

Expanding tick habitat in the European North of Russia (1)

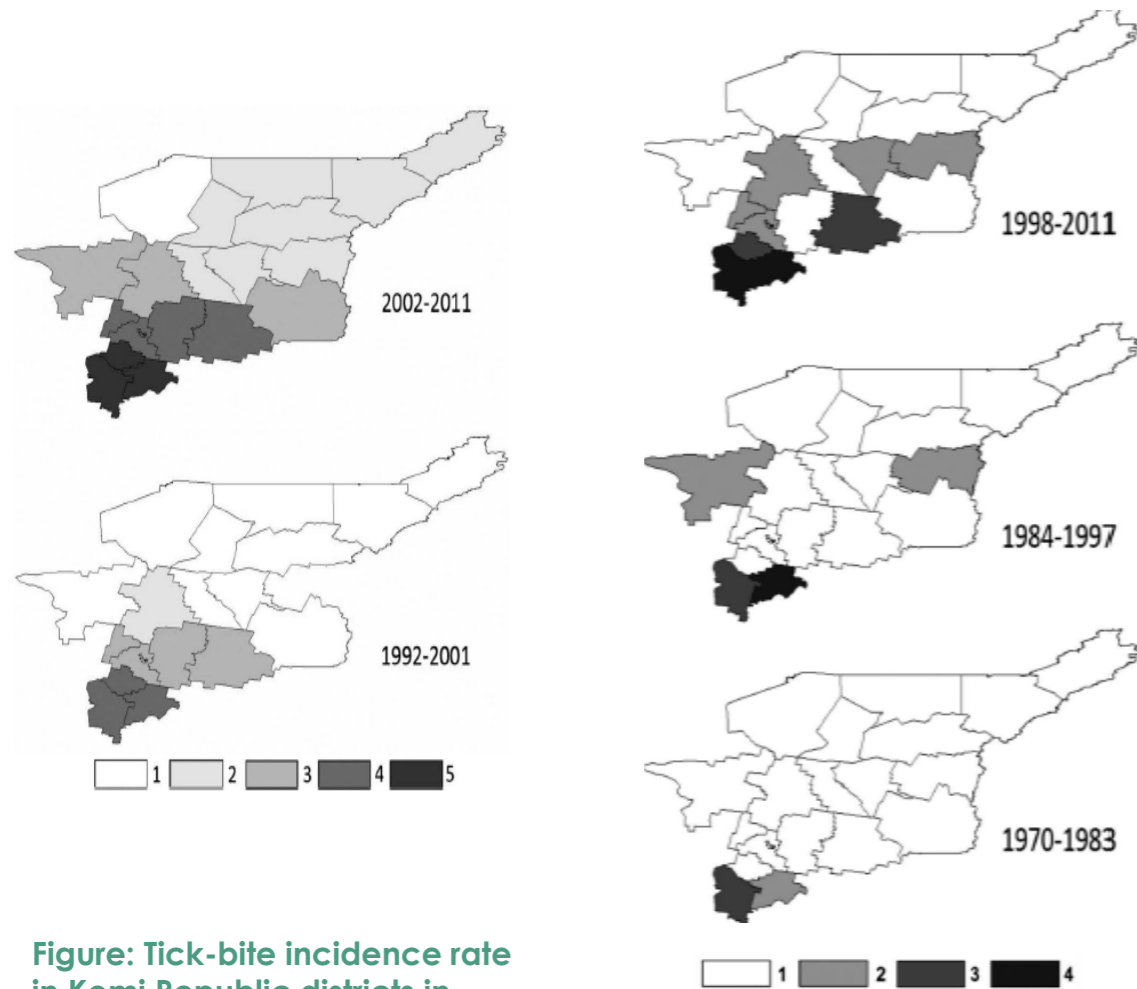


Figure: Tick-bite incidence rate in Komi Republic districts in 2002-2011 and 1992-2001. 1: <0,1; 2: 0,1-10; 3: 10-100; 4: 100-1000; 5: >1000.

Figure: TBE incidence rate in Komi Republic districts for 14-year periods. 1: <0,099; 2: 0,1-0,99; 3: 1-4,99; 4: >5.

From 1998–2011 we observed a substantial increase in **TBE** virus both in questing and in feeding ticks in Komi Republic, Russia. The average annual incidence rate of TBE was >6-fold higher than during previous periods.

We found a 23-fold increase in the tick-bite incidence rate in humans, a northward shift of the reported tick bites, and an increase in the tick bite season from 4 to 6 months.

The increase in TBE correlated with the expanding range of *Ixodes persulcatus* ticks. The territory with reported cases of TBE expanded northwards.