

Project Update: May 2014

During last 4 months in anticipation of field work season we continued education of students and switched from group training and presentations to more intense individual training. Several students showed genuine interest in this topic, so we decided to include them in field work activities.

In this period, we worked intensively on establishing collaboration with local veterinarians, so we had several short but effective presentation concerning importance of sandfly research and magnitude of their zoonotic influence in this region.

Using newly established connections with veterinarians we distributed simple questionnaires concerning some basic questions about sandflies. These questionnaires were distributed by veterinarians among their clients and other local people. Results we got helped us to find some potential location for sandfly trapping.

Also, we prepared some promotion material in which common people can learn difference between sandflies and mosquitoes, about significance of sandflies, what we do as a team and why we do it.

By the end of April 2014, we have prepared everything for the field work (bought equipment, formed the sandfly team, identify the best location for trapping...). Hoping to accompany seasonal dynamics of sandflies we had our first field trip at the beginning of May 2014.

At the middle of May 2014, terrible floods hit Serbia when large numbers of villages, even cities, were under water. Cold weather, floods and erosions affected not just people, plant life and animals but also the sandfly fauna. These kinds of conditions have possibly delayed normal life cycle of sandflies in this region and reduced the number of specimens because larvae are not aquatic.



Photo 1. Sremska Mitrovica May 2014.

(Picture taken from:

<http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Drustvo/465846/Raste-vodostaj-Save-kod-Sremske-Mitrovice-ojacani-nasipi-odolevaju>)



Photo 2. Sremska Mitrovica May 2014.

(Original photo from the field after floods- marginal region of barricade wall)

In addition to bad weather conditions we had misfortune that some of our traps were missing after night at the field, so we had to improvise with new prototype traps. We designed new modified CDC/CO₂ traps that can work on dry ice bait (CO₂) and light together and separately (only light and only CO₂).

3 types of traps we used so far:



Photo 3. CDC light trap



Photo 4. Dry ice baited trap



Photo 5. Sticky paper traps

New modified CDC/CO₂ trap



Photo 6. Process of making traps



Photo 7. Process of making traps



Photo 8. Trap that is finished