

PRESS RELEASE

Maisons-Alfort, 6 November 2023

Stéphan Zientara appointed Director of the ANSES Laboratory for Animal Health

On 1 November 2023, Stéphan Zientara was appointed Director of the ANSES Laboratory for Animal Health. An inspector general of veterinary public health, he has worked for many years in the study and control of viral animal diseases in France, and at European and international level.

Stéphan Zientara has been Deputy Director of the Laboratory for Animal Health since 2014, and is a recognised expert in animal viral diseases such as African horse sickness, foot-and-mouth disease, bluetongue, West Nile virus and epizootic haemorrhagic disease. Some of these are re-emerging or can be transmitted to humans.

Stéphan Zientara has also taken part in a number of European research projects. He holds an authorisation to supervise research and is the author of numerous scientific publications. An expert in animal health for European and international organisations, he is in charge of the European Union Reference Laboratory for equine diseases and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Reference Laboratory for epizootic haemorrhagic disease. He is also deputy head of the European Union Reference Laboratory for foot-and-mouth disease.

As Director, Stéphan Zientara now coordinates all the activities of the ANSES Laboratory for Animal Health at its sites in Maisons-Alfort (Val-de-Marne) and Goustranville (Calvados), which work to identify and characterise the major pathogens of domestic animals and propose methods for controlling them, in four areas:

- management of major animal epidemics (foot and mouth disease, bluetongue, etc.)

- bacterial, viral and parasitic zoonoses (bovine tuberculosis, toxoplasmosis, etc.)
- emerging multi-species infectious animal diseases, particularly vector-borne zoonotic diseases (West Nile, tick-borne diseases, etc.)
- persistent and/or emerging infections of major importance in the equine sector (equine infectious anaemia, African horse sickness, etc.)

Upon his appointment, Stéphan Zientara emphasised the importance of the work carried out by the laboratory's teams in accordance with the "One Health" approach: *"The Laboratory for Animal Health, which is dedicated to diseases in domestic animals, mainly focuses on pathogens and parasites capable of infecting several species or being transmitted to humans. The dynamics of infectious agents are analysed from animal cell to herd level, in France and beyond our borders, as part of a One Health approach. The laboratory's study topics are reflected in its 36 national, European and global reference mandates. I will endeavour to maximise the synergies between the laboratory's reference, surveillance, diagnostic and research activities, which are one of its strengths and key characteristics, as well as its contributions to ANSES's collective expert appraisal work."*

In becoming head of the ANSES Laboratory for Animal Health, Stéphan Zientara takes over from Pascal Boireau, who has retired. A doctor of veterinary medicine, inspector general of veterinary public health and doctor of virology, Pascal Boireau initiated the first joint research unit (UMR BIPAR) bringing together ANSES, INRAE and EnvA, and led the ANSES Laboratory for Animal Health from 2007 to 2023.

Background

Stéphan Zientara obtained a doctorate in veterinary medicine from the National Veterinary School of Nantes in 1987 and a doctorate from the University of Nancy in 1995. He is an inspector general of veterinary public health and has also held an authorisation to supervise research since 2001. He has been Director of the ANSES/INRAE/EnvA Virology joint research unit since 2008 and Deputy Director of the Laboratory for Animal Health since 2014. Stéphan Zientara has been involved in European and international roles for many years. He is in charge of the European Union Reference Laboratory (EURL) for equine diseases and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Reference Laboratory for epizootic haemorrhagic disease, and is deputy head of the EURL for foot-and-mouth disease. Stéphan Zientara is an animal health expert specialising in various animal viral diseases for international organisations such as WOAH, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Commission (EC). He has taken part in numerous research projects funded by the European

Union. In 2023, he was re-elected as Chair of the Scientific Committee of the FAO/EU Commission for the control of foot-and-mouth disease (EuFMD).

Find out more about **ANSES's Laboratory for Animal Health**.

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The French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES) provides public decision-makers with the scientific benchmarks needed to protect humans and the environment against health risks. It studies, assesses and monitors all the chemical, microbiological and physical risks to which humans, animals and plants are exposed, thereby helping the public authorities take the necessary measures, including in the event of a health crisis. A national agency working in the public interest, ANSES comes under the responsibility of the French Ministries of Health, the Environment, Agriculture, Labour and Consumer Affairs.