

The effect of global change on mosquito-borne disease

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More than 80% of the global population is at risk of a vector-borne disease, with mosquito-borne diseases being the largest contributor to human vector-borne disease burden. Although many global processes, such as land-use and socioeconomic change, are thought to affect mosquito-borne disease dynamics, research to date has strongly focused on the role of climate change. Here, we show, through a review of contemporary modelling studies, that no consensus on how future changes in climatic conditions will impact mosquito-borne diseases exists, possibly due to interacting effects of other global change processes, which are often excluded from analyses. We conclude that research should not focus solely on the role of climate change but instead consider growing evidence for additional factors that modulate disease risk. Furthermore, future research should adopt new technologies, including developments in remote sensing and system dynamics modelling techniques, to enable a better understanding and mitigation of mosquito-borne diseases in a changing world.

The global threat of mosquito-borne disease

Diseases transmitted by arthropod vectors, such as mosquitoes and ticks, are major contributors to the global burden of infectious disease,¹ with nearly half the world's population at risk of infection with a vector-borne pathogen at any moment.² Mosquito-borne diseases are a key group of concern as they include both very high burden and important emerging diseases, including human malaria (around 212 million cases per year), dengue (around 96 million cases per year), chikungunya (around 693 000 cases per year), and Zika virus disease (around 500 000 cases per year; table 1).³

Globally, many mosquito-borne diseases are thought to be increasing in incidence and geographical distribution, with diseases both emerging in new areas^{4,5} and re-emerging in regions from which they had previously been eradicated.^{6,7} For example, the global incidence of dengue over the past 50 years has increased 30-times, following its spread into many new countries;^{5,8,9} while, yellow fever cases are reported to be increasing again in many endemic countries, after previous dramatic declines.⁷ These diseases, with their corresponding high morbidity and mortality, have the potential to exert substantial negative financial and societal effects and can dramatically inhibit the development and structure of economies, societies, and politics.⁶ As a consequence, much research has focused on understanding the current and future geographical distributions of disease risk, in the context of ongoing global change, to help guide interventions and safeguard public health.^{10–12}

In this context, previous research has strongly focused on modelling the direct effects of climate change on spatial and temporal disease risk,^{13–15} paying less attention to other factors that are already known to interact with both climate change and vector-borne diseases, such as land-use and socioeconomics (eg, poverty, trade, and travel).^{3,16,17} These additional global processes, and the interactions between them, might reasonably be shown to have a stronger immediate impact on future mosquito-borne disease burden than climate change effects.¹⁸ This effect would mean a more complete understanding of the role of global change in modulating the spatial and temporal

distributions of mosquito-borne diseases will be essential for the successful prediction and management of disease risk in the future.¹⁹ In this Review, we assess current knowledge on the relative effect of global change processes on mosquito-borne diseases risk and examine how these have been incorporated into existing analyses. We argue that the focus on the effects of climate change is insufficient to predict future risk, considering growing evidence for the key role of other global change processes in modulating mosquito-borne diseases. We suggest an alternative approach to modelling mosquito-borne disease risk and recommend future directions for research.

Climate change as a driver of mosquito-borne disease

Narrative review

We did a narrative literature review to improve the understanding of the scope and outcome of climate-based mosquito-borne disease modelling studies, structuring the search to explore two main areas. First, because climate and climate change might affect mosquito-borne disease epidemiology via different pathways, we considered the different mechanisms examined by each study, including influencing pathogen development within the mosquito, and vector population dynamics.^{20,21} For the second area, we examined how different modelling approaches, such as mechanistic and correlation-based methods, have been

Lancet Infect Dis 2019;
19: e302–12

Published Online
June 18, 2019
[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099\(19\)30161-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(19)30161-6)

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	Predominant vectors by genus	Estimated or reported number of cases per annum
Malaria	<i>Anopheles</i>	212 million (range 148–304 million)
Dengue	<i>Aedes</i>	96 million (range 67–136 million)
Lymphatic filariasis	<i>Aedes</i> , <i>Anopheles</i> , and <i>Culex</i>	38.5 million (range 31.3–46.7 million)
Chikungunya	<i>Aedes</i> , <i>Anopheles</i> , <i>Culex</i> , and <i>Mansonia</i>	693 000 (Americas)
Zika virus	<i>Aedes</i>	500 000 (Americas)
Yellow fever	<i>Aedes</i> and <i>Haemagogus</i>	130 000 (range 84 000–170 000) (Africa)
Japanese encephalitis	<i>Culex</i>	42 500 (range 35 000–50 000)
West Nile fever	<i>Culex</i>	2588
Data are from WHO. ^{3,2}		

Table 1: Number of cases of the major mosquito-borne diseases of global health significance per year

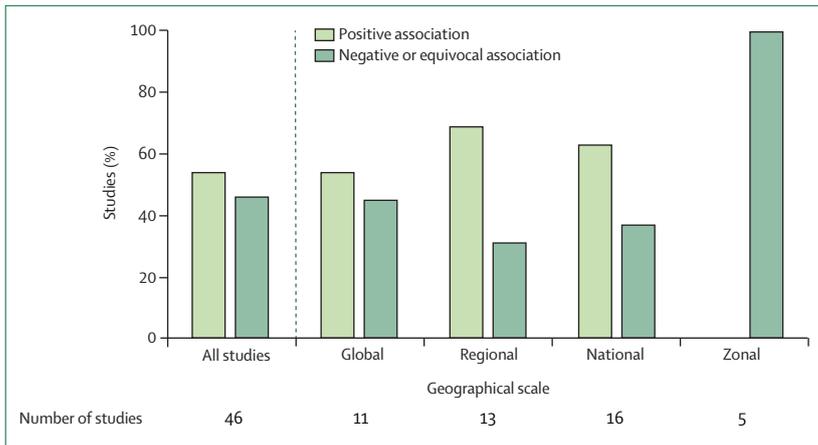


Figure 1: The percentage of studies predicting a positive or a negative or equivocal association between climate change and mosquito-borne disease risk per geographical region following review of the effect of climate change on disease risk

	National (%)	Regional (%)	Global (%)	Total (%)
Critical climatic thresholds and other global change drivers both excluded	24	4	8	36
Critical climatic thresholds included	16	16	4	36
Other global change drivers included	0	12	8	20
Critical climatic thresholds and other global change drivers both included	0	4	4	8

In total, 25 positive studies were included.

Table 2: Percentage of studies that consider the influence of other global change drivers in their models and critical climatic thresholds affecting the vector competence of mosquitoes, per geographical region

used to predict the effect of climate change on the risk of multiple mosquito-borne diseases over different geographical and temporal scales.²² Within this search we defined climate change as an alteration (either observed or projected) in climatic parameters over several decades, with changes in mosquito-borne disease risk inferred from variations in disease incidence or vector populations.

Of the 234 papers identified, 46 studies met the inclusion criteria (appendix p 1–4). Overall 54% of studies showed a positive association between climate change and mosquito-borne disease risk, with increased variations in meteorological values associated with increased vector abundance or disease incidence. However, the proportion of studies showing this positive association varied depending on the geographical scale of the study (figure 1). Of those studies that predicted increased disease risk with climate change, less than half included key biological information, such as vector critical climatic thresholds, and 28% considered other global processes (table 2). Of the global change processes examined in the 46 studies, 17% included land use; 11% included human population density, of which less than half considered future human density projections; and 7% included socioeconomics (appendix p 1–4).

Temperature, precipitation, and humidity were the main parameters used to model climate change (appendix

p 1–4). More than 97% of studies included the effect of temperature change in their analyses, 78% included precipitation, and 22% considered humidity. Temperature has been a predominant research focus because mosquitoes are ectothermic and ambient temperature strongly influences important epidemiological processes, including vector development, biting rates, and pathogen development within the vector.¹⁵ Precipitation is regularly included as a parameter in models of mosquito-borne disease risk because water pools are required for mosquito development and associated humidity affects mosquito survival and flight.^{23,24}

Changes in temperature, precipitation, and humidity were determined from recorded climatic data or from projected climatic values by use of different scenarios of climate change (eg, the 2014 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report).²⁵ Regarding modelling approaches, more than 50% of the studies used correlative models to investigate statistical associations between mosquito-borne disease risk and explanatory variables.²² Other studies used mechanistic models that incorporated biological or environmental mechanisms assumed to drive disease dynamics (eg, increased rainfall providing water pools for vector development). In addition, a few studies combined correlative and mechanistic approaches in hybrid correlative models. Mechanistic models were used more commonly in small geographical area (ie, zonal [states or districts] or national) analyses compared with correlative methods, which tended to be used for large-scale regional (ie, international) or global analyses. Most studies were prospective (ie, predicting the future), but a few were retrospective or theoretical.

The overall results indicate that no consensus exists on how changes in climatic conditions will impact mosquito-borne disease risk. This equivocal conclusion might reflect choice of modelling parameters (ie, selected climatic variables), spatial or temporal scales of the analyses, modelling approach or exclusion of important factors or biological processes from the analyses.

Climate change and mosquito-borne disease risk

The strong focus on the effects of temperature change in the field of mosquito-borne disease research^{11,26–28} appears to have led to a body of international scientific reports concluding that mosquito-borne disease expansion will probably occur in parallel with climate change.^{25,29} However, the conclusions are based on the assumption that temperature is a robust predictor of mosquito population dynamics, despite many temperature-dependent associations and their interactions remaining poorly defined.^{14,30,31} For example, the effect of increasing temperature on physiological traits in ectotherms has been shown to be generally non-linear,^{15,32} and can result in negative outcomes, such as reduced survivorship¹⁴ and fast larval development, resulting in small adult mosquitoes.³³ Small adult mosquito body size has been associated with reductions in fecundity, blood meal size,

See Online for appendix

and immunocompetence.³⁴ Therefore, paradoxically, increasing temperatures associated with some aspects of climate change can actually reduce the risk of transmission in certain regions via the negative effects of the increasing temperatures on vector competence (ie, the ability of vectors to become infectious).

Temperature changes also affects the time taken for pathogen development within the mosquito (ie, the extrinsic incubation period).^{15,30} The extrinsic incubation period has a major impact on disease transmission because small changes in this parameter can greatly affect the number of mosquitoes that live long enough to become infectious. However, most climate-based mosquito-borne disease models do not include this parameter; furthermore, when it is included in a study it is often based on out-dated temperature-dependent models developed from a single mosquito species that do not consider the effect of other abiotic (eg, larval habitat quality) or biotic (eg, parasite competition within the mosquito) factors.³⁵ Studies have typically shown the extrinsic incubation period to be shortened with increasing temperature, and suggested related high infection and transmission.^{36–38} However, this effect can vary considerably depending on the specific vector and pathogen.³⁵ For example, in vectors of the genus *Aedes*, low temperatures have been shown to shorten extrinsic incubation periods and cause high numbers of viral infections by suppressing mosquito antiviral immunity.³³ Other studies have shown that large temperature fluctuations at low mean temperatures cause shorter extrinsic incubation periods and higher infection in vectors of dengue virus^{39,40} and malaria,⁴¹ when compared with more consistent conditions. The lack of clarity about the association between the extrinsic incubation period and temperature is an essential knowledge gap that requires further empirical research to inform accurate forecasting of mosquito-borne disease risk.

There is considerable debate about how future climate change will affect precipitation trends,^{42,43} but the consensus is that the frequency of extreme precipitation is likely to increase.⁴⁴ With regard to mosquito-borne diseases, increased variation in precipitation might either increase vector breeding habitat formation or reduce it via detrimental periods of drought and extreme flooding. Similar to the effects of temperature, the association between precipitation and mosquito-borne disease risk is non-linear.^{27,45} Several time-lagged effects (eg, the time between water pooling and adult mosquito emergence) need to be considered in any analysis.⁴⁶ Furthermore, precipitation alone does not account for the presence of vector breeding habitat. It will also depend on species-specific preferences (eg, water depth) and hydrological factors (eg, soil type and vegetation) that control temporary water body development.^{45,47} Some studies have incorporated hydrological processes into their regional disease risk models;^{47–49} however, the practice has not been widely adopted, possibly because of

the increased complexity needed to model these processes or infrequent collaboration between disease researchers and hydro-logical experts.

Although climate-based models have proved useful in improving the understanding of mosquito-borne disease risk at the local level⁵⁰ and over short timescales,⁵¹ models based solely on approximating the impact of climatic factors are unlikely to be as effective over large spatial and temporal scales. We already know of other important mechanisms that affect the geographical distributions of vector populations, such as dispersal (eg, via host movement, wind, and trade routes), and biotic interactions (eg, competition and predation).^{20,52,53} For instance, although the West Nile virus was theoretically able to exist in the Americas because of climatic suitability, it only spread from its original range in Africa, southern Europe, and southwest Asia, to the whole of North America in 1999, probably because of dispersal by migratory birds.⁵³ Likewise, *Aedes aegypti* was expected to occupy rural habitats of southern USA because of climatic suitability, but these predictions proved inaccurate when the *Aedes albopictus* vector was present.²⁰

As a result, the burden of disease from mosquito-borne diseases felt by human populations is likely to be an emergent property of a set of interacting processes that will vary at different spatiotemporal scales. For instance, although climate change is likely to cause some predictable range shifts in vector species,⁵⁴ the precise effect of these changes can only be understood in the wider context of a set of non-biological factors, such as land-use change and socioeconomic development.⁵² Such interactions can be additive as shown by the synergistic effects of climate change, urbanisation, international trade, and travel that have promoted the global expansion in dengue virus transmission risk.⁵⁵ Alternatively, the factors affecting mosquito-borne diseases can be subtractive as seen with the global malaria recession that has occurred in parallel with increasing urbanisation⁵⁶ and economic development.⁵⁷ The usefulness of climate-based models of mosquito-borne disease risk should not be underestimated; however, to predict distributions of mosquito-borne disease risk in the context of ongoing global change, more complex models that consider multiple global change processes are needed.²⁸

The impact of land-use changes on mosquito-borne disease

Land-use change, from natural to human-dominated landscapes, is a key feature of the Anthropocene⁵⁸ and can alter disease risk by affecting the interactions between people, pathogens, vectors, and vertebrate hosts.^{3,17,59–62} The immediacy and strength of land-use change impacts on local ecology⁶³ support the argument that land-use change could prove to be the most important driver of recent disease emergence and global spread.^{3,62,64} However, the impact of land-use change on mosquito-borne disease risk will depend on several

factors, including geographical region of the land and mode of the change (ie, whether it was due to deforestation, agriculture, irrigation, or urbanisation, or a combination of factors).

Deforestation

Deforestation has been associated with increased human exposure to mosquito-borne diseases by its effect on the ecology of vertebrate hosts of zoonotic pathogens, vectors, and vector-host interactions.^{65,66} For example, reductions in biodiversity are associated with primary forest clearance⁶⁷ and can result in changes to the community composition of wildlife hosts^{3,60,68} and emergence of infectious diseases.⁶⁴ The ability of multihost-community structures to buffer against disease outbreaks as a result of pathogen transmission dilution has been suggested in biodiverse regions.^{69–71} Despite the theoretical and empirical evidence for this dilution effect being strongest for vector-borne pathogen transmission,^{70,72} the generalisability of this theory remains disputed.^{72–74}

Mosquito ecology is dependent on abiotic and biotic environmental conditions; as a result, land-use changes will have a significant effect on mosquito populations²¹ via altering microclimates, biotic interactions (eg, predation and competition), and nutrient availability.⁷⁵ Deforestation promotes the growth of certain mosquito populations because of changes in sunlight and the pH of water pools in cleared areas.⁷⁶ For example increased sunlight following deforestation has been shown to assist mosquito survival by providing nutrients for larvae⁷⁷ and limiting entomopathogenic fungi growth.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the effect of these changes on mosquito populations will vary depending on the specific microclimate created by the change in land use and the species' ecology.²¹ Frequently, deforestation has been associated with an increased abundance of mosquitoes that act as vectors of disease, with non-vector species favouring undisturbed forest.^{75,79} The mechanisms behind this remain unclear but might reflect the evolutionary processes that, due to a history of human–mosquito co-occurrence, have enabled pathogens carried by disturbance-specialist mosquito species to adapt to infect humans and proliferate in anthropogenic landscapes.⁷⁹

Agriculture

Agricultural land, including cropland, livestock production, and irrigated land, accounts for more than 30% of the world's land use.⁸⁰ Although agricultural land conversion has led to enhanced global food production and economic development, associated mosquito-borne disease risk has increased.^{2,81–87} Agricultural land has specific localised effects on important mosquito-borne disease correlates, such as livestock number and water management practices.⁸⁰ Livestock production, in particular, can modify mosquito-borne disease dynamics by increasing blood meal availability for the vectors⁸⁸ and provide competent reservoir hosts to maintain,^{76,89} and

even amplify,⁷⁶ zoonotic pathogens. For instance, domestic pigs are amplification hosts for Japanese encephalitis virus because the animals can mount high concentrations of the virus in their blood, which augments the proportion of infected vectors.^{89,90} Indeed, pig farming is reported to be a key correlate in the prevalence of Japanese encephalitis virus in Asia.⁹¹ Furthermore, livestock production might influence mosquito-borne diseases risk via its interaction with climate change because it contributes substantially to global greenhouse gas emissions; conversely, climate change might influence disease transmission in domestic animal populations.⁴⁴

Irrigation and dam creation have led to marked changes in the risk of global mosquito-borne diseases, such as Japanese encephalitis, lymphatic filariasis, and malaria.^{83,84,86,92,93} These practices lead to a dramatic expansion in vector breeding habitat⁹⁴ and can extend disease transmission seasons,⁸³ alter seasonal transmission dynamics in endemic areas,⁸⁶ and enable pathogen spread into non-endemic areas.^{91,95,96} However, the effects of these schemes on vector populations are complex and depend on vector species-specific life-history traits.²¹ For example, *Culex quinquefasciatus*, a major vector of lymphatic filariasis in Asia, prefers to breed in clean water whereas conspecific *Culex tritaeniorhynchus*, a principal vector of Japanese encephalitis virus, favours stagnant water.⁹⁷

Importantly, irrigation practices can also affect the socioeconomic status of a region, which can also influence mosquito-borne disease dynamics. The so-called paddies paradox, where land conversion for irrigation leads to an initial increase and then decrease in mosquito-borne disease risk, has been reported for malaria in Africa⁸³ and Asia.⁸⁶ This occurrence is postulated to reflect increasing socioeconomic status in the region associated with improved crop production. Other possible mechanisms include changes in ecology that limit vector abundance⁹⁸ and reduce pathogen spread over time.⁹⁹ With future expansion of irrigation practices and dam construction expected,^{93,100,101} the influence of agricultural land-use changes on disease risk requires consideration.

Urbanisation

The majority of urbanisation over the past 30 years has occurred in developing countries, where rapid and unregulated urban settlements have caused a strain on public health programmes. In 2016, 54% of the global population was reported to reside in urban areas, a substantial increase from 34% in 1960. This trend looks set to continue,¹⁰² with 2.5 billion people predicted to increase the world's urban population by 2050, predominantly in Asia and Africa.¹⁰³ Increasing numbers of people living in high densities could lead to higher overall pathogen transmission risk for some mosquito-borne diseases;¹⁰⁴ additionally, high volumes of travel and trade in urban hubs can enable the spread of vectors and pathogens between population centres.^{9,104–106} Nevertheless, the effect

of urbanisation on mosquito-borne disease risk is complex and evidence suggests both an expansion of some disease risks and a contraction of others. For instance, urban expansion has promoted the emergence of arboviruses transmitted by *Ae aegypti*, such as dengue, chikungunya, and Zika virus (table 1),^{9,106–108} by influencing resource availability and climatic factors that alter mosquito community ecology.²¹ The occurrence known as the urban heat island, where urban areas experience warmer temperatures than surrounding rural areas,¹⁰⁹ can increase the speed of vector development.²¹ In addition, the interplay between the structural complexity of urban landscapes and precipitation has been associated with greater vector numbers and several dengue outbreaks in Asia.⁴⁴ Some vectors, including *Ae aegypti* and *Ae albopictus*, are well adapted to urban areas;¹¹⁰ these vectors can breed in water containers, drains, and gutters with little competition or predation.²¹ However, the relative effect of urbanisation on vector populations is unlikely to be geographically uniform because urban environments represent a diverse spectrum of habitat mosaics, which vary in microclimatic features¹¹¹ and socioeconomic status.²¹

By contrast, increased urban development has also been associated with the global decrease in malaria over the past century.^{56,112} However, the underlying mechanisms behind this decrease remain unclear. Urbanisation has been shown to reduce infectious disease burdens, probably via improved health care, education, and employment levels when compared with rural areas.¹¹³ Nevertheless, reductions in disease risk can mask strong inequalities that exist within urban populations, especially in low-income and middle-income countries where urban communities with high levels of poverty show higher disease transmission than nearby rural communities.¹⁰⁵

Socioeconomics and mosquito-borne disease risk

Socioeconomic factors are increasingly recognised as important drivers of mosquito-borne disease risk.^{114–116} For malaria, a strong negative association exists between reported disease risk and national gross domestic product per person.¹¹⁵ This association reflects either high prevalence of malaria transmission in impoverished settings, the development of poverty due to the burden of malaria on economic growth, or a combination of the two processes.^{57,115} Although poverty has been cited as an important factor in the spread of several arboviruses,^{116,117} there is a paucity of literature on this topic to support this hypothesis.¹¹⁴ The economic burden associated with mosquito-borne diseases includes the direct costs of health provision and control programmes (eg, vaccination and vector control schemes), and indirect costs (eg, impacts on education, demographics, and human movement).^{57,115} Furthermore, macroeconomic costs might occur because of the effect of disease on foreign investment, trade, and tourism.⁵⁷

Sometimes these factors combine to impede economic development and strengthen the association between

poverty and disease^{57,118,119} leading to poverty traps, a self-reinforcing mechanism enabling poverty and diseases to persist.¹²⁰ Poverty traps can be accelerated by the development of synergistic diseases, referred to as syndemics, as seen with lymphatic filariasis and HIV in east Africa.¹²¹ Escaping from poverty traps is particularly difficult for underprivileged rural populations who generally rely on subsistence agriculture, have poor access to health care, and have a high prevalence of infectious diseases. A further complexity arises when disease risk is a function of underlying production systems (eg, livestock are a major feeding resource for Rift Valley fever vectors and rice paddies are a major habitat component for Japanese encephalitis vectors). The currency of people in poverty is often biological (eg, crops and livestock, human health, and nutrition), the dynamics of which are dependent on ecological systems; as a result, economic development could be tied to the ecological processes.¹¹⁹ Models representing this relationship show that poverty traps are features of coupled ecological–economic systems and within these systems, infectious diseases can limit economic growth.¹¹⁹

External intervention (eg, use of federal funds or international aid) can allow areas with high endemic disease burden to escape disease–poverty feedbacks.¹²² This economic development could then act to reduce contact between people and mosquitoes via vector protection, improved housing, and environmental management (eg, larvicide treatment and vector habitat destruction).^{3,123} Moreover, hazardous behaviours are often reduced, such as accessing high-risk areas for resource exploitation or settlement.⁶² The weight of evidence to date suggests economic growth reduces mosquito-borne diseases risk; however, it also results in increased movement of people, animals, commodities, and accompanying pathogens and vectors via travel and trade.^{9,76,124,125}

The interplay between global change processes: case studies of dengue and malaria

Despite growing convergence in the field of mosquito-borne disease research that considers interactions between global change processes,⁵⁵ these dynamics and potential resulting trade-offs that either positively or negatively affect global health,¹⁹ are often not represented in models. Below, we outline the impact of these interactions on the global distribution of dengue, which has dramatically expanded over the past 30 years, and malaria, the incidence of which has contracted during the same period (figure 2). This comparison helps to illustrate that climate change is just one part of an overall mechanism that is changing the epidemiology of mosquito-borne diseases.

Dengue

Although climate change is known to directly influence dengue virus transmission, Messina and colleagues¹²⁸ suggested that other global change processes and their

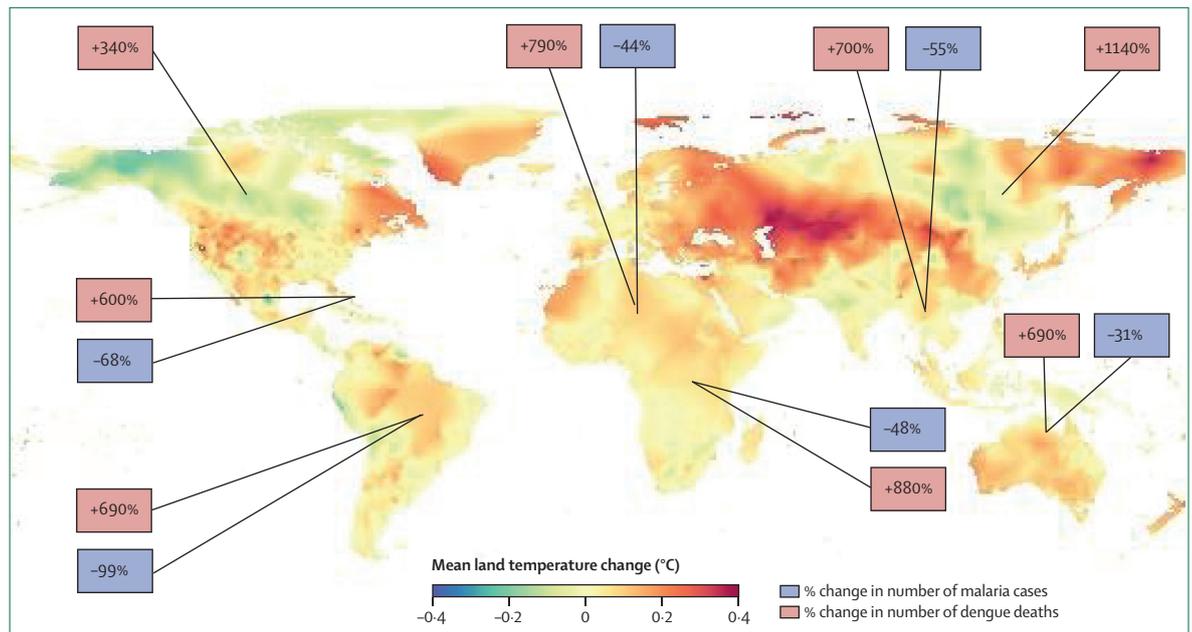


Figure 2: Percentage change in dengue cases and malaria deaths and annual mean land temperature change between 1993 and 2013

WHO regions include Latin America, the Caribbean, North America, north Africa and the Middle East, south and southeast Asia, central and east Asia, Oceania, sub-Saharan Africa. Climatic data were accessed via the Climatic Research Unit¹²⁶ and case data retrieved from the Global Burden of Disease Survey 2013.^{5,127}

interactions with the climate are likely to have a greater effect on dengue incidence in the more immediate future. The rapid global re-emergence of dengue virus within the past 50 years¹²⁹ is related to a number of interacting factors, including urbanisation, socio-economics, climate change, travel, and trade.^{130,131} For instance, the substantial expansion of urban areas after World War 2, especially in Asia, meant that large numbers of people migrated into cities, often residing in housing with no sanitation or running water.⁹ These factors, combined with poor health-care infrastructure, meant that by the 1980s dengue virus had escalated from causing sporadic epidemics to being a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in southeast Asia.⁹ However, the expansion of dengue was preceded by the spread of its principal vectors, *Ae aegypti* and *Ae albopictus*. Originally zoophilic and sylvatic, these mosquitoes became domesticated and were introduced to global urban hubs via travel and trade.^{12,110} Local populations of dengue viral vectors then increased in urban landscapes because of the higher numbers of human hosts and the abundance of suitable breeding habitats.^{12,21} Furthermore, complex interplay between urban heat island, pesticide use, and vector competition have been reported to affect vector competence and influence dengue virus transmission.²¹

Malaria

Much research has pointed to interactions between malaria transmission, land conversion, socioeconomics, and human movement.^{86,132,133} For instance, one study

coupled mosquito-borne disease dynamics with socioeconomic outcomes that occurred during land transitions¹³³ and found that an initial increase in malaria transmission to occur after land-use change was common, followed by either a further rise or a decline in transmission. This pattern of malaria transmission is postulated to arise because of ecological changes that promote transmission (eg, altered breeding sites and human-vector contact rates) occurring at a much faster rate than economic changes that can reduce transmission risk, such as improved housing and public health infrastructure among other factors. This analysis provided a theoretical explanation for empirical observations of higher malaria risk during the early stages of irrigation schemes compared with well established irrigated land^{82,86} and highlighted the need to consider both wide-ranging sets of underlying drivers and appropriate timescales over which each driver acts on a system.

The interacting effects of climate change and socioeconomic factors are also predicted to dramatically influence malaria risk over longer timescales. A study found that the projected population at risk of mosquito-borne diseases in 2050 was estimated to be 5.2 billion people when only climatic effects were considered, 1.74 billion when only gross domestic product effects were considered, and 1.95 billion when both sets of factors were considered.¹³⁴ This outcome indicates that climate change might act to negate the continued contraction in malaria expected with economic development. However, feedback loops between climate

change and economic development need to be better understood to improve predictions.

Recommendations for future research

Although the effects of climate change on mosquito-borne disease risk are substantial, the influence of other global change processes and their interactions occur over shorter timescales and are likely to have a greater impact in the immediate future.¹³⁵ Considering the effect of climate change in isolation might result in inaccurate predictions of mosquito-borne diseases risk, which might influence the formulation of robust policy recommendations for these emerging diseases. This issue is compounded by the fact that many studies do not account for the multiple sources of uncertainty in their predictions,^{28,43} including the data (eg, health, environmental, and socioeconomic), future global change scenarios (eg, climate emission scenarios), and the structure of models and their outputs.

We advocate future research to adopt a holistic system dynamics approach (figure 3) where the associations and the feedbacks between socioeconomic and environmental systems are considered.¹³⁶ However, to achieve this approach several research gaps need to be addressed. First, enhanced surveillance and evaluation of public health measures are needed to improve health data and define the factors that promote disease risk. Second, empirical research is required to describe the associations between vectors, pathogens, and global change processes to improve parameterisation of mosquito-borne diseases risk models. Third, more high-resolution, large-scale datasets for other global change processes are needed to match the quantity of climatic data available. Finally, further research is required to understand the scale at which different global change processes influence mosquito-borne diseases risk, and how to incorporate multiple scales into mosquito-borne diseases transmission models.^{16,28,44}

Addressing these gaps requires improved funding for empirical research and long-term surveillance at varying geographical scales, and enhanced collaboration between researchers working within different disciplines of mosquito-borne diseases research. In addition, greater funding for transdisciplinary studies is required to overcome unilateral modelling approaches and improve our understanding of disease risk. The ever-increasing availability of big data, sensor technology, and innovative software means researchers have the ability to understand environmental heterogeneity and global change over multiple spatial and temporal scales, including real-time perspectives.^{137–139} High-resolution satellite remote sensing data are available for some disease risk modifying variables, including land-use, climate, and human populations at a global scale over long periods. For example, remote sensing data from the European Space Agency satellite Sentinel are available weekly at a 10 m resolution¹⁴⁰ and can be processed into environmental

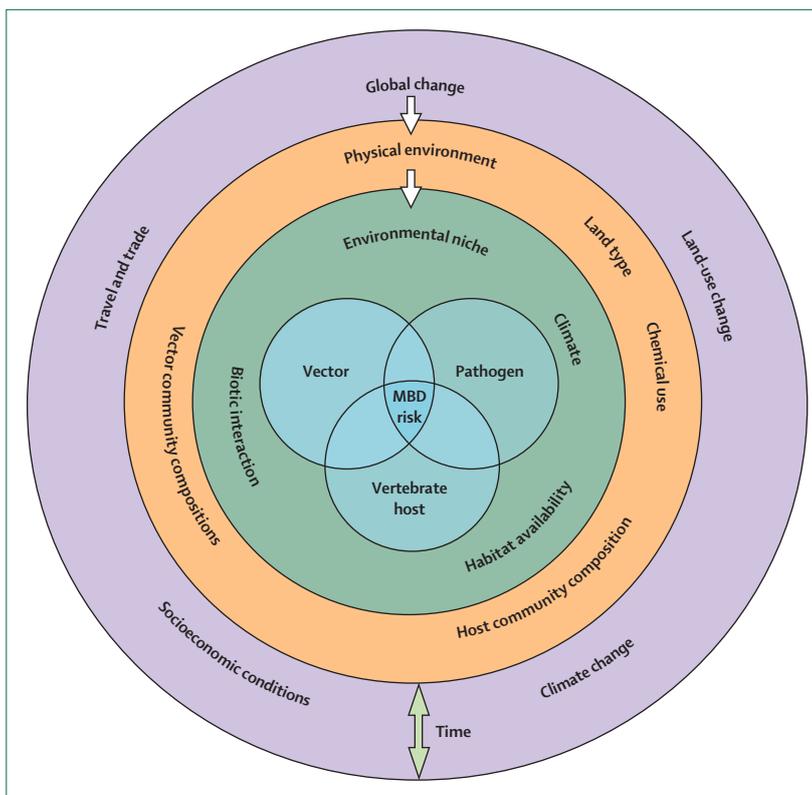


Figure 3: A system dynamics approach to understanding mosquito-borne disease risk
A conceptual model to show a system approach to understanding mosquito-borne (MBD) disease risk whereby public health outcomes are influenced by complex interactions between environmental and socioeconomic systems.

datasets via machine learning approaches. Mobile phone data have also been used to map patterns and processes in human populations,¹⁴¹ and to examine the effect of human movement on disease transmission data.¹⁴² For example, human mobility estimates generated from mobile phone data can accurately predict the distribution and timing of dengue epidemics in Pakistan.¹⁴² In addition, citizen science projects are engaging members of the public to record data, such as mosquito occurrence, via applications on their mobile phones.^{143,144}

Conclusion

Previous mosquito-borne disease research has focused on unilateral climate change analyses despite the growing evidence that other global change processes are important determinants of disease risk. Adopting a system dynamics approach, where the association between socioeconomic and environmental factors are considered, could improve future mosquito-borne disease projections and facilitate stakeholder engagement by showing the effectiveness of common goals in a changing world. Enhanced funding for transdisciplinary research and new opportunities in data availability and analyses will enable a better understanding of the interacting mechanisms that drive disease transmission, which will help to guide interventions and safeguard global health.¹³⁴

Search strategy and selection criteria

We searched PubMed and Web of Science, for all papers published from Jan 1, 2014, to March 28, 2018, inclusive to reflect the field since the publication of the WHO report *A global brief on vector-borne diseases* in 2014, which called for further research into vector-borne diseases. Search terms were related to models of human mosquito-borne diseases and climate change: ("mosquito*" or "mosquito-borne disease*" or "mosquito borne disease*") AND ("climate chang*" or "climat* change*" or "climat* warm*" or "chang* climat*") AND ("model*" or "modelling"). We excluded treatment papers, reviews, case studies, and surveillance reports and focused on modelling studies that evaluated the effect of climate change on mosquito-borne diseases and their vectors. Climate change was defined as an alteration (either observed or projected) to climatic parameters and we included studies in our analysis if they considered the effects of climate change over several decades rather than within-decade timescales.

Contributors

All authors conceived this literature review. LHVf undertook the literature review and created the figures and tables. All authors interpreted and critically revised the draft.

Declaration of interests

We declare no competing interests.

Acknowledgments

The authors thank Rory Gibb, Sue Daly, and Flora Spooner for their discussion and comments on the previous versions of the manuscript. This research was financially supported by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC; grant number NE-J001570-1) for KEJ and DWR; a PhD NERC studentship (grant number NE/L002485/1) for LHVf; a Medical Research Council UK Research and Innovation Rutherford Fellowship (MR/R02491X/1) and Wellcome Trust Institutional Strategic Support Fund (204841/Z/16/Z; both DWR); IA was funded by National Institute for Health Research (SRF-2011-04-001; Senior Investigator Award NF-S1-0616-10037), Medical Research Council, UK Department of Health and the Wellcome Trust. The funding sources had no involvement in the writing or decision to submit the paper for publication. IA had final responsibility for the decision to submit for publication.

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