Reviewer’s report

Title: Temporal Trend and Climate Factors of Hemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome Epidemic in Shenyang City, China

Version: 2 Date: 20 June 2011

Reviewer: Desheng Huang

Reviewer’s report:

In this revised version of the work, the authors have answered most of my questions, while I think the following things need to solved or improved.

Minor Essential Revisions

For the vaccination information, I do recommend the authors to read and absorb some information from the paper published in ‘Chinese Journal of Disease Control & Prevention’ [Bai S and Li P, Chinese Journal of Disease Control & Prevention, 2009,13(2):211-212, in Chinese]. There, Bai et al. provided the key information about the vaccination in the study area. The authors should discuss or add this kind of information in the part of discussion or limitation. Otherwise, the readers can not understand why the HFRS monthly incidence declined so obviously in 2007 compared to that in 2006. If according to the authors’ major view, the climate factors have effect on HFRS incidence, were there any corresponding extreme changes of climate factors in these two years?

In the section of Methods

Study area, Para 1, Line 4, the authors indicated ‘The city comprises 10 districts and 4 counties’

According to my understanding, Shenyang comprises 9 districts, one county-level city and 3 counties, no matter the cluster or definition of district/county-level sub-regions, I think the total number of district/county-level sub-regions should be 13, maybe the authors can visit the official website of Shenyang government (http://www.shenyang.gov.cn/web/assembly/action/browsePage.do?channelID=1240220664933) to get the accurate number.

By the way, as I recommended previously, the pooled coefficients, standard error and t value of the original climate variables can be gotten according to the result of linear regression and principal component analysis (PCA). It’s not fair to use linear regression from original climate variables directly for comparison with results of regression from PCA.

Figures,

Can these figures reach a higher resolution to meet the criteria for publication?

Figure 4, the title of Figure 4 is fitted and actual monthly of HFRS cases, is it monthly or bimonthly? I sent this query just based on the tick marks of X axis (6
major tick marks per year for the current figure). And for the X axis again, it is a little bit crowded for those 6 same year labels within one year period. It would be enough and also clear to indicate the year just once to get a better layout.

References
Highly recommend the authors to double check the format of the references, check the abbreviation of authors’ name, the title, the abbreviation of the journal name, the volume and page number information. I only list part of the corrections as follows.

For example,
ref 1 and ref 2, the issue number should be deleted or listed, please check BMC Infectious Diseases reference style for detail.
ref 2, there should be a space between ‘wild rats’ and ‘(Rattus norvegicus)’ for the title;
ref 4, the page number should be ‘318-327’ according to search via PubMed;
ref 7, the 5th author’s name should be ‘de Vlas SJ’;
ref 8, the source journal name should be ‘PLoS Negl Trop Dis’
ref 18, the journal name abbreviation should be ‘Int J Epidemiol’, and the current abbreviation of the authors’ names were different from those results from PubMed;
ref 20, the journal name should be ‘BMC Infect Dis’
ref 21, in the title, the word ‘hemorrhagic’ should be changed to ‘haemmorrhagic’ to according to the original full text and also the information provided by PubMed.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests