

# Geographical Spread of the Exotic Mite *Tropilaelaps* spp.: new reports from the Caucasus

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This note presents an update of the geographical distribution and spread of *Tropilaelaps* spp. mites, parasites of bees and exotic in the European Union (EU), as of 11 December 2025. Previous states of play of the geographical distribution are [available here](#).

The presence of *Tropilaelaps* spp. has been reported in the autonomous Republic of Abkhazia and in the Russian Republic of Dagestan, and suspected in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia (Figures 1 & 2).

The map of the worldwide geographical distribution of *Tropilaelaps* spp. has been updated accordingly (Figure 3).

## Description

- **Presence in the Republics of Abkhazia and of Dagestan**

A study was conducted from 2022 to 2024 in an apiary from the Krasnodar region of Russia to investigate the specificities of the infestation by *Tropilaelaps mercedesae* in Russia (Brandorf *et al.* 2025). The mite has been present in this region since the summer of 2021 (Brandorf *et al.* 2024). The study compared the morphological characteristics of the local mite population with those from other regions and countries. Among these other regions and countries, 200 specimens were collected in the Gagra district of the autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, situated in northwestern Georgia, and another 200 specimens were collected in the Russian Republic of Dagestan, located in southwestern Russia at the eastern end of the North Caucasus (Figures 1 & 2). This constitutes the first reported occurrence of *Tropilaelaps mercedesae* presence in these two territories.

- **Suspected presence in another region of Georgia**

Discussions between the Anses<sup>1</sup> laboratory of Sophia Antipolis, a French association for rural development and a local Georgian beekeeper association suggest the presence of *Tropilaelaps* spp. in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region, situated in southern Georgia near the frontier with Turkey and Armenia (personal communications, 2025) (Figures 1 & 2). In 2024, the presence of *T. mercedesae* was confirmed in the Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region in northwestern Georgia (Janashia *et al.* 2024; WOA website, consulted on 11 December 2025).

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## Discussion

These suspicions have neither been confirmed by official analyses, nor have been notified to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), and no data have been published in international peer-reviewed scientific journals. Thus, this information should be considered with caution.

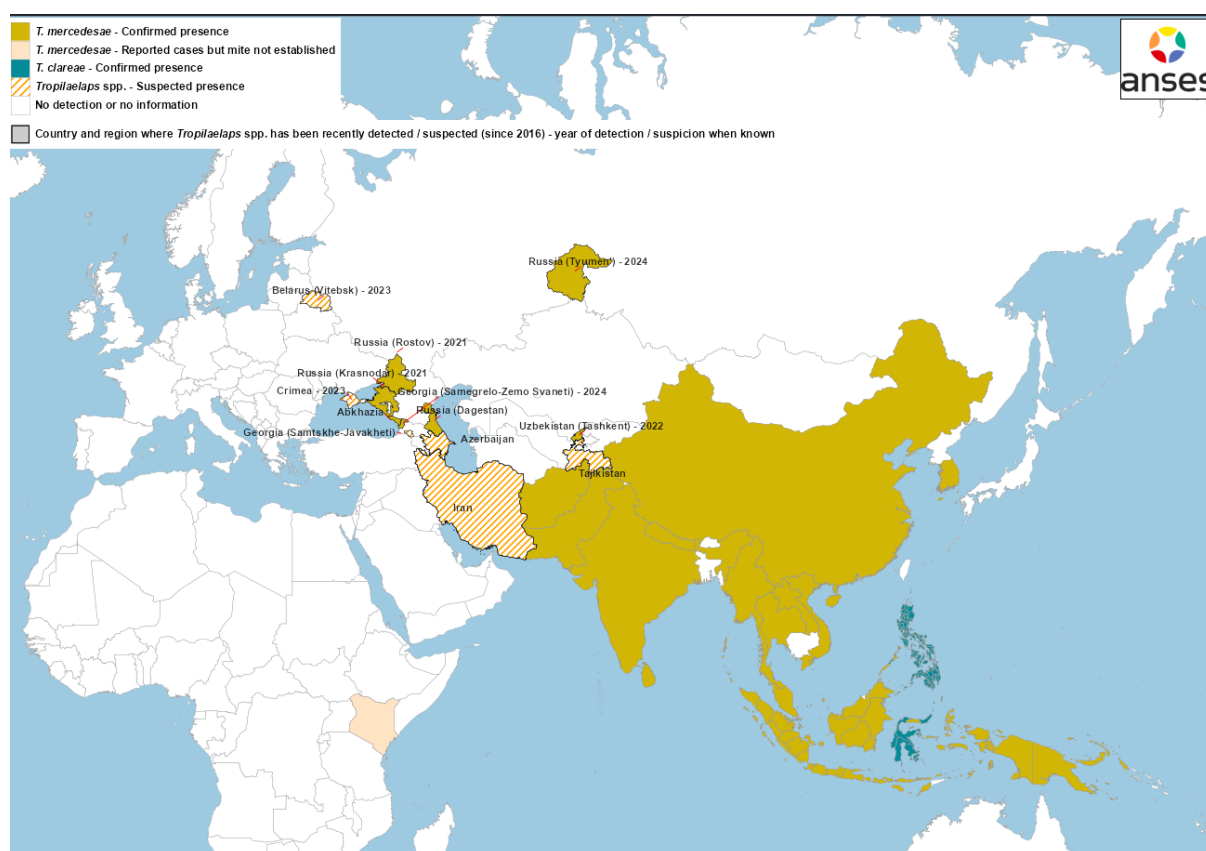
These data do not allow for an accurate description of the epidemiological situation in the affected territories. They do not originate from official surveillance systems but rather from scientific projects focusing on one or a limited number of apiaries, or from informal feedback. Their objective is neither to assess the prevalence of *Tropilaelaps* spp. nor its spread.

However, the potential spread of *Tropilaelaps* in regions neighbouring the EU constitutes an increasingly serious threat to the European beekeeping sector (Figure 2).

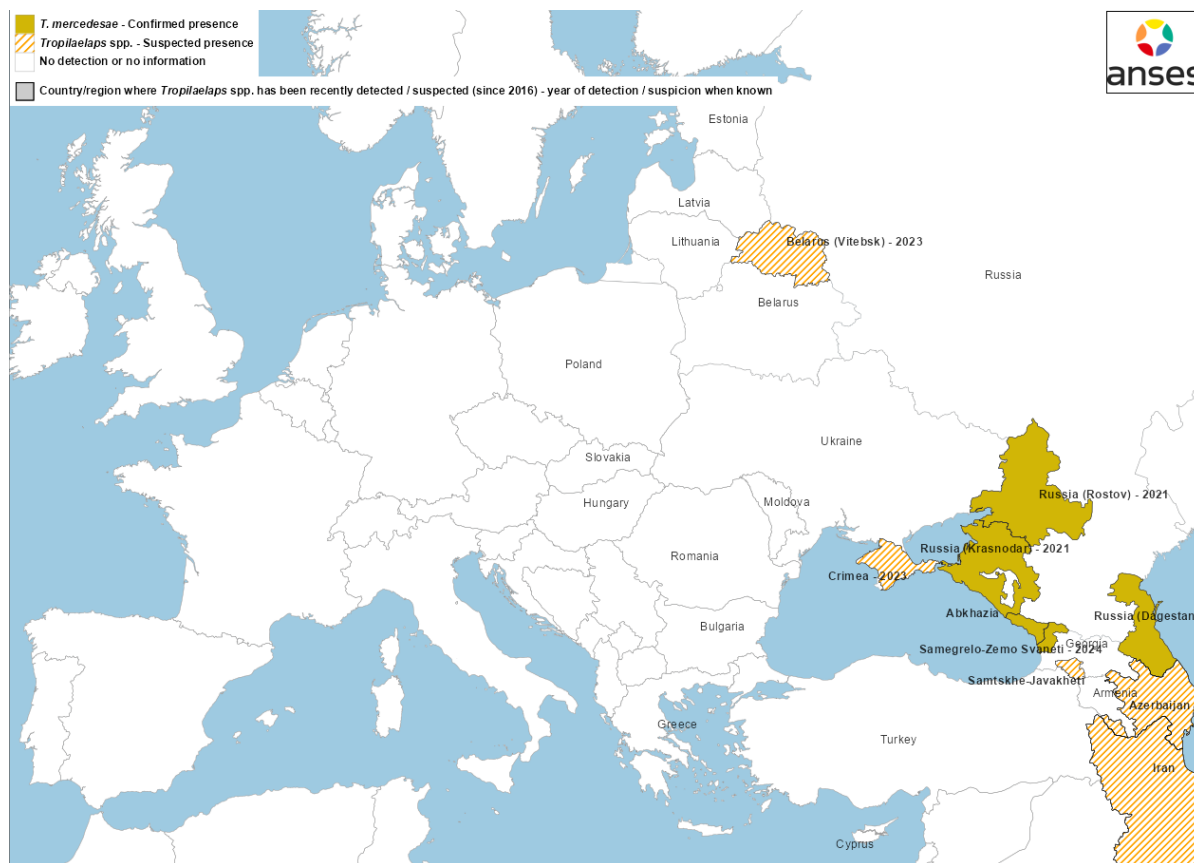
This calls for increased vigilance regarding movements of bees and beekeeping material, which are rapid spread routes for the parasite. [Regulations on entry into the EU and movements between Member States](#) make it possible to limit the risk of introduction.

**The early detection of any possible introduction is essential to attempt eradication and prevent the mite establishment. *Tropilaelaps* spp. mites can no longer be eradicated once it is well established.**

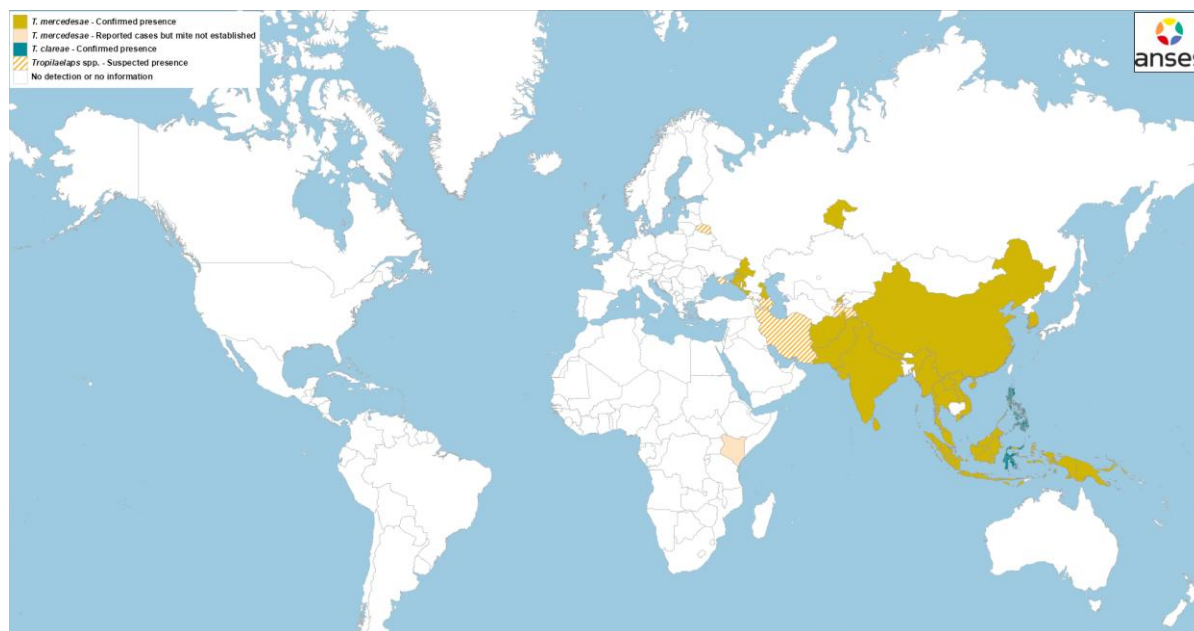
In case of suspicion, competent authorities must be notified as soon as possible. All suspect *Tropilaelaps* mite specimens should be immediately sent to the national reference laboratory and/or to the competent authority for confirmation and for the implementation of appropriate surveillance and control measures. A leaflet on *Tropilaelaps* spp. aimed at raising awareness among beekeepers [is available on the EURL website](#).



**Figure 1** Geographical distribution of the two species of *Tropilaelaps* spp. observed in *A. mellifera* (*T. clareae* and *T. mercedesae*) in Asia and Europe, including newly confirmed detections since 2016 as of 11 December 2025.



**Figure 2** Geographical distribution of *Tropilaelaps* spp. in territories close to the European continent as of 11 December 2025.



**Figure 3** Worldwide geographical distribution of the two species of *Tropilaelaps* spp. observed in *A. mellifera* (*T. clareae* and *T. mercedesae*) as 11 December 2025.

Explanation of the legend and sources for Figures 1, 2 & 3:

**Confirmed presence:** the presence of *Tropilaelaps* spp. has been officially reported to the WOA and/or documented in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. **Suspected presence:** the presence of *Tropilaelaps* spp. has neither been officially reported to the WOA nor published in a peer-reviewed journal. Instead, the information

comes from informal sources such as beekeeping association websites, communications with scientists from affected countries, local media reports, or scientific publications in non-peer-reviewed journals. Anderson and Morgan 2007, Brandorf *et al.* 2024, Brandorf *et al.* 2025, Chantawannakul *et al.* 2016, de Guzman *et al.* 2017, Khokhlova 2023, Mohamadzade Namin *et al.* 2024, Joharchi and Stolbova 2024, Janashia *et al.* 2024, Goryachev and Kuzmich 2025, Sammataro *et al.* 2000, WOA event notifications (WAHIS-WOAH consulted on 11 December 2025), information on the website of a local media outlet (regarding Azerbaijan) and personal communications with the Anses laboratory in Sophia Antipolis (regarding Georgia, Iran and Tajikistan).

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