Author's response to reviews

Title: Brucellosis in livestock and wildlife: zoonotic diseases without pandemic potential in need of innovative One Health approaches

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Author’s response to reviews:

Rebuttal

Reviewer #1:

Comment: The paper by Jacques Godfroid addresses the disease ecology of brucellosis in livestock and wildlife in the One health context. Overall, I found the paper to be very interesting, though with a very strong veterinary epidemiology and ecological focus. The added value of considering the interplay between veterinary epidemiology and ecology is very clearly highlighted, especially when it comes to contrasting surveillance strategy in enzootic vs. disease-free regions, and developed vs. developing countries.

Response: I thank the reviewer for his very nice comment. However, the public health dimension of brucellosis was not much developed, so those unfamiliar with this zoonose may lack the necessary public health context of its surveillance and control. Below are a few comments that the author may find useful in revising the paper.

R: A few lines are added in the abstract and in the introduction of the revised manuscript in order to guiding the reader through the Human health dimension of brucellosis.

General comments:

Q1: There was relatively little information on the public health aspects of brucellosis, so it may be useful to remind the reader with a few key facts and figures on the public health aspect of brucellosis in the developed vs. developing world.

R1: A few key numbers are highlighted in the manuscript.

Q2: I found the section on the ethical dimension of veterinary culling to be somewhat detached from the previous section on brucellosis, and to some extent, a bit of scope. I fully agree that this is a very important question that would deserve to be addressed in a OH context, especially in conditions where veterinary and public health interests don't align, but I felt it would then take an
entire paper to treat this more extensively. As it is currently, there is\n't truly the space to address it in all its ethical dimensions, and the reader is left with a feeling that this was a bit of an add-on.

R2: I fully agree with the reviewer when he states that this aspect would require a full manuscript. However, I firmly but respectfully disagree when he states: “I found the section on the ethical dimension of veterinary culling to be somewhat detached from the previous section on brucellosis, and to some extent, a bit (out?) of scope for the main following reasons:

1. To the best of my knowledge this issue has thus far not been addressed in the literature in the OH context, although wildlife health it fully part of animal and environmental health, as defined by OH. Therefore, I genuinely think it deserves a place in its own right when addressing OH.

2. This paper is written as an “opinion” paper, aiming at raising awareness about different OH aspects that are somehow out of mainstream OH approaches, i.e., actions taken in the context of zoonosis with pandemic potential. Some issues like the culling of wildlife, justified as veterinary and public health measures, need to be justified in their ethical aspects in a OH global perspective. I am of the opinion that this deserves a section in its own right in this opinion paper. Again, the goal is not to answering a difficult and controversial issue but to raising awareness about the OH dimension of wildlife culling.

3. Society demands to address these issues. May I just mention the recent debate about the culling of Alpine Ibex in the Bargy range in the French Alps? This has raised hot debates and the questions has been addressed to the ANSES in order to provide the Competent Authority with a scientific advice in order to make informed-based decision.

I have addressed the reviewer’s concern by shortening this section (deleting the paragraph related to bovine tuberculosis and the culling of badgers in the UK).

Q3: The paper was submitted as a 'Systematic review', and I feel that this may be more of a 'Commentary', which is subject to a limit in length. In order to remain within the length limits, maybe the author could consider saving space by removing or reducing the sections on the ethical dimensions of culling, that could then give space to a couple of paragraphs on the public health aspect of brucellosis that would ease the reading of those unfamiliar with this disease?

R3: As mentioned, this paper is an “opinion paper” but was submitted under “systematic” review, according to instructions provided for the submission of manuscripts for the special OH issue. As mentioned previously, I genuinely think that the culling of wildlife, justified as veterinary and public health measures, need to be justified in its ethical aspects in a OH global perspective.

Minor comments:

1. In a few instances, the author indicated the link to a report that could be replaced by a proper reference (e.g. line 39, line 151);
Done

2. In noted duplicated sentences between the abstract and some of the text section (e.g. line 12-15 & 51-54), which may be better to be avoided.

Done

Reviewer #2:

This is a very nice written manuscript which fits the aim of the thematics series.

I only have a few minor comments

Q1: I suggest to change the article type from systematic review to commentary.

The article does not meet the PRISMA guidelines for a systematic review

R1: I fully agree with the reviewer’s comment. The paper was written as an opinion paper and fits the commentary format.

Q2: Page 6 line 142: camelids ???

R2: Camelids are a group of even-toed ungulate mammals. They form the family Camelidae. There are six living species of camelids. Camelids is found in number of publications indexed in Pubmed. However, in order to avoid confusion and to be consistent with the rest of the text, “camelids” is replaced by “camel

Q3: Page 6 line 144: camels or more => camels are more

R3: Corrected

Q4: Page 7 line 161: ewes, does and cows : does??

R4: Female goats are referred to as "does" or "nannies;" intact males are called "bucks" or "billies;" and juveniles of both sexes are called "kids".

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