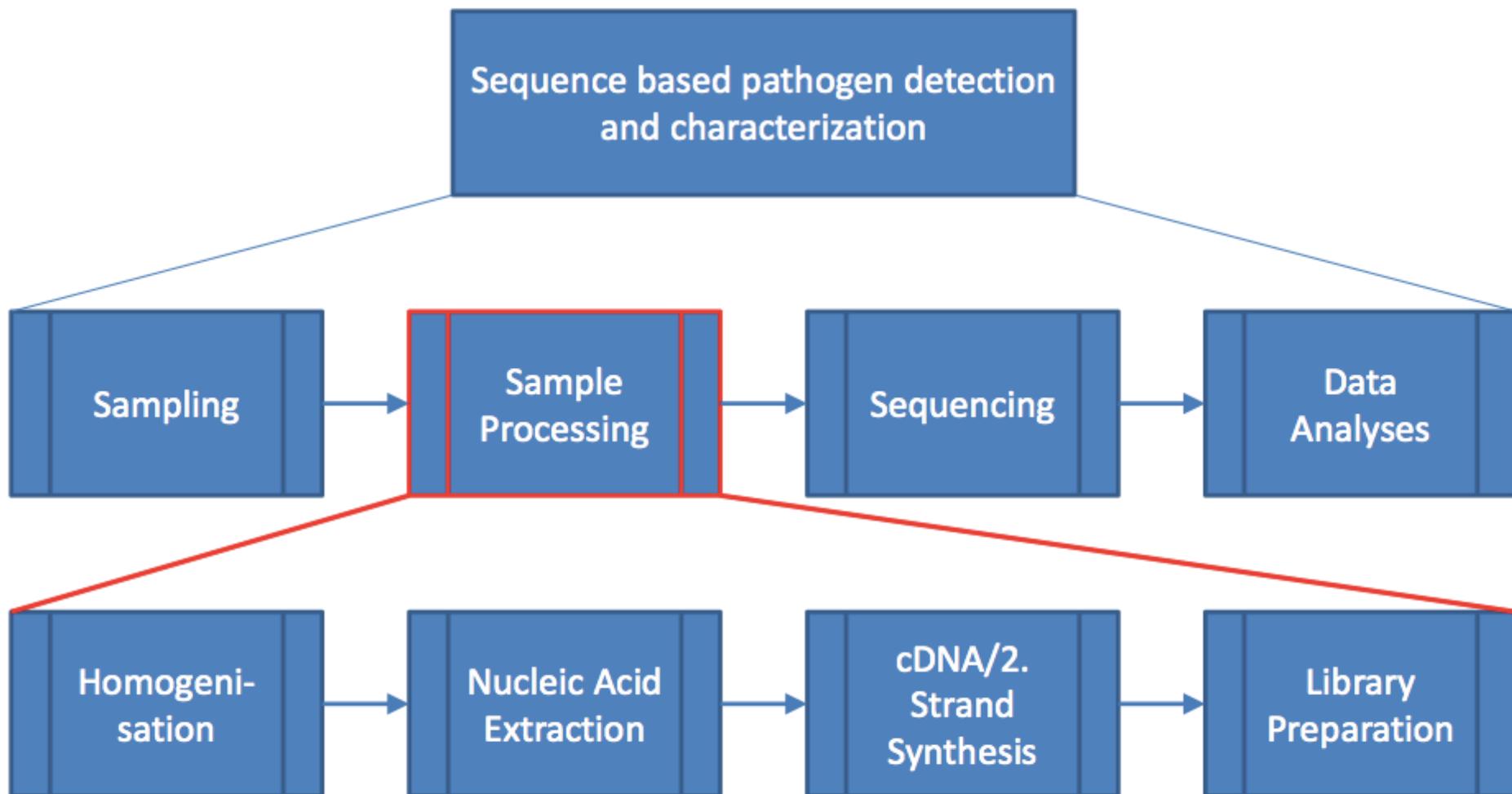
WP co-leader



# Developments in High Throughput Sequencing



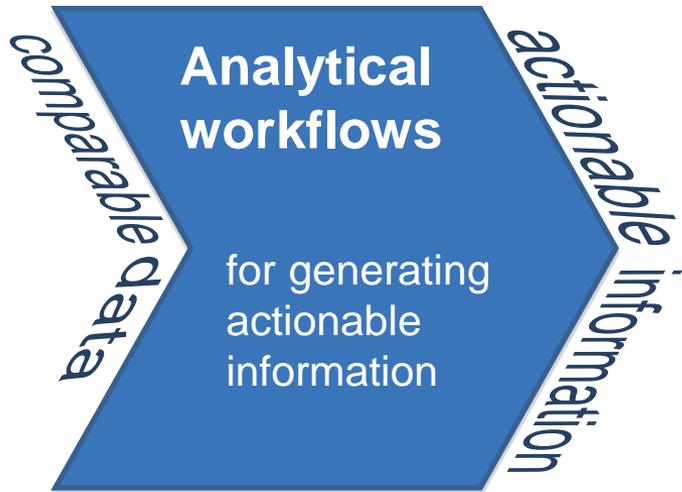
# Task 2: Standardised processes for sample processing (Dirk Höper/Simone Caccio)



# From comparable data to actionable information

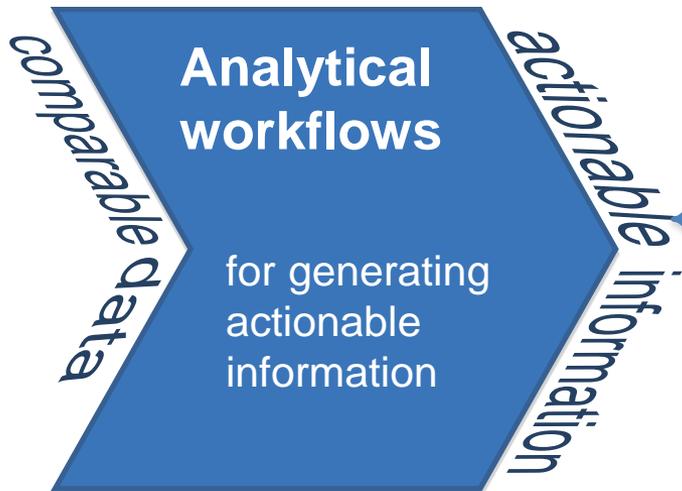
## Analytical workflows

“Actionable Information” is defined as information that enables users generating/receiving this information to take well-informed decisions and actions in pursuit of:



# From comparable data to actionable information

## Different users need different Analytical workflows



Frontline diagnostics in human and veterinary clinical microbiology

**Surbhi Malhortra**

WP leader



**Menno de Jong** **Anne Pohlmann**

WP co-leader



WP co-leader



Detection and analysis of foodborne outbreaks

**Eva Møller-Nielsen**

WP leader



**Tine Hald**

WP co-leader



**Anne Brissabois**

WP co-leader



Detection and analysis of (re-) emerging outbreaks

**Ron Fouchier**

WP leader

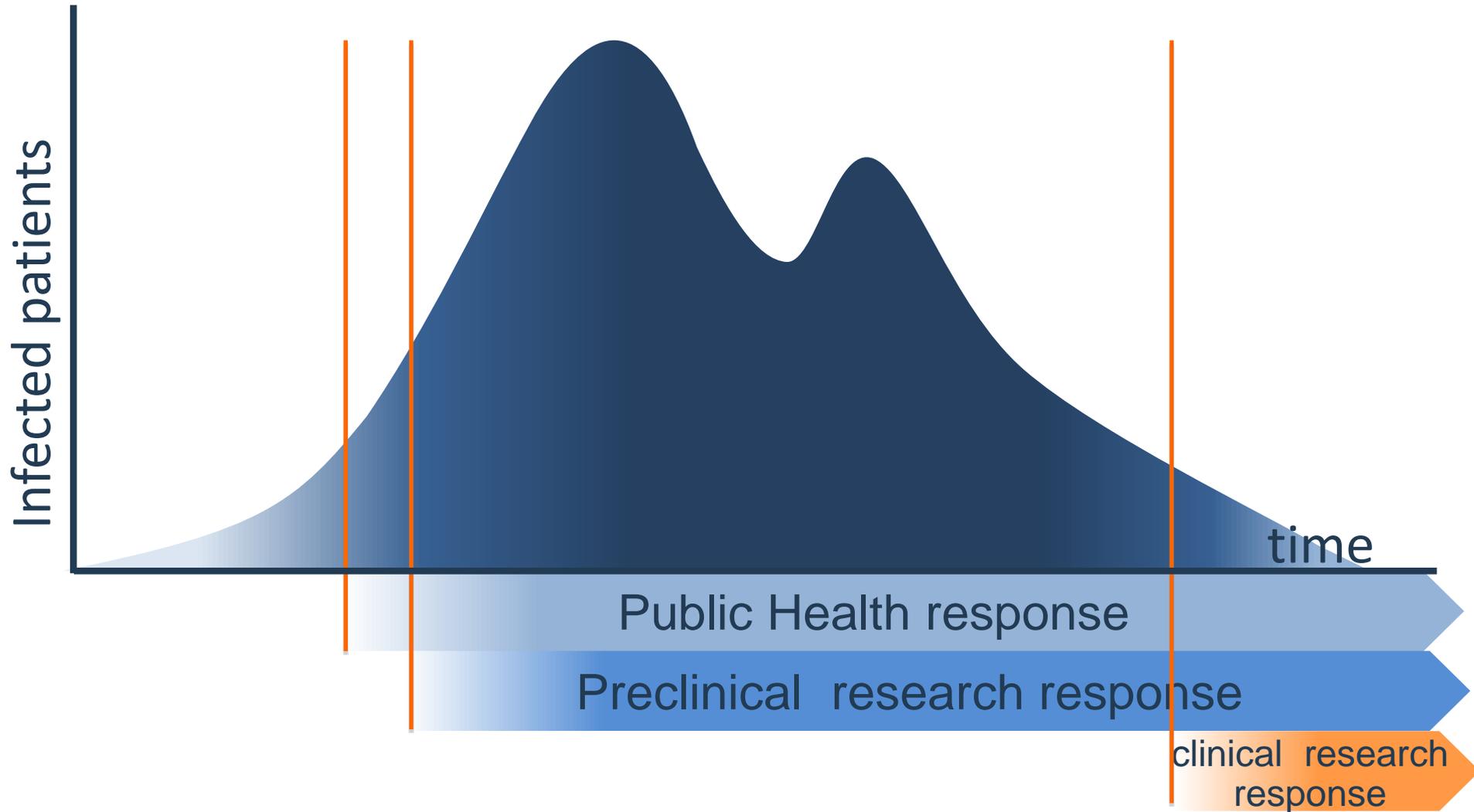


**Mark Woolhouse**

WP co-leader



# Clinical research response to ID outbreaks usually fragmented and too late





# Epidemic preparedness research: European Union-supported efforts

- prediction

- understanding emergence
- surveillance
- modelling



2009-2016  
€ 36 M

- early recognition and containment

- surveillance
- clinical awareness
- infection control



2015-2020  
€ 21 M

- clinical research

- pathogen & disease characterization
- prevention & treatment



2014-2019  
€ 24 M

- funding

- rapid responses

GloPID-R

2015-2020  
€ 3 M

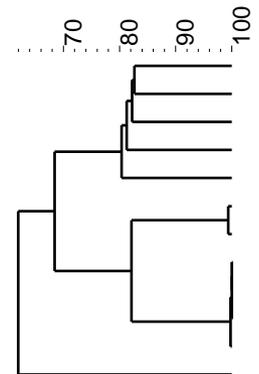
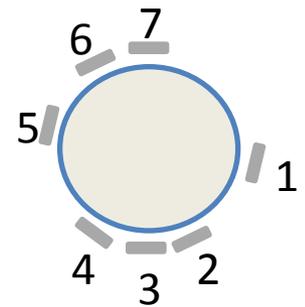
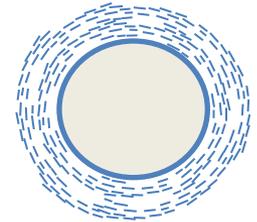
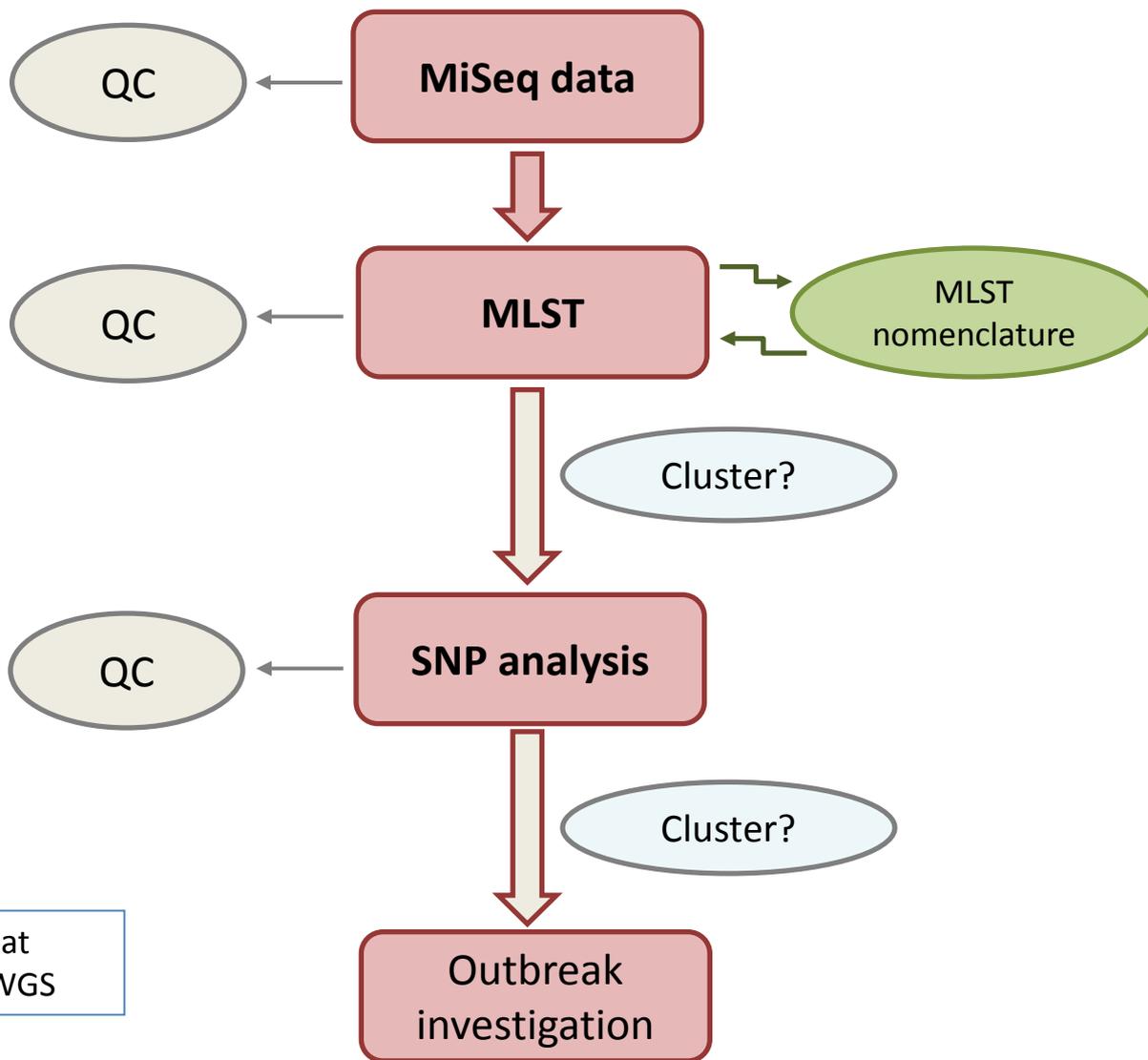
## Increasing resolution of foodborne outbreak detection, Listeriosis surveillance in Denmark (courtesy of Eva Moller Nielsen)

### Before September 2013:

- PFGE all patient isolates
- Interview when suspected outbreak
- Food isolates from official control are stored, not typed

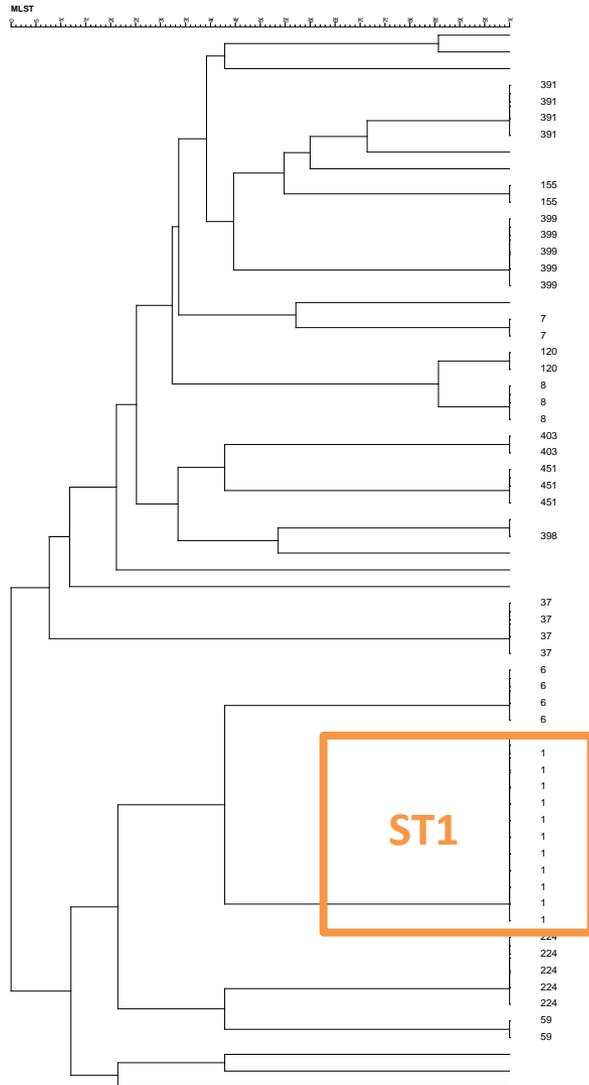
### Improved surveillance 2013-14:

- WGS of patient isolates, weekly
- January 2014: follow-up on all patients (incl. interview when possible)
- June 2014: Isolates obtained by control visits by the food authority (FVST) are submitted for WGS at SSI

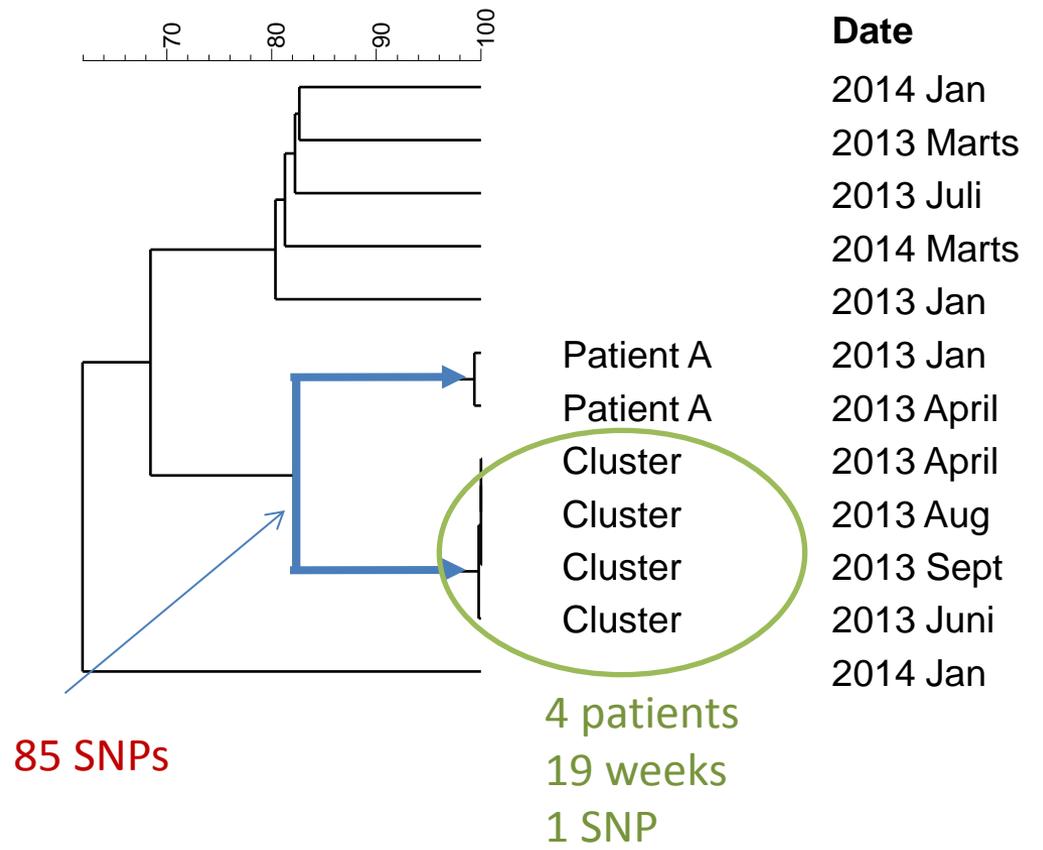


ssi-snp-pipeline at  
[github.com/PHWGS](https://github.com/PHWGS)

# MLST tree



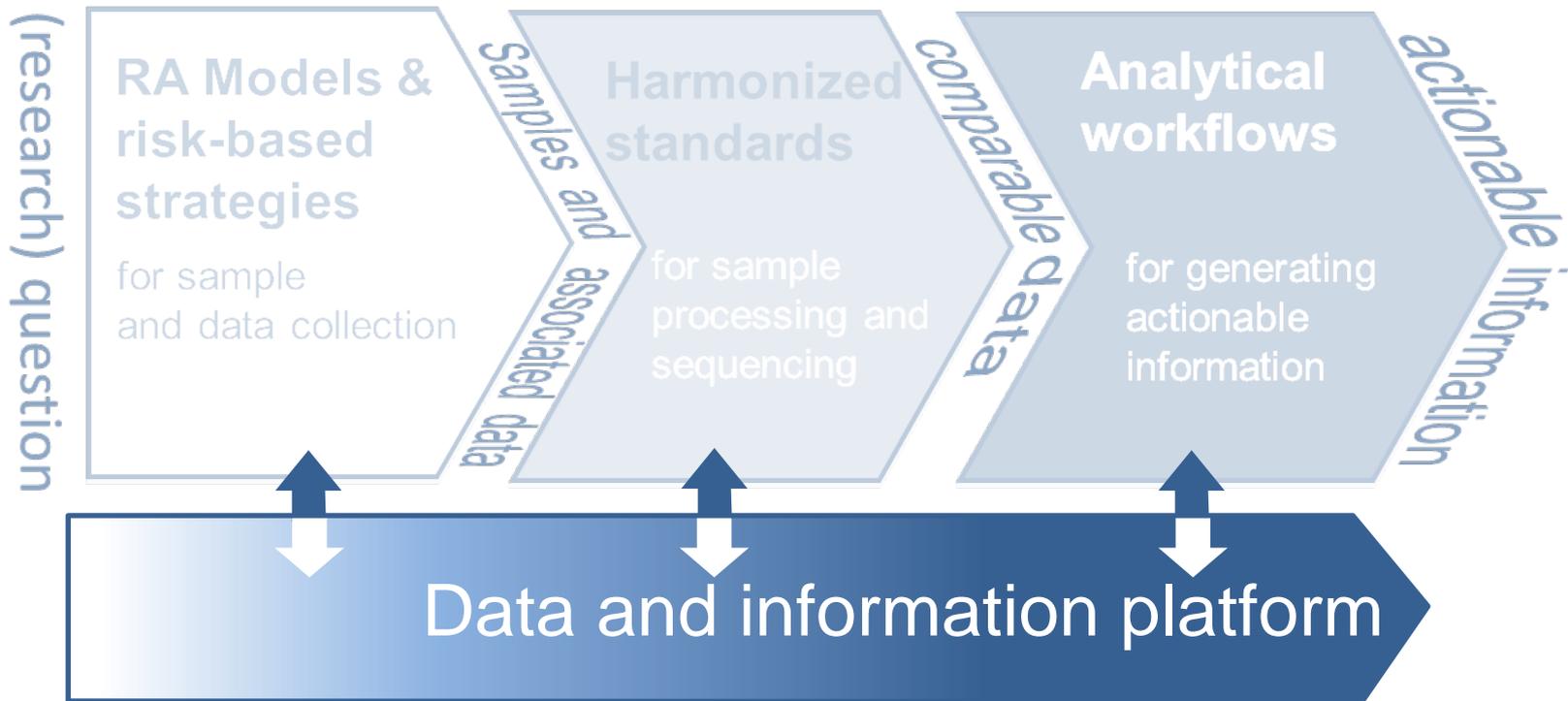
# WGS tree: increased resolution



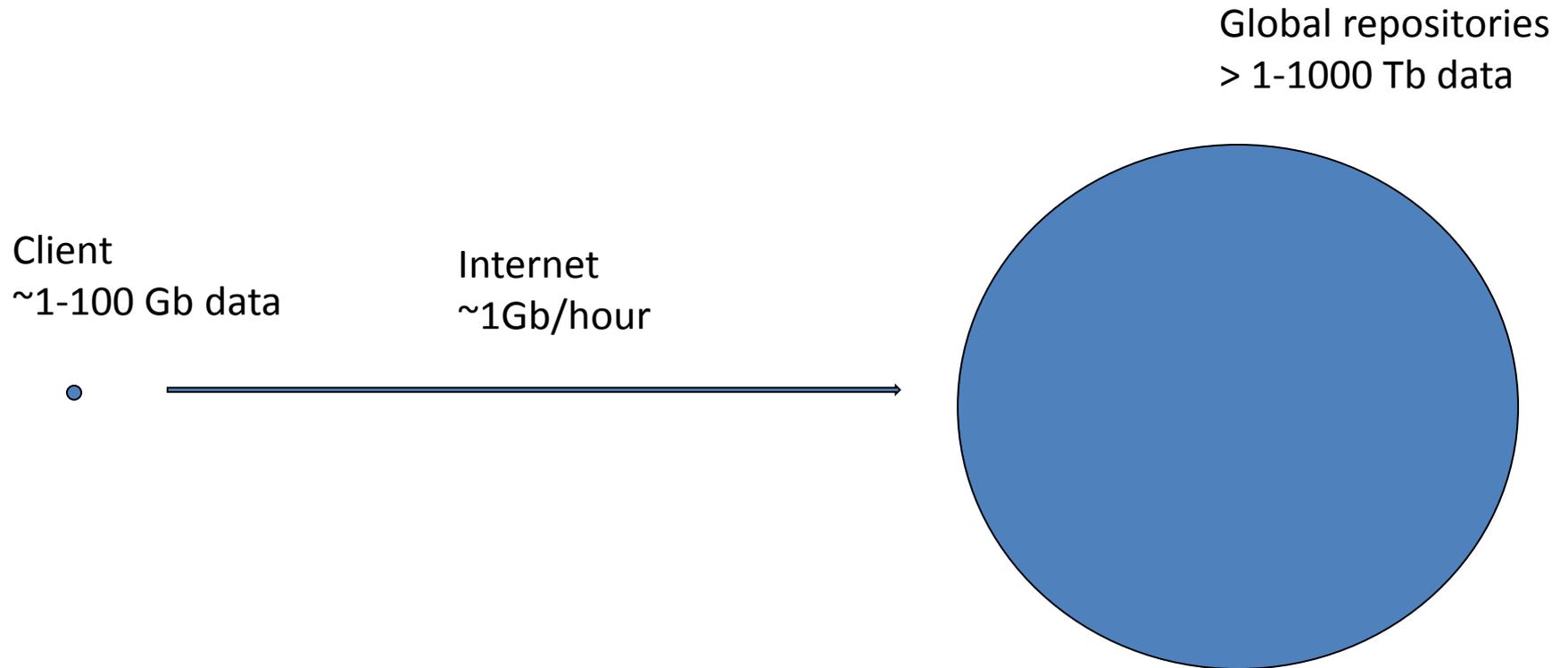
# Recent competition on a ASM conference (20 Listeria isolates) WGS

- Do the product isolates from facility #1 match the environmental swabs from facility #1?
  - Easy: Pipeline (species, closest match, MLST followed by snp-tree). Around 2 hours to answer.
- Do the product isolates match any other food/environmental isolates currently in the NCBI/SRA database under BioProjects PRJNA211456 or PRJNA215355?
  - Ca. 2 tera-bytes – depending on connection (1 to 10 Gb / h) from 200 to 2,000 hours
    - With 5 days to go we did not manage the challenge

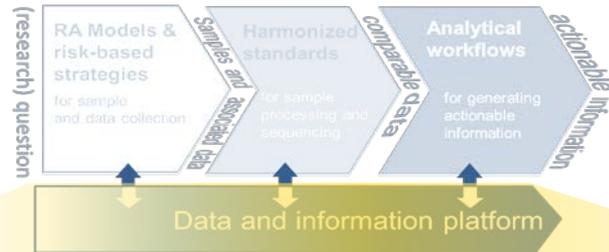
# The COMPARE platform



# Data comparison problem



# WP9 Information sharing platform



Guy Cochrane

WP leader



Ole Lund

WP co-leader

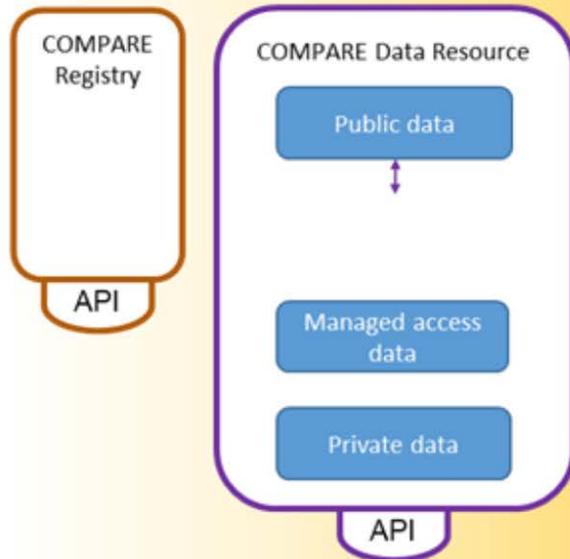


Istvan Csabai

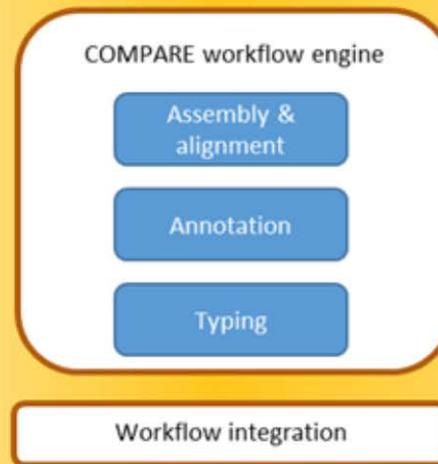
WP co-leader



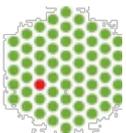
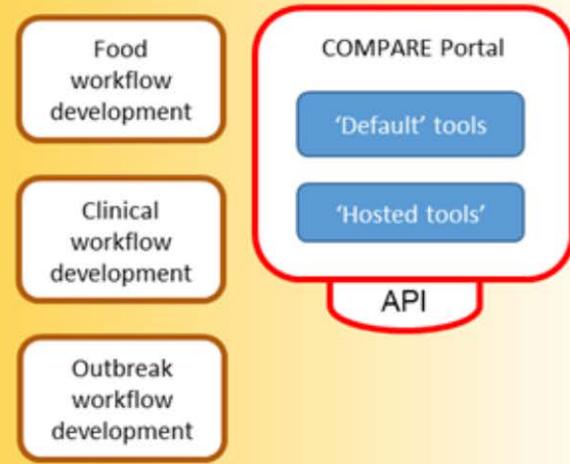
Sources



Processes



Portals and environments



Building on the EU ESFRI Elixir, EMBL and DTU infrastructures

# COMPARE



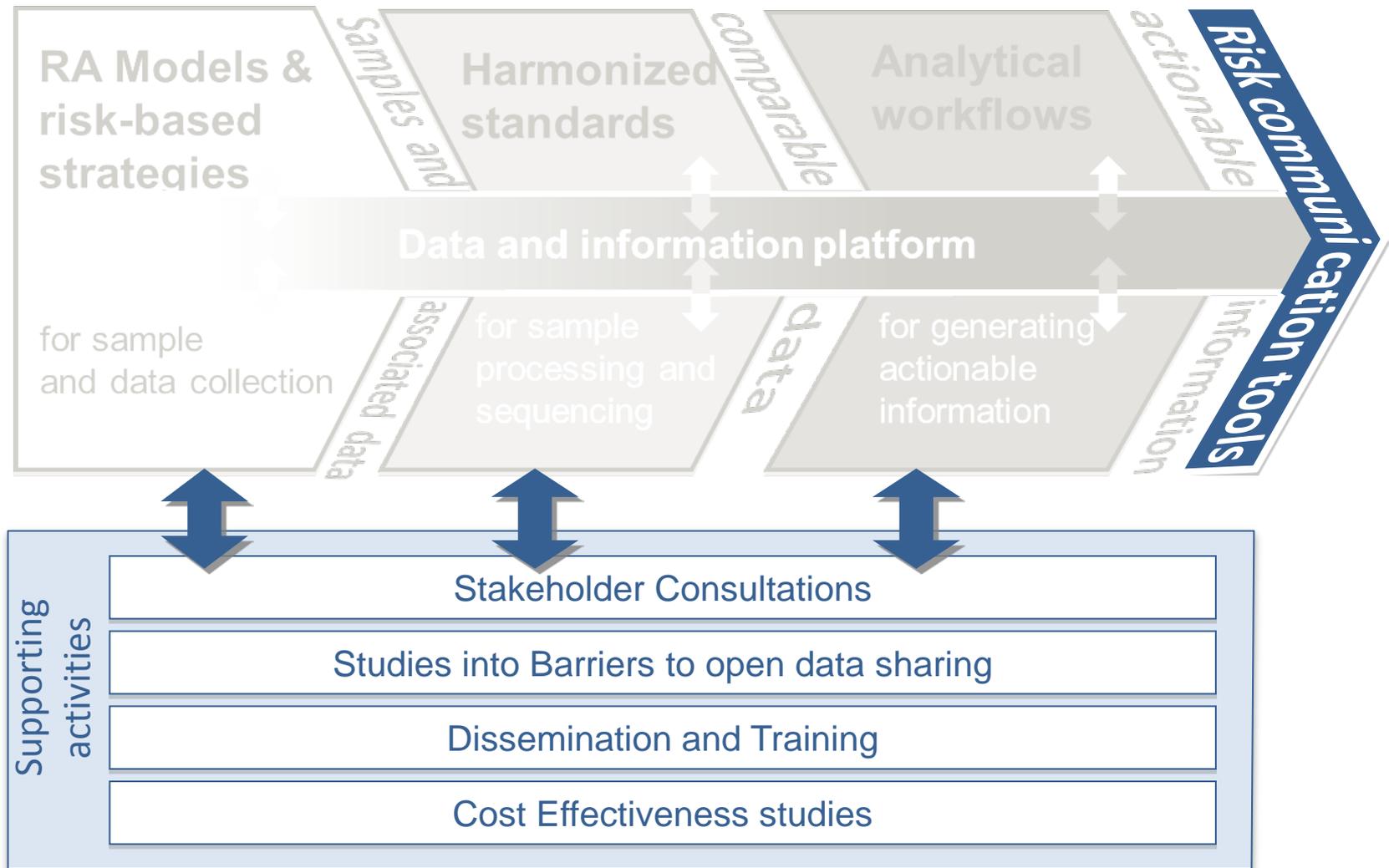
The **CO**llaborative **M**anagement **P**latform for detection and **A**nalyses of **(Re-)** emerging and foodborne outbreaks in **E**urope is a collaboration of 29 institutions with experience in outbreak detection and response in areas of human health, animal health and food safety.

## COMPARE Reference Genomes

This COMPARE Reference Genomes page offers a curated selection of published reference sequences covering viral, bacterial and protozoan genomes. These sequences can be searched and retrieved via the following URLs as tagged records in the European Nucleotide Archive (ENA). The complete COMPARE Reference Genomes dataset can be retrieved via the following URL:

<http://www.ebi.ac.uk/ena/data/xref/search?source=COMPARE-RefGenome>

# WPs 10-14: supporting activities

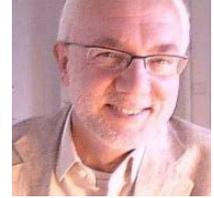


# WP12 barriers to open data sharing

The willingness of all envisaged COMPARE users to rapidly share their data with others is a crucial prerequisite for COMPARE having an impact on rapid pathogen/outbreak detection and mitigation. There are various barriers or bottlenecks to rapid and open sharing of sequence-based data and contextual metadata that influence the impact of COMPARE (e.g Publication priorities, Protection of Foreground, Exploitation of Foreground, fear of loss of control/capacity and capability gaps, Reputation/ Economic damages).

George Haringhuizen

WP leader



The goal of WP12 is to identify, clarify and, as far as feasible, develop practical solutions for Political, Ethical, Administrative, Regulatory and Legal (PEARL) barriers, that hamper the timely and openly sharing of data through COMPARE.

# Conclusions

- WGS/NGS is rapidly entering diagnostic and public health arena, with near real time data generation
- Sequence platforms rapidly developing, cheaper, simpler
- Bottleneck at level of bioinformatics, particularly for intergroup comparison, national, international
- COMPARE aims to develop infrastructure and ICT to meet the coming demand
- In 1-2 years, we will be seeking partners for pilot projects

