

## International Meeting of countries that are facing outbreaks of Leptospirosis in the Americas

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### **Global Leptospirosis Environmental Action Network**

*Dr. Eric Bertherat, Pandemic and Epidemic Diseases, WHO/Geneva*

In his presentation Dr. Bertherat referred to the health perspective on leptospirosis, mentioning important and unique aspects of the disease. He explained that to estimate the magnitude of the problem of leptospirosis, WHO, in 2006, appointed a committee to evaluate the global severity of the disease, which resulted in alarming numbers and found that outbreaks occur after climatic disasters. He presented, as an example, what happened in the Philippines in 2009, after weather events the incidence of leptospirosis cases had a considerable increase. Given this situation, guidelines for controlling outbreaks were evaluated and many questions and concerns were found about the actions against outbreaks. He highlighted as an important point the revision of antibioprophylaxis measures, taking into account risk groups, such as pregnant women, at the time of treatment protocols. He explained what GLEAN is, with whom it is composed, its function, its objectives and its priorities. Furthermore, he stated that since GLEAN's priorities are outbreaks that have occurred after climatic disasters, the outcome of all this work is a plan of action for five years with 4 levels of intervention. He highlighted the importance of definition and differentiation of the seasonal behavior of the disease compared to outbreaks, for this reason he recommended that defining an epidemiological threshold would greatly help optimize health resources. Finally, he closed by giving his recommendations for the control of outbreaks and his conclusions about the extent of the disease and the work that is still to be done.