Reviewer's report

Title: Elevation and Cholera: An Epidemiological Spatial Analysis of the Cholera Epidemic in Harare, Zimbabwe, 2008-2009

Version: 1 Date: 22 March 2012

Reviewer: Patrizio Pezzotti

Reviewer's report:

The study reports an ecological analysis of data collected about an outbreak in Zimbabwe.

The question posed is well defined and the results are sound.

My major concern is that in its current form the manuscript is not easily comprehensible for a general reader. I suggest to revise the methods section to provide a more detailed description of the approach. Also the results section is poor of details.

Furthermore, the authors should provide pros and cons when using a complex statistical approach to demonstrate that altitude was an important determinant. To me it seems to be quite obvious that simpler statistical techniques were sufficient to arrive at the same conclusions.

Other minor comments:

1a. in the current version the resolution of figures seems to be low, in particular section a of figure 1 and section b of figure 2. In figure 2, section b it is not clear what Q1-Q5 represent. Were Q1-Q5 used in the model? It will be useful to provide same labels in the observed cases. I feel that in some cases the prediction was not so good.

1b. I suggest to add poles in the figures

1c. Figure 2b should be more commented in the results section

2. table 1. the average altitude of each suburb area should be added. I would suggest to add also Q1-Q5 (although at the moment I have not understood what they are)

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

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