

PRESS RELEASE

European experts call for urgent action against *Tropilaelaps* and other invasive species challenging apiculture

Ohrid, N. Macedonia, 1 to 5 September 2026

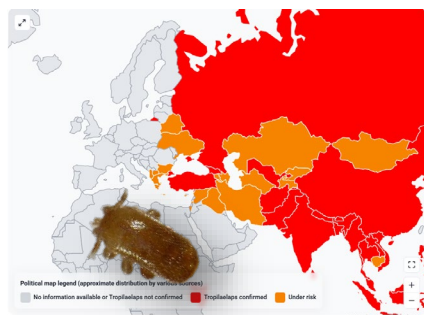
Europe faces an increasing risk from *Tropilaelaps* mites and other alien and invasive species that threaten honey bees, pollinators, biodiversity and ecosystem resilience. The emerging challenges brought together researchers, veterinary professionals, extension specialists and beekeeper representatives from several European countries in Ohrid from 1 to 5 September, 2026.

Discussions focused on the heightened risk of *Tropilaelaps* introduction into Europe, particularly southeastern Europe, following the confirmed occurrence in Türkiye reported to the World Organisation for Animal Health on 31 August 2026. Participants also reviewed the spread and impacts of the small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*), the yellow-legged hornet (*Vespa velutina*) and repeated introductions of the red dwarf honey bee (*Apis florea*), as well as entry pathways linked to transport, trade and bee movements.

The workshop called for stronger institutional preparedness; harmonised surveillance, diagnostics and rapid-notification systems; field sentinel colonies; species-specific contingency plans; risk-based monitoring at high-risk entry points; targeted research; and closer regional and cross-border cooperation. Participants also stressed the need to promote basic research on the biology of host-parasite interactions, strengthen veterinary and extension services, and to support practices that improve ecosystem resilience.

The central conclusion was clear: prevention, early detection, rapid reporting and coordinated, science-based action are more effective and less costly than managing an alien species after establishment. A unified European response involving authorities, scientists, beekeepers, laboratories and international organisations is urgently needed to protect apiculture, pollinators, biodiversity and ecosystem services. A *Brief Communiqué* was prepared and disseminated to relevant institutions across participating countries (attached).

The workshop “**The Tropilaelaps Mite on Its Way to Europe**” was organised by the Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg and Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, with funding from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).



Map source: www.tropilaelaps.info



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