Wild Tiger Health Centre Information Sheet

Disease threat: Besnoitia besnoiti

Hazard description: Apicomplexan parasite, oocysts are very similar to *Toxoplasma* and require specialist differentiation.

Host species: Cattle are the ruminant intermediate host. The definitive host has not been determined, although domestic cats or a wild carnivore have been suggested, but no supportive evidence found (Millán et al. 2012; Cortes et al. 2014).

Pathogenesis: Can cause abortion in pregnant cattle, infertility in bulls. Infection of cattle can also cause a debilitating chronic disease and appears to be re-emerging in Europe (Gazzonis et al. 2014; EFSA 2010; Cortes et al. 2014).

Diagnosis: Oocysts in faeces. Serology (but seropositivity not necessarily indicative of shedding).

Vaccination: None.

Free-ranging tiger occurrence: No reports found.

Distribution: An emerging disease in Europe. Consider unlikely in tiger range states.

Assumptions: Low/zero pathogenicity in felids; absent from tiger range states.

Limitations: Knowledge of the definitive host for the parasite – likely to be a wild carnivore.