Reviewer’s report

Title: Air Pollution and the Hemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome

Version: 1 Date: 4 December 2012

Reviewer: Hua Liang lin

Reviewer’s report:

I think that their statistical analysis and discussion is inappropriate. I suggest the author to re-do the analysis using a finer scale, say daily scale. Please pay more attention to the changes of direction in the uni- and multi-variate analyses.

I recommend a major revision before publication.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Abstract

1. PM10 should be written as PM10.
2. The effects of air pollution on the HFRS cases were both independent and dependent of the climate variables. By “dependent on climatic variables” it means that the climatic variables are effect modifiers for the association between PM10 and HFRS. But in this study, it seems that climatic variables are confounding factors.

Background

1. In this respect, it can be hypothesized that air pollution affects the occurrence of HFRS via climate change.
I don’t know how this hypothesis can be drawn.
To my understanding, the possible linkage with particles is due to the aerosols transmission route of this virus.

Data collection

1. “… HFRS has been legally designated as a communicable disease.”
I guess the authors wanted to state that this disease was national notifiable infectious disease.

Statistical analysis

1. Time lags of PM10 extending up to 12 months were also considered to verify the existence of a climate-dependent effect of PM10.
I don’t know how can the author examine the climate-dependent effect by examining the 12 months lag effect.

Discussion

1. HFRS is a critical infectious disease having a 15% mortality rate (18).
I guess it should be fatality rate.

2. More discussions are needed for the possible mechanism.

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

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

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