

Review of: "A Dataset of Small-Mammal Detections in West Africa and Their Associated Micro-Organisms"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The study describes the distribution of small mammals and associated pathogens in West African countries, using data obtained from 127 rodent trapping-related studies conducted across 14 West African countries.

To provide a more insightful perspective on the distribution of rodent species in West Africa, and their probable associated pathogens, it would be more beneficial to narrow down the proportion of species distribution and associated pathogens in the West African region rather than stating the broad global account, as this could potentially generate greater interest among the policy holders and prompt the development of more region-specific interventions.

While the authors highlighted limitations associated with rodent/pathogen-related studies in the region, it is important to succinctly account for what has been done and identify what is missing; this is crucial to bridge the identified knowledge gaps.

The authors mentioned "rodent trapping, taxonomic, and geographical sampling biases" without providing an explanation of these terms. Doing so would enhance understanding, especially for those from different fields interested in managing rodent-borne diseases.

The authors may have missed out on some important studies, considering the search terms used. To enhance the study's robustness, incorporating keywords such as "small mammals," "rats," "insectivores," and "rodent-borne disease," etc., is recommended. Also, excluding all non-English studies may have led to under-reporting, given the diversity of the West African countries.

Did the authors exclude or include review studies? This is not mentioned in the inclusion or elimination criteria.

Although this manuscript attempts to characterize the distribution of small mammals and their associated pathogens in West African countries, the authors did not include their findings (results) and discussion in this write-up. This omission is significant to understanding the study's main objective.

Overall, while the intended objective is crucial to developing region-specific interventions in rodent and pathogen management, the manuscript requires substantial revision to meet global scientific publication standards.

