

Short Report

Preliminary observations on *Schistosoma curassoni* Brumpt, 1931 in Niger

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NDIFON *et al.* (1988) recently reported the presence of *Schistosoma curassoni* in northern Nigeria. This parasite of Bovidae was formerly known only in Senegal, Mali and Mauritania (GRETILLAT, 1962).

We report here the results of two surveys on schistosome infections of ruminants in Niger. The first survey was carried out in the western part of the country, in the Niamey and Tillabéri abattoirs, from November 1987 to July 1988. The second survey was conducted in the east of the country, in Zinder abattoir, in February 1989.

that *B. senegalensis* was marginally compatible with *S. curassoni*. Malacological surveys during September and October have revealed that *B. senegalensis* occurs very frequently in temporary ponds throughout Niger (F. Mouchet, personal communication). To our knowledge, no malacological survey has been done in the eastern part of the country during the favourable season for the development of *B. umblicatus*. From studies conducted in the western zone by CERMES and INRAN, it appears that, even though it has been reported in the two localities, *B. umblicatus* is rare.

Further studies are planned to determine the major biological and epidemiological features of *S. curassoni* in Niger in order to assess its genetic relationships with *S. curassoni* from Senegal and with *S. haematobium* and *S. bovis* from Niger.

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Table. Prevalence of *Schistosoma bovis* and *S. curassoni* in ruminants in Niger

Table with 6 columns: Locality, Hosts examined, Number examined, S. bovis, S. curassoni, Mixed infections. Rows include Niamey and Tillabéri (Cattle, Sheep, Goats), Zinder (Cattle, Sheep, Goats), and Zinder (Sheep, Goats).

^aMesenteric veins examined.

^bRectal scrapings examined.

Schistosome infections were detected either by examining the mesenteric veins for adult worms or by microscopical examination of fresh scrapings of the rectal mucosa. The specific identification of *S. curassoni* and *S. bovis* was made on the basis of egg morphology. The results are presented in the Table.

It appears that, unlike *S. bovis* which has been found in both surveys, *S. curassoni* is present only in the eastern part of Niger. Considering the rectal scraping examination, the observed overall prevalences in sheep (11.6%) and goats (4.3%) are slightly higher than those in Dakar (VERCRUYSSSE *et al.*, 1984). Enquiries from butchers in Zinder indicated that most of the animals parasitized by *S. curassoni* came from the Goure area, 170 km east of Zinder in the pastoral zone.

SOUTHGATE *et al.* (1985) and ALBARET *et al.* (1985) demonstrated the probable role of *Bulinus umblicatus* in the transmission of *S. curassoni* in the field in Senegal. SOUTHGATE *et al.* (1985) also demonstrated

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