

The anthropogenic fingerprint on emerging infectious diseases

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64 **Abstract**

65
66 Emerging infectious diseases are increasingly understood as a hallmark of the Anthropocene¹⁻³. Most
67 experts agree that anthropogenic ecosystem change and high-risk contact among people, livestock,
68 and wildlife have contributed to the recent emergence of new zoonotic, vector-borne, and
69 environmentally-transmitted pathogens^{1,4-6}. However, the extent to which these factors also structure
70 landscapes of human infection and outbreak risk is not well understood, beyond certain well-studied
71 disease systems⁷⁻⁹. Here, we consolidate 58,319 unique records of outbreak events for 32 emerging
72 infectious diseases worldwide, and systematically test the influence of 16 hypothesized social and
73 environmental drivers on the geography of outbreak risk, while adjusting for multiple detection,
74 reporting, and research biases. Across diseases, outbreak risks are widely associated with mosaic
75 landscapes where people live alongside forests and fragmented ecosystems, and are commonly
76 exacerbated by long-term decreases in precipitation. The combined effects of these drivers are
77 particularly strong for vector-borne diseases (e.g., Lyme disease and dengue fever), underscoring that
78 policy strategies to manage these emerging risks will need to address land use and climate change¹⁰⁻¹².
79 In contrast, we find little evidence that spillovers of directly-transmitted zoonotic diseases (e.g., Ebola
80 virus disease and mpox) are consistently associated with these factors, or with other anthropogenic
81 drivers such as deforestation and agricultural intensification¹³. Most importantly, we find that observed
82 spatial outbreak intensity is primarily an artefact of the geography of healthcare access, indicating that
83 existing disease surveillance systems remain insufficient for comprehensive monitoring and response:
84 across diseases, outbreak reporting declined by a median of 32% (range 1.2%-96.7%) for each
85 additional hour's travel time from the nearest health facility. Our findings underscore that disease
86 emergence is a multicausal feature of social-ecological systems, and that no one-size-fits-all global
87 strategy can prevent epidemics and pandemics. Instead, ecosystem-based interventions should
88 follow regional priorities and system-specific evidence, and be paired with investment in One Health
89 surveillance and health system strengthening.

90 Introduction

91
92 In the last few decades, emerging infectious diseases transmitted by wildlife (zoonoses; e.g. COVID-
93 19, Ebola virus disease, influenza, and mpox) or arthropod vectors (e.g. dengue fever, Lyme disease,
94 and Zika virus disease) have had catastrophic social, economic and ecological impacts. This trend runs
95 counter to overall improvements in population health, and is widely believed to be the result of an
96 ongoing state shift in the biosphere^{14,15}, where human-driven environmental change has both increased
97 animal susceptibility to infection, and created more opportunities for animal-to-human transmission
98 (zoonotic spillover²), leading to more outbreaks of both familiar and novel pathogens. The rising tide of
99 emerging infectious diseases has brought global attention to ecological and social interventions that
100 could mitigate the upstream drivers of disease emergence^{13,16}. Recently, most attention has focused
101 on curbing wildlife trade or deforestation¹⁷⁻²⁰, but other interventions could include greenhouse gas
102 emissions reduction to limit climate change, human and livestock vaccination, improved access to
103 point-of-care diagnostics and clinical care, the development of “One Health” disease surveillance
104 systems and workforces, and stricter biosafety and biosecurity practices^{17,21,22}.

105
106 Although these interventions are grounded in public health and ecological first principles, there is
107 limited scientific consensus on their potential benefits and relative priority, in large part because of
108 insufficient evidence about the universality of many drivers of disease transmission and emergence. A
109 growing number of literature syntheses and meta-analyses have found evidence of predictable
110 anthropogenic impacts on disease dynamics in wildlife hosts of emerging infectious diseases^{23,24}, as
111 well as vertebrate host²⁵⁻²⁷ and arthropod vector²⁷⁻²⁹ community composition. In general, these studies
112 suggest that habitat fragmentation and disturbance, biodiversity loss, and agriculture tend to increase
113 wildlife disease prevalence³⁰, but the net impacts of urbanization, deforestation, and climate change
114 may be more unpredictable³¹⁻³⁴. This reflects a mix of scientific evidence gaps and true heterogeneity
115 across systems, driven by differences in pathogen life cycles, host and vector ecology, and the
116 intensity and types of anthropogenic impacts. As a result, the downstream relationship between
117 human disease risk and climate change, biodiversity loss, or land use may also be idiosyncratic across
118 diseases and regions³⁵. These relationships are further complicated by exposure processes: human-
119 wildlife contact patterns and social vulnerability to outbreaks both vary across landscapes and
120 populations, and neither are usually captured in wildlife-focused studies.

121
122 A few influential studies have directly examined the ecological correlates of human disease
123 emergence, based on the location where and circumstances under which around 300 emerging
124 pathogens were first scientifically identified (“emergence events”)^{1,4-6}. These studies have found that
125 land use change, agricultural expansion, biodiversity hotspots and global travel are widely associated
126 with observed geographic hotspots of disease emergence. However, the historical circumstances of
127 the first confirmed outbreak may not be representative of the social and ecological factors that
128 determine wider landscapes of infection risk. By design, data on emergence events are biased towards
129 better-resourced settings where new diseases are more likely to be detected and described, rather
130 than the rural, poor, and marginalized populations in lower-resource settings that experience an

131 endemic burden of zoonotic and vector-borne diseases³⁶ (including many infections typically framed
132 as “emerging”^{37–39}). Assigning outbreak drivers based on expert opinion^{5,6} is also prone to confirmation
133 bias⁴⁰, and difficult to generalize to wider patterns of risk. The growing availability of fine-scale,
134 comprehensive georeferenced outbreak datasets for many of these diseases – compiled from disease
135 surveillance reports, scientific and gray literature⁴¹ -- provides the opportunity for a more systematic,
136 global, data-driven assessment of emerging disease drivers.

137
138 In this study, we harmonized spatially-explicit human outbreak data sources for 32 emerging infectious
139 diseases with available data (Figure 1, Extended Data Table 1, Supp. Table 1), including bat viruses with
140 epidemic and pandemic potential (e.g. filo-, henipa-, and coronaviruses), rodent-borne pathogens
141 (e.g. hanta- and arenaviruses, plague, and mpox), mosquito-borne arboviruses (including flavi-, alpha-
142 , and orthobunyaviruses: e.g., chikungunya, dengue fever, and Rift Valley fever), and other neglected
143 zoonotic, vector-borne, and environmentally-transmitted infections (e.g. melioidosis, Crimean-Congo
144 hemorrhagic fever, and *Plasmodium knowlesi* zoonotic malaria). Because our goal was to understand
145 drivers of outbreak risk, rather than the distinct factors that predispose outbreaks to become
146 epidemics or pandemics, we only examined records associated with some level of environmental
147 influence: we included all available records associated with vector-borne or environmental exposure,
148 but for diseases with substantial onward human-to-human transmission chains (e.g. Ebola virus
149 disease, mpox), only index cases with a probable zoonotic origin were included (Methods). Datasets
150 were mainly collated from published scientific datasets, as well as national notifiable disease
151 surveillance system data from the United States, Brazil, and Argentina. The complete dataset includes
152 58,319 unique outbreak events across 169 countries (Figure 1a; Methods) spanning 1910 to 2022 (but
153 primarily post-2000; Figure 1b), with an outbreak event defined as ≥ 1 confirmed case at a given
154 georeferenced location in a given year (either point or administrative polygon; Methods). Because of
155 several source datasets’ focus on comprehensive coverage for certain diseases^{42–54}, our harmonized
156 database has widespread coverage in the Americas, sub-Saharan Africa and South and Southeast Asia,
157 although records are still sparse in North Africa and above the 50° N latitude line.

158
159 Using this extensive dataset, we developed a standardized framework for inferring the socio-
160 environmental drivers of spatial outbreak intensity (Methods, Extended Data Figure 1). We use a
161 modified case-control design^{55,56}, which compares contemporary (post-1980) outbreak localities to
162 population-weighted background locations (Methods, Extended Data Figure 2). At each location we
163 extracted a set of 16 covariates from gridded geospatial datasets (Extended Data Table 2), which fall
164 under five broad categories: *detection processes* (motorized travel time to healthcare⁵⁷; urban land
165 cover), *socioeconomic factors* (livestock density; relative social vulnerability), *ecosystem structure*
166 (spatial vegetation heterogeneity as an indicator of landscape fragmentation; forest cover; cropland
167 cover; biodiversity intactness index⁵⁸), *land use change and intensity* (forest loss; cropland expansion;
168 urban expansion; mining; protected area coverage; hunting pressure index) and *climate change* (mean
169 change in annual temperature and precipitation between a 1950-1970 reference period and 2000-
170 2020). These covariates were mainly derived from satellite remotely-sensed products, climate
171 reanalysis and gridded demographic data, but some necessarily came from composite or modeled

172 products, notably biodiversity intactness (average local abundance of all species relative to their
173 abundance in minimally-disturbed habitat, predicted as a function of land use intensity⁵⁸); social
174 vulnerability (a composite indicator of relative multidimensional deprivation, based on inputs including
175 infrastructure, human development index, nighttime lights and infant mortality rate⁵⁹), and hunting
176 pressure (estimated average hunting-linked abundance decline across all mammal species, predicted
177 from several geographical covariates; tropical forest biomes only⁶⁰). We used Bayesian logistic
178 regression models to test the contribution of these covariates to outbreak risk, including continuous
179 geospatial random intercepts to account for unexplained macro-scale patterns of data availability, for
180 example between countries or subnational regions (Gauss-Markov random field, models implemented
181 in INLA v23.3.26^{61,62}; Methods, Extended Data Figure 2). Models were fitted to outbreak event records
182 from 1985 onwards to align with the timescales of covariate data (with certain data-sparse exceptions
183 that included data from post-1980; Methods). We apply this framework first to our entire dataset, and
184 then on a disease-by-disease basis, and ask (1) whether a general anthropogenic fingerprint on the
185 spatial intensity of outbreak events can be distinguished from both bias and noise; (2) whether any
186 broad categories of environmental change are consistently implicated in outbreak events across
187 pathogen types, transmission modes, and regions; and (3) whether there is evidence of widely-shared
188 drivers across diseases and transmission modes that could point towards promising ecosystem-based
189 intervention strategies.

190

191 **Detection biases shape outbreak hotspots at global and local scales**

192

193 Globally, zoonotic, vector-borne, and environmentally transmitted disease outbreak events ($n =$
194 49,239 after data preprocessing, with 50,000 background points; Methods) were correlated with
195 human-driven ecosystems (more forest cover, but more fragmented vegetation and lower biodiversity
196 intactness) and less socially vulnerable communities (Figure 2a). However, these associations could
197 be confounded by both broad- and local-scale biases in outbreak detection, investigation and
198 reporting, as well as by the spatial extent of the specific sources that were compiled into our database.
199 Extending the model to include a geospatial random effect and adjust for detection-related covariates
200 showed that apparent hotspots are primarily created by these observation and reporting processes
201 (Figure 2b-c). At its extremes, the magnitude of the geospatial effect exceeds all covariate effects,
202 with the highest intensity in the United States and Brazil – two of the three countries whose national
203 disease surveillance systems are substantially represented in our database – as well as in regional
204 reporting hotspots across West and Central Africa, the Middle East, and South and Southeast Asia
205 (Figure 2d). At a more local scale, outbreak events are much more commonly reported in cities and near
206 clinics, with these two slope estimates much larger than any other covariate effects (Figure 2c). These
207 relationships likely reflect the importance of health systems infrastructure in disease detection (and
208 its direct influence on the location where outbreaks are reported), although our analysis cannot
209 distinguish reporting bias from a true effect of urban environments on outbreak risk⁶³.

210

211 Social and ecological risk factors were detectable, but with weaker or modified effects, after adjusting
212 for detection and reporting processes (Figure 2a, 2c). Outbreak event risk was strongly associated with

213 higher livestock density (especially when analysis was limited to zoonotic diseases, i.e. whose human
214 infections arise principally from spillover from an animal reservoir; Extended Data Figure 3), forest cover
215 and fragmented vegetation and, more weakly, with higher biodiversity intactness and protected area
216 coverage. Outbreak events were also generally associated with areas experiencing long-term drying
217 trends (Figure 2c). These results were very similar across models only including diseases classed non-
218 exclusively as either zoonotic (n = 26 diseases) or vector-borne (i.e. transmitted by invertebrate
219 vectors regardless of host type; n = 20) (Extended Data Figure 3). The findings of these global, disease-
220 agnostic models (hereafter “global models”) thus broadly align with the consensus that emerging
221 infectious diseases are associated with zones of frequent contact among people, livestock, and
222 biodiverse ecosystems^{1,4-6}. However, spatial reporting biases at multiple scales, both regional and
223 highly localized, have by far the strongest influence on the inferred global geography and drivers of
224 outbreak events. These biases, and the socio-ecological diversity of disease systems represented in
225 our dataset, emphasize the need to transition towards more granular (and bias-adjusted) disease
226 system-specific inference.

227

228 **Anthropogenic drivers of outbreak risk are detectable and differ across disease systems**

229

230 Next, we developed disease-specific geospatial models for 31 diseases (excluding Hendra virus
231 disease, due to data sparsity [n = 11 outbreak records]). The high number of pairwise disease-driver
232 combinations (n = 496) and spatial reporting biases created a substantial risk of detecting spurious
233 relationships. Therefore, to ensure we only tested specific and plausible hypotheses, we conducted a
234 participatory hypothesis-generating exercise in which 25 study authors independently ranked
235 candidate drivers for each disease (Supp. Table 2; Methods). The results were used to identify specific
236 drivers to test per disease, based on either broad or strict thresholds for consensus (Methods,
237 Extended Data Figure 4). Overall, the top-ranked hypothesized drivers were healthcare access and
238 socioeconomic vulnerability, followed by landscape fragmentation, deforestation, urbanization, and
239 climate change-related variables (Extended Data Figure 4). We fitted hypothesis-driven multivariable
240 models for each disease following the general methods described above, with geospatial effects and
241 both detection process covariates included in all models as *a priori* expected confounders (except
242 when detection covariates were highly collinear; Methods, Extended Data Figure 3). We also fitted
243 univariable models, i.e. each driver individually plus a geospatial random effect, to compare to inferred
244 effects without adjustment for local detection covariates (Extended Data Figure 5).

245

246 Across diseases, we again found widespread evidence of systematic reporting biases: the most
247 prevalent significant predictors were increasing urban land cover (20 out of 30 diseases tested) and
248 proximity to the nearest health facility (15 out of 23 tested); these predictors also had the two largest
249 average scaled effect sizes (Figure 3, Extended Data Figure 6, Supp. Figure 1). For approximately half of
250 the diseases we examined, we again found that outbreak risk was higher in fragmented and forested
251 landscapes, with common and almost always positive effects of vegetation heterogeneity (15 out of 30
252 tested) and forest cover (13 out of 27 tested) (Figure 3). For a quarter of the diseases we examined (8
253 out of 31 tested), outbreak event risk was higher in localities experiencing long-term changes in annual

254 precipitation: in particular, climate drying was strongly associated with several vector- and water-
255 borne diseases with known or suspected links to anomalous drought-wetness dynamics (e.g. Rift
256 Valley fever⁶⁴, dengue fever⁶⁵, melioidosis⁶⁶ and Japanese encephalitis⁶⁷; Extended Data Figure 5).

257
258 Relationships with land use, biodiversity, temperature, and socioeconomic factors were less commonly
259 detected across diseases, more heterogeneous in effect size and direction (Figure 3; Extended Data
260 Figure 5), and often failed to align with their hypothesized importance (Extended Data Figure 4).
261 Although deforestation is often considered one of the most common drivers of disease emergence, we
262 detected impacts of recent cumulative forest loss (2000-2020) in one quarter of systems for which
263 this driver was tested (7 out of 29 tested), with a mix of directional effects (three positive, four
264 negative) and small effect sizes (Figure 3). There were similarly varied relationships with biodiversity
265 intactness, protected area coverage, and livestock density (respectively 7 out of 24; 6 out of 27; and 5
266 out of 18 tested; Figure 3), the latter contrasting notably with the large positive effect of livestock
267 density in the global model. Warming was a hypothesized driver for most diseases, but we only
268 detected effects of long-term temperature change for a few diseases (5 out of 28 tested) again with
269 little consistency in direction (three positive, two negative; Figure 3). Finally, although social
270 vulnerability was one of the highest-ranked hypothesized drivers, disentangling any signal from
271 detection biases proved impossible at this broad scale (and with a relatively coarse global vulnerability
272 indicator): outbreak events were strongly biased towards more affluent settings in univariable models
273 (25 out of 30 diseases tested), but these effects almost always became negligible after adjusting for
274 detection covariates (Extended Data Figure 5). All of these findings were very similar when testing
275 hypotheses generated using a stricter criterion for consensus (Extended Data Figures 5-6).

276
277 It is unclear to what degree the limited detectability of certain drivers reflects a true absence of causal
278 relationships, or is primarily a byproduct of data sparsity, spatial misalignment between where
279 infections occur and where they are detected, temporal misalignment between infections and
280 environmental driver data, and/or measurement error in the environmental driver covariates
281 (Methods). Because of these limitations, our framework may not always detect weaker, more
282 confounded or time-sensitive effects (e.g. transient changes in risk during the land conversion
283 process³⁰), especially for data-limited diseases. To some degree, these limitations may be inherent to
284 cross-disease geospatial analyses at continental or global scales; we therefore suggest our approach
285 should be thought of as complementary to system-specific work, including both longitudinal eco-
286 epidemiological studies⁷ and ethnographic research⁴⁰. Nonetheless, our confidence in the overall
287 findings was strengthened by a sensitivity analysis of arbovirus surveillance data from the United
288 States, which showed that our outbreak event case-control framework can detect similar spatial
289 drivers as full models of county-level case incidence (Extended Data Figure 7). Our models also
290 detected numerous well-known or strongly-suspected drivers of specific diseases, further validating
291 the approach: these included a negative effect of biodiversity intactness on Lyme disease (consistent
292 with foundational disease ecology research into the dilution effect^{8,68}); pig density and both
293 temperature and precipitation change trends as drivers of Japanese encephalitis⁶⁹; an increased risk
294 of avian influenza A/H5N1 outbreaks in areas with higher poultry densities⁷⁰; positive impacts of forest

295 loss on mpox and zoonotic malaria⁷¹; and evidence of fragmented forest cover driving human outbreaks
296 of arboviruses that emerge at human-forest ecotones⁷² (i.e., Mayaro fever, Oropouche fever, and
297 yellow fever) (Extended Data Figure 5). Finally, for Argentine hemorrhagic fever, after adjusting for
298 detection processes we found evidence that outbreak events are more frequent in relatively more
299 socially-vulnerable areas, which aligns with the disease's rodent-borne transmission ecology⁷³.
300 Surveillance data on this disease were the most consistently and precisely geolocated in our entire
301 database (Extended Data Table 1), demonstrating the value of precise, standardized spatial disease
302 surveillance reports for reducing the confounding impacts of detection bias.

303

304 **Shared drivers and syndemic risks differ by pathogen transmission mode**

305

306 Prevailing narratives about disease emergence tend to focus on the impacts and relative importance
307 of individual drivers, but outbreak risks often arise through synergistic interactions between diverse
308 socio-environmental processes^{7,74}. For pathogens with shared ecological characteristics, convergence
309 of socio-ecological drivers - for example, similar vector community responses to land use pressures²⁹ -
310 might produce clustering of multiple infections within the same population, potentially leading to worse
311 outcomes ("syndemics" or syndemic interactions)⁷⁴⁻⁷⁶. Differences in the landscape-level structure of
312 anthropogenic impacts could even help to explain global syndromes of disease emergence: for
313 example, in East Asia and the Pacific, most drivers we analyzed are tightly correlated across space,
314 while the opposite is true in sub-Saharan Africa (Extended Data Figure 8).

315

316 To explore how these kinds of interactions could affect outbreak risks, we visualized patterns of driver
317 occurrence and co-occurrence as unipartite networks (Figure 4, Extended Data Figure 6), across all 31
318 disease-specific models and separately for either directly transmitted (n = 10) or vector-borne
319 zoonoses (n = 16). We found that certain drivers co-occur frequently overall - principally urban cover
320 and healthcare access, and to a lesser extent fragmented vegetation and forest cover (Figure 4a) -
321 and that this pattern does not simply reflect landscape structure; for example, forest cover and
322 vegetation heterogeneity are uncorrelated globally, while cities, travel time to healthcare, and
323 vegetation heterogeneity are at most moderately correlated (Extended Data Figure 8).

324

325 Notably, patterns of driver co-occurrence differ substantially by transmission route. In particular,
326 zoonotic diseases that transmit from animals to humans through an arthropod vector (e.g., Chagas
327 disease, Lyme disease, or yellow fever) have a proportionally higher rate of co-occurring ecosystem
328 drivers (Figure 4c). This reinforces existing evidence about vector-borne disease risks in degraded and
329 urbanizing landscapes^{28,77,78}, particularly where compound drivers and shared vectors (e.g., *Aedes*
330 mosquitoes) could interact to create syndemic risks^{79,80}; and suggests that ecosystem-based
331 strategies (such as protecting intact forests, or regulating the financial actors most responsible for
332 unsustainable, extractive land use⁸¹) may be effective in mitigating the burden of these diseases.

333

334 In contrast, we found little evidence of widely shared spatial drivers among directly transmitted
335 zoonoses (e.g., Ebola virus disease, MERS, or mpox) (Figure 4b). This may be due in part to the relative

336 paucity of outbreak data for several of these pathogens, which constrains inferential power (Figure 1b-
337 c), but it also likely reflects their diversity of ecologies, life cycles, and human exposure pathways (e.g.,
338 hunting, contact with livestock and food products, household contact with wildlife⁸², or occupational
339 contact with wildlife, such as through agriculture⁸³). These findings do not support the idea that one-
340 size-fits-all ecological interventions (e.g. tighter global regulations on deforestation and agricultural
341 expansion) would be broadly protective against epidemic and pandemic threats, such as directly-
342 transmitted respiratory and hemorrhagic fever viruses. Ecosystem-based risk prevention and
343 surveillance programmes remain the most effective and scientifically-supported option to reduce
344 spillover risk and improve outbreak detection at the human-animal interface¹⁶, but our findings suggest
345 that proposed interventions should be tailored to the ecology of specific priority pathogens in specific
346 landscapes. In systems where this evidence is currently limited, long-term ecological research can
347 establish these principles in striking detail⁷.

348

349 **Healthcare access supports both surveillance and response**

350

351 Even with our extensive dataset of 32 diseases, representing a wide variety of different pathogens,
352 biomes and socioeconomic contexts, our study remains limited by sample size and data quality.
353 Detection and reporting biases are a pervasive, worldwide phenomenon, spanning multiple spatial
354 scales and low- to high-income settings (Figures 2 and 3). Strikingly, many of the highest-concern
355 diseases – such as bat-borne epidemic viruses – have the lowest availability of data (Figure 1). These
356 gaps probably reflect under-detection rather than a true scarcity of spillover events: previous studies
357 have estimated that up to half of all Ebola outbreaks might never have been identified⁸⁴, a pattern that
358 serological evidence indicates also applies to many high-concern zoonotic pathogens (e.g. SARS-
359 related bat coronaviruses⁸⁵ and Lassa fever⁸⁶).

360

361 These findings highlight an underappreciated and disease-agnostic lever for intervention: improving
362 access to healthcare in underserved rural and remote communities. In much of the world, it can take
363 over a day to reach a clinic, especially without motorized transportation⁵⁷, and remote clinics often lack
364 capacity for molecular diagnostics, especially for rare infections; these gaps in health systems are
365 likely to be persistent at high-risk interfaces between rural communities and intact ecosystems.
366 Outbreaks that start further from clinics are less likely to be detected, promptly diagnosed and treated,
367 and – without a timely response – may be more likely to grow into epidemics⁸⁷. For most of the diseases
368 we examined, outbreak event reports are clustered in close proximity to clinics: outbreak odds declined
369 by a median of 32% (range 1.2%-96.7%) for each additional hour's motorized travel time from the
370 nearest healthcare facility (Figure 5a). Average travel times to healthcare across each disease's entire
371 geographic range are generally much higher than at documented outbreak locations, with a substantial
372 proportion of population-weighted background locations falling over 2 hours away (median 23%, range
373 2%-38%; Figure 5b-c). These travel time estimates may also be relatively conservative, given
374 socioeconomic disparities in access to motorized transport, the tendency for models to underestimate
375 actual travel times (e.g. due to road quality or traffic)⁸⁸, and the many additional non-geographic
376 barriers to accessing healthcare. Investing in new infrastructure and lowering social and economic

377 barriers to access would ensure timely disease diagnosis, treatment, and prevention for underserved
378 communities – and would substantially increase the odds of outbreak detection and reporting.
379 Improving global surveillance of infectious diseases at human-nature interfaces would also help
380 address the data gaps highlighted in our study, and could therefore help strengthen the scientific
381 evidence base around ecological strategies for risk reduction.

382

383 **Conclusion**

384

385 The recent rise of emerging infectious diseases is often described – both by scientists and science
386 communicators – as a byproduct of global anthropogenic environmental change^{20,91}. This trend may
387 share common causes with both the climate and biodiversity crisis, but is also a “wicked problem” in its
388 own right: our analyses suggest that emerging infectious disease risks are ubiquitous, and widely
389 associated with mosaic landscapes where people and cities live alongside forests and fragmented
390 ecosystems. For many vector-borne diseases, we find evidence of a strong and consistent
391 anthropogenic fingerprint, supporting the idea that certain land use and climate policies could achieve
392 net reductions in disease burden. However, we were unable to detect a similarly consistent
393 anthropogenic fingerprint on directly-transmitted zoonotic infections, diverging from popular
394 emergence narratives that have been based largely on evidence from in-depth case studies^{2,91,92}. In any
395 given region, investments in ecological and community-led research will be needed to identify and
396 evaluate locally-tailored ecosystem interventions that reduce spillover risk and the endemic burden of
397 regional priority diseases. Meanwhile, as new diseases continue to emerge – and human activities
398 continue to transform the planet, even in the best-case scenarios for sustainable development – we
399 suggest that the global community should redouble their investments in health system strengthening.
400 Achieving universal health coverage, strengthening outbreak response capacity, and investing in novel
401 vaccines and therapeutics, can help to ensure that – even in a world with 5% more spillover events each
402 year⁹³ – outbreaks never have the opportunity to become epidemics.

403

404 **Materials and Methods**

405

406 **Overview**

407

408 The aim of this study was to empirically test for a general detectable fingerprint of anthropogenic
409 drivers on the geographical distribution of human outbreaks of 32 emerging infectious diseases, based
410 on existing geolocated outbreak and case data sources, as well as gridded datasets representing key
411 socio-environmental disease drivers. To account for differing ecological characteristics across
412 diseases and avoid testing for spurious or irrelevant associations, we generated a set of hypothesized
413 key drivers for each individual disease through a structured form-based exercise completed by most
414 coauthors, whose expertise spans a wide range of disciplines and scales of enquiry (from microbiology
415 to global public health). Across all diseases overall, and individually per disease, we applied a
416 standardized statistical inference framework, which involved harmonization of point and polygon data
417 and inference of the drivers of outbreak risk using geospatial logistic regression models. We describe
418 these methodological stages in detail in the following sections.

419

420 **Collection and harmonization of geolocated human disease data**

421

422 We collated and harmonized geolocated point and polygon data on human case occurrence and/or
423 incidence of 32 environmentally-linked emerging infectious diseases, from numerous published
424 datasets in the scientific literature and from open national disease surveillance data portals (Figure 1,
425 Extended Data Table 1, Supp. Table 1). We used the following broad criteria to select diseases for
426 inclusion: (1) Human infection risk should be closely coupled and thus in principle attributable to local
427 environmental or ecological conditions (i.e. zoonotic, vector-borne, or environmentally-transmitted),
428 and if extended human-to-human transmission chains independent of these conditions are possible,
429 datasets must specify the locations of probable index cases. (2) Diseases should not be sufficiently
430 well-surveyed that prevalence surveys, rather than case incidence or occurrence, could form the basis
431 for inference. (3) Diseases should not have been subject to long-term eradication programmes that
432 could confound inference of environmental drivers. These criteria meant that our analyses included
433 many emerging, rare and high-concern zoonotic and vector-borne pathogens (including many
434 mosquito-borne arboviruses, rodent- and bat-borne viruses and *Plasmodium knowlesi* zoonotic
435 malaria), but not *P. falciparum* or *P. vivax* malarias or neglected tropical helminthiases.

436

437 The full list of diseases, data sources and their spatial and temporal coverage is provided in Extended
438 Data Table 1. When compiling data for each disease, our priority was to select datasets that covered as
439 much of the known geographic extent of transmission as possible, while remaining internally
440 consistent (i.e. collated in a standardized and comparable way to facilitate analysis). We focused on
441 compiling existing published datasets from scientific literature and openly accessible disease
442 surveillance portals, rather than collecting additional data (e.g. via scraping scientific literature or
443 ProMED), to ensure that our analyses are representative of data that are currently in the public domain
444 and relatively analysis-ready. Notably, sufficient or suitable data were not available for certain high-

445 priority diseases, most notably SARS-related coronaviruses, because too few confirmed spillover
446 events have been documented to provide a geographic picture of risk⁹⁴. Datasets were obtained either
447 via downloading from scientific paper supplementary data or open repositories, sharing between study
448 coauthors, or through email requests to specific paper lead authors. To credit the substantial work
449 involved in compiling the source datasets and ensure our author team included disease-specific
450 expertise, lead authors who collated and shared datasets were invited to be study coauthors and
451 participate in hypothesis generation (see below) and manuscript writing and editing (see Author
452 Contributions section for a breakdown of roles).

453
454 Human case datasets are generally available in one of two formats. (1) *Geolocated spillover or outbreak*
455 *occurrences*. Here, records represent 1 or more cases occurring at a named place and time, with
456 geographical precision ranging from a specific point location or point with buffer radius (more precise),
457 to a named administrative unit (less precise). This category of data includes most of the datasets
458 collated for the purpose of risk mapping, for example by research groups affiliated with the US-based
459 Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation^{53,95}. (2) *Case counts from named areal units*. Here, records
460 contain the number of cases reported from a particular areal unit (usually administrative level 1 or 2)
461 during a particular time window (usually month or year). This category mainly includes datasets
462 collected and reported through national notifiable disease surveillance systems, which are often
463 available via online portals, reports, or scientific papers. Point locations can provide greater geographic
464 precision on environmental conditions nearby to a reported disease case, whereas administrative units
465 require averaging conditions across often much-larger polygons. Consequently, different sources
466 provide different levels of information about both transmission intensity (binary outbreak occurrence
467 versus number of cases) and environmental context (specific event location versus broad aggregated
468 unit).

469
470 To ensure that the results of our models were comparable across diseases and datasets (Extended
471 Data Table 1), we therefore needed to develop a common harmonization framework to accommodate
472 these diverse data sources while preserving spatial uncertainty in location of infection. A diagram of
473 this pipeline is shown in Extended Data Figure 1 and described as follows. The response variable, an
474 “outbreak event”, was defined as at least 1 case in a named locality in a given year, to ensure
475 comparability in analyses between geolocated outbreak datasets (which contain no or partial
476 information about the number of cases) and surveillance data (which typically provide an estimate of
477 incidence). For any given disease, all outbreak locations (whether natively point or polygon) were
478 converted to polygon objects using the ‘sf’ package in R⁹⁶, by drawing a circular buffer around point
479 locations with a radius of either 5km or another custom value (if specified within the source dataset).
480 All polygons covering too large a spatial area were excluded as too imprecise to link to local
481 environmental conditions; this was by default >5000 km² (equivalent in area to a circular buffer with a
482 radius of 40km) but was relaxed to higher values (mostly under 10,000km², but maximum 20,000km²)
483 for certain data-sparse diseases and coarser areal case surveillance datasets (Brazilian spotted fever,
484 chikungunya, Eastern equine encephalitis, influenza (H5N1), Jamestown Canyon encephalitis, Marburg
485 virus disease, Mayaro fever, Oropouche fever, plague, Rift Valley fever, St. Louis encephalitis, West Nile

486 fever, and yellow fever), as a compromise to retain as complete a geographical picture of outbreak
487 event distributions as possible.

488
489 For each disease, this process produced a dataframe where each row with a unique identifier
490 represents an outbreak event (i.e. 1 or more cases in a given locality in a given year) with metadata
491 where available (number of cases, case definition, diagnostic method, etc), along with an associated
492 shapefile linking each record to a geographical polygon. For most diseases the shapefile contained a
493 mixture of smaller circular buffers around point locations (with radius between 5 and 20km) and larger,
494 irregularly shaped administrative unit polygons. Across all diseases, the full database contained 58,319
495 unique georeferenced outbreak events, for 32 diseases, in 169 countries worldwide (Figure 1). The
496 majority (88.7%) of records were from after 2000, whereas far fewer records (2.4%) were from before
497 1980. The constraints of available data mean that these datasets are necessarily presence-only (i.e.
498 contain only information on positive case detections without true negatives as controls), so later
499 modeling analysis required the selection of background points as pseudo-controls (Extended Data
500 Figures 1-2); we describe this process below.

501

502 **Disease-specific hypotheses for the drivers of human infection risk**

503

504 A large body of literature has proposed that several broad anthropogenic change processes may be
505 general or common drivers of risk across a large number of zoonotic, vector-borne and
506 environmentally-mediated diseases (e.g. agriculture and urban expansion, deforestation, wildlife
507 hunting, biodiversity loss). Yet given the wide diversity of reservoir hosts and transmission ecologies
508 across pathogens, spatial drivers of risk may often be pathogen- or context-specific. To ensure our
509 analyses accounted for expected ecological differences between systems, we developed a
510 structured, form-based exercise to identify key hypothesized drivers for each individual disease, which
511 was then completed by study coauthors. To balance between comprehensiveness and exhaustion, we
512 created a fill-in matrix spreadsheet of 18 drivers and 34 disease systems (see Supp. Table 2). Each cell
513 could be filled in by the respondents indicating their choice of a driver having a negative, positive, none,
514 or 'don't know' impact, and respondents were additionally asked to provide a 1-3 ranking for their
515 expected top three drivers for each disease (in either direction). Given that coauthors have a range of
516 expertise, which may include either multiple disease systems, or a focus on one or a few, respondents
517 could choose to leave one or more full disease systems blank (NA). The full list of drivers included
518 ecological/environmental processes (biodiversity loss, forest cover, forest loss, invasive species, long-
519 term temperature change, long-term precipitation change), processes driving human-wildlife contact
520 (cropland cover and expansion, landscape fragmentation, mining, protected area coverage, urban
521 cover and expansion, wildlife hunting, wildlife trade and markets) and social processes influencing
522 exposure and detection (socioeconomic vulnerability, proximity to hospitals/clinics, livestock density).
523 This hypothesis-generation exercise was intended mainly to robustly identify a group of testable
524 drivers for each disease that reflect system-specific knowledge, but this process also allowed us to
525 compare between coauthor opinion and what can be inferred from available data.

526

527 This exercise was completed by most coauthors (25 of 31; Extended Data Figure 4), whose expertise
528 spans multiple disciplines, disease systems and scales of biological organization, including
529 microbiology and virology, genomics, disease ecology and evolution, epidemiology, veterinary
530 medicine, social-ecological systems, public health, and machine learning and statistical inference.
531 Despite this wide disciplinary expertise this group still consists largely of academic researchers based
532 in Global North institutions, and as such our hypotheses are unlikely to fully reflect locally-situated
533 understandings of most of these diseases. While this exercise was a concise approach to hypothesis
534 generation, users reported spending multiple hours (>2) to fully complete the matrix; this is feasible
535 and reasonable for invested author teams such as this, but we do not recommend this as a template
536 for a rapid, large-scale survey exercise.

537
538 We then post-processed the completed exercise data to generate hypothesized drivers for each
539 disease using two definitions of group consensus. For each disease we first adopted a broad definition,
540 including drivers for which more respondents stated an effect (either positive or negative) than stated
541 no effect (“majority rule”). As a sensitivity check we also adopted a narrower definition, including only
542 drivers that were included in the top 3 ranked drivers by at least 1 respondent (“top-ranked”). This
543 process generated consensus lists of hypothesized drivers to test for each disease (Extended Data
544 Figure 4) reducing the risk that models would identify spurious, ecologically-implausible drivers (e.g.
545 wildlife hunting for West Nile). Such an issue could otherwise feasibly arise due to the small size and
546 spatially-biased nature of many disease datasets (see “Limitations of data and methodology” below).

547

548 **Collation of geospatial data on socio-environmental drivers of disease**

549
550 In parallel, we collated global geospatial (raster) layers describing socio-environmental and climatic
551 features as proxies for the key geographic drivers of risk listed above, based on remote sensing, climate
552 reanalysis, social indicators and census-based data sources. A full table of socio-environmental
553 covariates, their sources and processing is provided in Extended Data Table 2 and Supp. Table 3. The
554 small size of many disease datasets unfortunately meant there was insufficient data to analyze the
555 relationship between cases and covariates in both space and time, which therefore limited our study
556 to spatial rather than spatiotemporal driver analysis (see “Limitations” below). Therefore, for variables
557 describing gross characteristics of the environment (e.g. land cover type proportion variables) we
558 selected a single raster year or time period close to the central tendency of reported disease data (i.e.
559 between 2005 and 2015), while aiming for the best spatial and thematic resolution possible under that
560 constraint. For variables describing anthropogenic change, we generated rasters that described the
561 grid cell-level change in a particular variable across most of the disease data period (e.g. tree cover loss
562 between 2000 and 2020, change in mean annual temperature between 1950-1970 and 2000-2020).
563 Raster covariates were used at their original spatial resolution with a few exceptions (e.g. social
564 vulnerability was aggregated; see Extended Data Table 2); since this was not a mapping study no
565 rescaling was required. Notably, we were unable to identify suitable proxy covariates for several widely-
566 hypothesized drivers that have not been quantified in space and time, highlighting an important lack of

567 systematic data collection around key putative drivers of disease emergence; these include invasive
568 species density, wildlife trade and/or live markets, and wildlife hunting outside tropical forests.

569
570 A brief description of the full list of the socio-environmental raster datasets is as follows: *temperature*
571 *change* (change in grid-cell level mean annual air temperature between reference period of 1950-1970
572 and focal period of 2000-2020, derived from ERA5-Land reanalysis⁹⁷); *precipitation change* (change in
573 grid-cell level mean annual precipitation between 1950-1970 and 2000-2020, from ERA5-Land); *forest*
574 *cover* (grid cell-level fractional tree cover from Copernicus land cover 2015); *forest loss* (grid cell-level
575 tree cover loss 2000-2020 from Global Forest Change); *biodiversity intactness* (local Biodiversity
576 Intactness Index, modeled for 2005 based on human disturbance layers⁵⁸); *cropland cover* (grid cell-
577 level fractional crop cover from Copernicus land cover 2015); *cropland expansion* (grid cell-level
578 cropland growth 2000-2019⁹⁸); *vegetation heterogeneity* (grid cell-level EVI dissimilarity index 2005, a
579 metric of landscape fragmentation sensitive to anthropogenic landscapes⁹⁹); *hunting pressure index*
580 (a modeled defaunation index measuring average hunting-related species declines in tropical forest
581 biomes⁶⁰); *protected area cover* (whether grid cell is under area-based conservation, based on the
582 World Database of Protected Areas 2022); *mining cover* (whether grid cell is under mining land use,
583 based on ref.¹⁰⁰); *social vulnerability* (the Global Gridded Relative Deprivation Index for a nominal
584 present-day period⁵⁹); *travel time to healthcare* (road-based travel time to nearest hospital or clinic for
585 nominal year 2015⁵⁷); *urban cover* (grid-cell level fractional urban cover from Copernicus land cover
586 2015); *urban expansion* (grid-cell level expansion of built-up areas 2000-2019 derived from ESA-CCI
587 land cover); and *livestock density* (grid-cell-level density of livestock types from Gridded Livestock of
588 the World v3).

589 590 **Statistical modeling**

591
592 To infer the drivers of the geographic distribution of human cases while accounting for spatial and
593 detection biases, we applied a standardized geospatial modeling approach for each disease. We
594 describe this procedure in the following paragraphs.

595
596 For each model, we first defined the geographical boundaries of the modeling area (“study region”). For
597 datasets compiled from the scientific literature, this was defined as a smoothed convex hull polygon
598 around the full extent of geographical case occurrences, with a buffer of 180km (Extended Data Figures
599 1-2). For national-level case surveillance data the study area was constrained to the borders of the
600 relevant country or subnational region. We then generated a final case-control dataset for modeling.
601 We excluded records from before 1985 for most diseases, to better align the disease data with the
602 timescale of available covariates; exceptions were certain data-sparse diseases where data from post-
603 1980 were kept to retain as much information as possible (anthrax, Ebola virus disease, Marburg virus
604 disease, Mayaro fever, and Oropouche fever). Because the case data were presence-only, meaning
605 there were no true negative controls, we then generated background (pseudo-control) points
606 throughout the study region. We selected between 2 and 8 times as many background points as
607 presence points; this varied depending on the number of positive observations and their geographical

608 dispersion, with higher multiples selected for more widely-distributed but data-sparse diseases to
609 capture the full background area. (Guidelines have been developed for the selection of background
610 points for species distribution modeling, which often lean towards balanced training sets of presence
611 and pseudoabsence points¹⁰¹, but we note that this is a distinct statistical approach; our objective here
612 is to detect predictor effects, rather than correctly model the area of occupancy, and as such our
613 priority is statistical power and coverage of the area being examined.) All else being equal, the null
614 expectation is that the distribution of human disease cases would follow the distribution of population;
615 as such, entirely spatially random selection of background points would over-represent sparsely
616 populated rural areas and under-represent highly populated urban areas. We therefore weighted
617 background points distribution by human population, i.e. randomly generated point locations with the
618 probability of a location being selected proportional to log+1-transformed population. This was based
619 on a global raster of 2010 human population per pixel (WorldPop's top-down unconstrained mosaics¹⁰²),
620 at 1km resolution for most diseases, but 10km resolution for certain diseases spanning a multi-
621 continent geographic range to limit computation time (e.g. dengue, chikungunya). This approach
622 produced a pseudo case-control design, i.e. comparing the socio-environmental conditions
623 experienced by human populations at the locations where outbreaks have occurred (cases), to a
624 representative background sample of the conditions experienced by populations across the study
625 region ("controls"). Circular buffers were created around each background point with an area equal to
626 the median area of the outbreak location polygons, to ensure covariates were averaged across a
627 comparable geographical area for both presence and background points (Extended Data Figure 1).

628
629 For each model, this process produced a final dataframe of presences and pseudo-absences with
630 associated polygons (again using 'sf'), from which we extracted the mean value for each raster
631 covariate using the 'exactextractr' package. We excluded from the analyses any variables that were
632 missing data for >10% of observations or contained zeroes for >95% of observations. We examined
633 collinearity among covariates via visual inspection, correlation matrix plots and variance inflation
634 factors, and identified and excluded highly collinear covariates from multivariable models; this step was
635 conducted manually rather than programmatically, to prioritize the inclusion of covariates with a strong
636 hypothesized relationship to each disease in question. The final sets of covariates included in each
637 disease-specific multivariable model are visualized in Extended Figure 5.

638
639 To infer relationships between covariates and disease outbreak probability p at location i (log odds of
640 occurrence), we fitted geospatial logistic regression models in a Bayesian inference framework
641 (integrated nested Laplace approximation, implemented in the package 'INLA' v23.3.26^{61,62}), with the
642 following general formula:

$$643 \quad y_i \sim \text{Bern}(p_i)$$
$$644 \quad \text{logit}(p_i) = \alpha + \rho_i + \sum_j \beta_j X_{j,i}$$

645 Here, α is the intercept, ρ_i is a continuous spatially-structured random effect, and β is a vector of
646 linear fixed effects parameter estimates for the matrix of j covariates X_j . The geospatial effect was

647 specified as a Gauss-Markov random field fitted using a stochastic partial differential equations
648 approach (SPDE), with penalized complexity priors on the range and sigma parameters, and an
649 intermediate mesh density chosen to reasonably balance between spatial precision and computation
650 time. We set Gaussian priors for intercept and linear fixed effects (mean = 0, precision = 1). Due to wide
651 variation in geographic range size and patchiness of data across the different diseases, the
652 hyperparameters of the SPDE model's Matern covariance function (range and variance) were manually
653 tuned for each disease to ensure a smooth fit of the spatial field, assessed via visual inspection. After
654 model fitting, we visually inspected posterior parameter and hyperparameter distributions, visualized
655 the fitted SPDE to check for any visible issues with inference of the geospatial effect, and extracted
656 the Watanabe-Akaike information criterion (WAIC) as a model adequacy metric.

657

658 *Global multi-disease models*

659

660 We first fitted general models to infer drivers of risk for all disease outbreaks ($n = 49,239$ after excluding
661 early and spatially-imprecise records), with 50,000 background points across the global study area, not
662 differentiating between specific diseases. To examine the potential confounding effects of local
663 detection processes and broad-scale patterns of reporting effort on inferred drivers, we fitted three
664 submodels: (1) including only socio-environmental covariates, i.e. with no outbreak detection-specific
665 covariates (urban cover and healthcare travel time) and no geospatial effect; (2) adding a geospatial
666 effect but no local outbreak detection-specific covariates; and (3) a full model with outbreak detection
667 covariates and a geospatial effect (Figure 2). For comparison and sensitivity checking, we also fitted
668 the full geospatial and detection covariate model for subsets of pathogens defined as either zoonotic
669 (principally transmit to humans from an animal reservoir; $n = 26$) or vector-borne (transmitted to
670 humans by arthropod vectors irrespective of host, i.e. also including anthroponotic arboviruses such
671 as dengue fever; $n = 20$), whose risk is expected to be tightly coupled to local ecosystem
672 characteristics (Extended Data Figure 3).

673

674 *Individual disease-specific models*

675

676 We fitted individual models for all diseases except Hendra virus disease, for which the number of human
677 outbreak points was too low for reliable model fitting (Extended Data Table 1). The process of inference
678 of drivers for each individual disease ($n = 31$) was as follows. First, we fitted separate geospatial models
679 which included each covariate individually ("univariable") plus a geospatial random effect to account
680 for the broad geographical pattern in outbreak occurrence, but not possible finer-scale confounding
681 by other variables (particularly detection proxies). We then fitted two hypothesis-driven multivariable
682 geospatial models including either the broad ("majority rule") or stricter ("top-ranked") drivers from the
683 coauthor exercise (Extended Data Figure 4). Because of the strong *a priori* expectation of detection
684 bias driven by health systems proximity and accessibility, all hypothesis-driven models included both
685 travel time to healthcare and urban cover; except in instances where these were highly collinear with
686 each other; in these cases, the driver identified as most important in the hypothesis-generation
687 exercise was selected. For all models where forest loss, cropland expansion or urban expansion were

688 hypothesized as drivers, we also respectively included either forest cover, cropland cover or urban
689 cover to account for the inherently spatially correlated process of land use change. For most diseases,
690 urban expansion and urban cover were highly collinear at the scale of this analysis (Pearson's $\rho > 0.8$)
691 so urban expansion was almost always excluded from multivariable models. For diseases with strongly
692 hypothesized associations to specific livestock, the livestock covariate was based on gridded data for
693 only the most relevant livestock type(s) (e.g. poultry for influenza, ruminants for Rift Valley fever; Supp.
694 Table 1, Methods); the exception was MERS, as gridded camel density data are not openly available.
695 Across all diseases, both the multivariable and hypothesis-driven models always reduced WAIC relative
696 to a model including only a geospatial effect (i.e. including covariates improved model fit).

697

698 **Examining compound drivers across diseases**

699

700 For many infectious diseases, synergistic interactions between drivers may be necessary to align the
701 conditions for spillover and emergence risks (for example, high livestock densities in fragmented forest
702 landscapes for bat-borne henipaviruses⁷). Improving geospatial prediction for emergence risks
703 requires accounting for how compound drivers align to create local foci of pathogen transmission. To
704 examine this question we visualized patterns of co-occurrence between drivers across all 31 individual
705 modeled diseases. We generated a unipartite network with drivers represented as nodes, and with
706 edges between driver pairs weighted by the number of diseases for which each pair of drivers co-
707 occurred (i.e. when both drivers had 95% credible intervals not overlapping zero), for all diseases
708 (Figure 4a) and for subsets of either directly-transmitted zoonoses (Figure 4b) or vector-borne
709 zoonoses (Figure 4c). In parallel, to examine observed autocorrelation among putative drivers at global
710 and regional scales, we generated a matrix of pairwise Pearson correlation coefficients between each
711 pair of scaled covariates across 50,000 background points globally, or subsets of background points
712 within five regions containing most of our data (North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, sub-
713 Saharan Africa, East Asia and Pacific, and South Asia). These were used to visualize unipartite networks
714 of pairwise driver correlations, with edges weighted by Pearson coefficient magnitude (Extended Data
715 Figure 8).

716

717 **Limitations of data and methodology**

718

719 Because the goal of the study was to apply a general, standardized analysis framework across a variety
720 of diseases with very different quantities and types of data, we encountered several important but
721 irreconcilable methodological constraints that are significant to interpretation of our results, as well as
722 to inference of spatial drivers of disease emergence more broadly. Firstly, the datasets for many
723 diseases (especially rare and high-consequence pathogens) are very small and spatially biased
724 towards surveillance hotspots. We adjusted for these biases using geospatial random effects and
725 proxies for detection processes, but these are imperfect descriptors for complex processes, and some
726 residual confounding might remain unaccounted for (e.g. health systems access is influenced locally
727 by many factors other than proximity, and clinical index of suspicion and accessibility of diagnostics is
728 often highly geographically variable for many rarer, non-specific febrile illnesses). Relatedly, it was

729 often not possible to combine multiple data sources for the same disease without creating a
730 geographical imbalance in the distribution of points, so our analyses were mostly restricted to datasets
731 that were usually broad in scale but lacked granular information about transmission intensity (e.g. most
732 georeferenced outbreak datasets) or sometimes locally comprehensive at the expense of
733 geographical breadth (e.g. hantavirus cardiopulmonary syndrome [HCPS], which was restricted to
734 Brazil and Argentina due to available surveillance data, despite hantavirus infections occurring
735 worldwide¹⁰³). Notable exceptions where we were able to combine point and polygon data from more
736 than one source without substantial issues included Lassa fever, Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever,
737 HCPS, Chagas disease (acute), and yellow fever (Extended Data Table 1, Supp. Table 1).

738
739 Importantly, some of the most relevant variables thought to shape risk for many high-consequence
740 epidemic zoonoses either have not (hunting pressure outside the tropics) or cannot (wildlife trade) be
741 readily translated into global geospatial covariates that accurately reflect their relationship to infection
742 risk. For example, the impacts of wildlife trade and markets on disease risks can be spatially diffuse and
743 transboundary, involving multiple actors at multiple points along commodity chains from capture to
744 sale¹⁰⁴; consequently, quantifying how these activities shape the spatiotemporal dynamics of zoonotic
745 spillover may require substantially different analytic approaches than what is possible with this study's
746 geolocated outbreak event data. (However, we also refer to other work that has highlighted instances
747 where wildlife trade has been overstated as a driver of spillover risk.²⁰) Similarly, coarse modeled spatial
748 proxies for hunting pressure such as the tropical defaunation index we used in this study⁶⁰ probably
749 more closely reflect commercial rather than subsistence hunting activities, even though the latter may
750 often be more important in driving zoonotic spillover (e.g. rodent hunting and exposure to Lassa fever
751 and mpox); our study's sparse and ambiguous results for tropical hunting pressure (Extended Data
752 Figure 5; Supp. Figure 1) should be interpreted with this limitation in mind.

753
754 Developing a common analysis framework also led to the loss of information from some datasets,
755 through reducing case surveillance data (with number of cases) to a binary annual outbreak indicator,
756 (i.e. losing potentially valuable information on transmission intensity). Although necessary for a
757 standardized framework, this could feasibly erode the reliability and accuracy of inference. We
758 therefore conducted a model comparison test, examining how reducing the data's information content
759 affects inferred drivers for a set of relatively well-reported diseases (4 arboviruses in the USA using
760 CDC ArboNET data). For each disease we compared coefficient estimates between full geospatial
761 models of county-level case incidence, and our outbreak event risk modeling framework. County-level
762 total case incidence across the surveillance period (2000-2020) was modelled using a negative
763 binomial (West Nile fever) or zero-inflated negative binomial likelihood (LaCrosse encephalitis,
764 Powassan encephalitis and Jamestown Canyon encephalitis), including an offset of log population, and
765 a fitted geospatial random effect to account for unexplained geographical variation, again
766 implemented using INLA. We found that most significant socio-environmental effects from a full case
767 incidence model (i.e. reflecting transmission intensity) remained detectable even in a dataset reduced
768 to binary outbreak occurrences with background locations (Extended Data Figure 7). This test

769 improved our confidence that our modeling approach is sufficient to capture key spatial drivers of risk,
770 despite this information loss.

771
772 Nonetheless, given data sparsity for many infections, it was not possible in this standardised
773 framework to account for temporal dimensions of causality (e.g. time-specific climate or land change
774 effects), such as by aligning covariate and case data in time; and/or adjusting for temporal patterns of
775 detection through spatiotemporal random effects. This kind of analysis is feasible and fruitful when
776 modeling case surveillance time series for better-surveyed infections (including some in our study
777 such as *Borrelia burgdorferi* or West Nile fever), but it was not possible to apply this consistently across
778 diseases, given the extreme sparsity of outbreak data for infections like Ebola, Marburg, Hendra, and
779 Nipah virus disease. Rather than solely a limitation of this study, this is a more general problem for
780 attribution of outbreak drivers for rarely documented but high-consequence infections, that currently
781 hinders our capacity to, for example, robustly link recent deforestation to viral zoonosis outbreaks.
782 Improving both fundamental eco-epidemiological research, and strengthening healthcare access,
783 diagnostics and surveillance in underserved areas, will be needed to fill these gaps.

784

785 **Code and Data Availability**

786

787 All code, data (where not subject to sharing constraints) and disease-specific results objects (e.g.
788 CSVs of parameter estimates; rasters of fitted geospatial effects) are available on GitHub at
789 github.com/viralemergence/fingerprint-preprint.

790

791 **Author contributions**

792

793 Conceptualization: RG, SJR, GFA and CJC.

794 Study design and methodology: RG, SJR, CJC, DP, RLM, MPF, CHT, and BAH.

795 Hypothesis exercise design: SJR, CJC, and CAL.

796 Hypothesis exercise participation: RG, SJR, DP, MPF, RLM, GFA, DJB, HC-E, MC, EAE, HKF, BAH, ENH,
797 KEJ, RK, AK, DL, CAL, JL, JPM, DWR, DR-A, BVS, SNS, and CJC.

798 Disease data processing: RG.

799 Modeling and analysis: RG.

800 Visualization: RG and CJC.

801 Data contribution: RG, DP, MPF, RLM, BVS, ENH, JPM, AS, EON, JKB, MC, JFM, DL, JL, DRA, AK, and CJC.

802 Writing (initial draft): RG, SJR, and CJC.

803 Writing (review and editing): all coauthors.

804

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814 data collection and analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of manuscript. We thank Freya Shearer
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816 CDC's ArboNET platform for providing the data on US arboviruses.

817

818 **Conflicts of Interest Statement**

819

820 *Related research funding:* BVS, CJC, DWR, KEJ, and RG have received research grants from the Coalition
821 for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations. *Consulting:* BH has been a consultant to the Wellcome Trust
822 on emerging infectious diseases. CJC has been a consultant for the US Department of State on Global
823 Health issues. *Government advisory roles:* RK is a senior advisor at the U.S. Department of State Bureau
824 of Global Health Security and Diplomacy. *Non-governmental advisory roles:* DJB is a current member of
825 the *Lancet*-PPATS Commission on Prevention of Viral Spillover. CJC, CHT, and SJR have been
826 contributing authors on related reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. CJC has
827 been a contributing author on related reports by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on
828 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. HC-E has been a contributor to related reports by the
829 International Union for the Conservation of Nature. RK is a current member of the Pandemic Fund
830 Technical Advisory Panel.

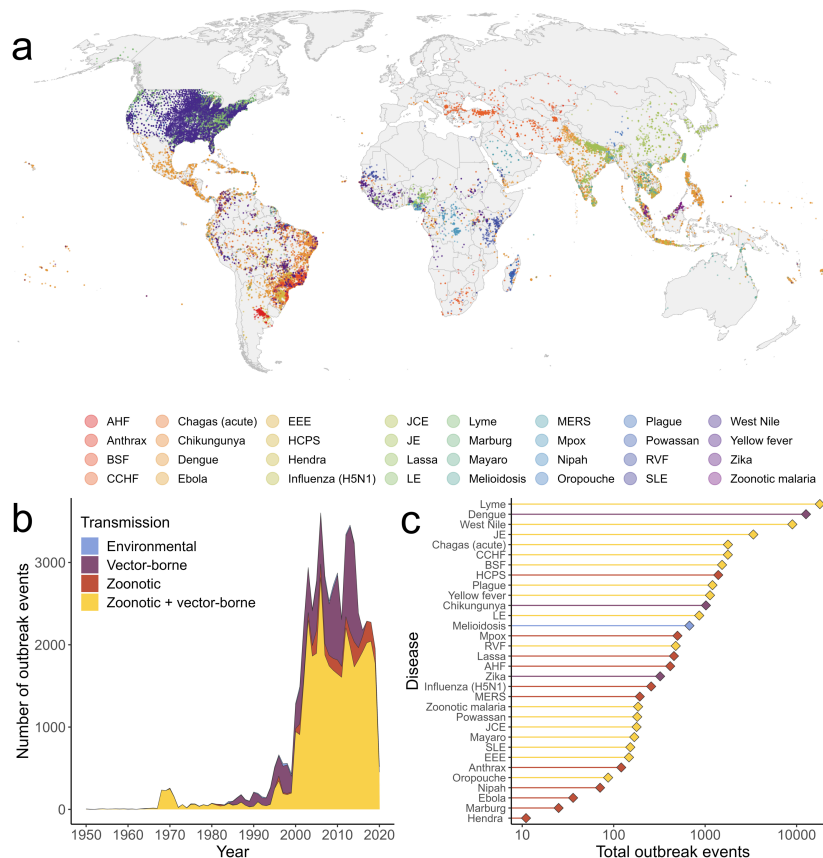
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Figures and Tables

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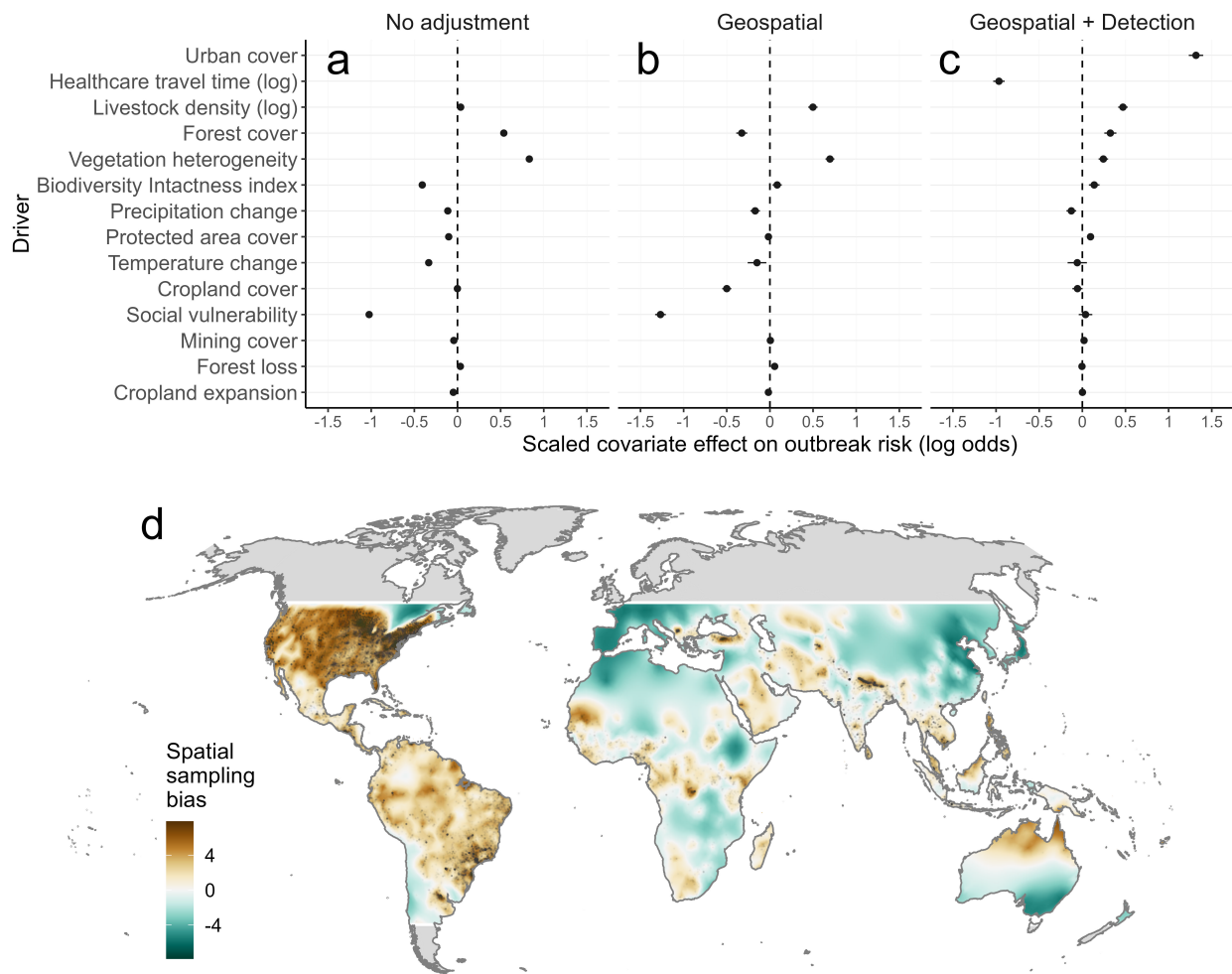
833 **Figure 1. A global compendium of outbreak events for 32 human emerging infectious diseases.**

834 Records include a mix of georeferenced human disease occurrence or outbreak data and case
 835 incidence data from national surveillance systems (Extended Data Table 1) (A). Each point represents
 836 an outbreak event (at least 1 confirmed case per named locality per year) for diseases whose
 837 predominant human infection routes are broadly classified as either zoonotic (e.g. Ebola virus disease,
 838 Lassa fever), zoonotic and vector-borne (e.g. West Nile fever, yellow fever), vector-borne and mainly
 839 maintained in human hosts (e.g. dengue fever, chikungunya, and Zika virus disease), or transmitted
 840 through the environment (melioidosis) (B-C). Data were predominantly from post-2002 across all
 841 transmission types (B; data shown from 1950 onward), with the most data available for well-monitored
 842 widespread diseases (e.g. Lyme disease, dengue fever, West Nile fever) and the least for emerging bat-
 843 borne infections (filo- and henipaviruses) (C). Disease name abbreviations: AHF - Argentine
 844 hemorrhagic fever; BSF - Brazilian spotted fever; CCHF - Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever; EEE -
 845 Eastern equine encephalitis; HCPS - Hantavirus cardiopulmonary syndrome; JCE - Jamestown Canyon
 846 encephalitis; JE - Japanese encephalitis; LE - LaCrosse encephalitis; MERS - Middle East Respiratory
 847 Syndrome; RVF - Rift Valley fever; SLE - St. Louis encephalitis. For shorthand, we also omit “disease,”
 848 “virus disease,” and “fever” from disease names as appropriate; see Extended Data Table 1.



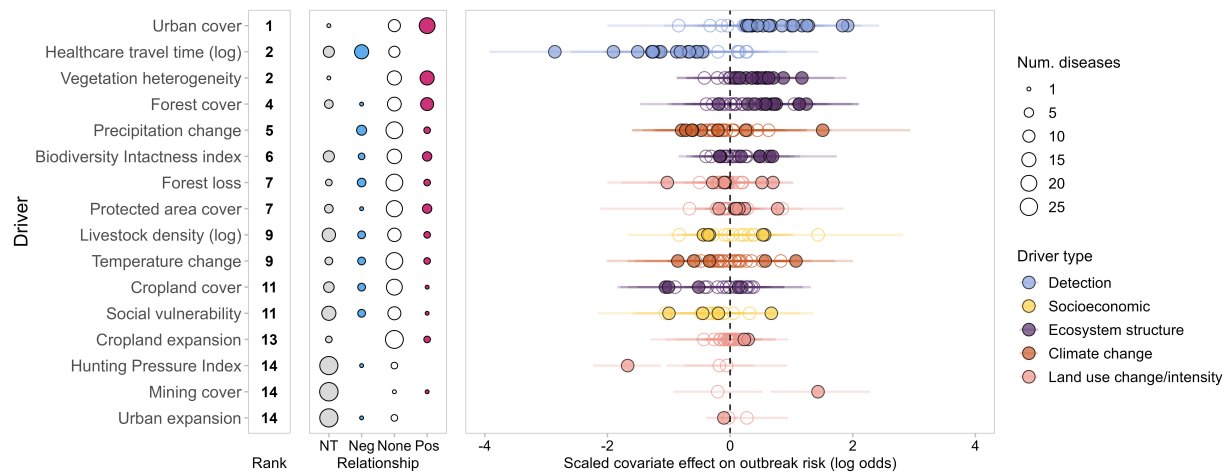
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850 **Figure 2: Geographical reporting and detection biases confound inference of global emerging**
 851 **infectious disease drivers.** Points and error segments (A) show linear fixed effects of scaled
 852 covariates (posterior marginal mean and 95% credible interval) from Bayesian logistic regression
 853 models fitted to the full global dataset of contemporary outbreak events (i.e. pooling data across all
 854 diseases; $n = 49,239$ with 50,000 background points, between 1985-2022). Slope estimates denote
 855 the effect of each scaled covariate on spatial outbreak risk. Panels denote model specification:
 856 including either only socio-environmental fixed effects (*no adjustment*; A), adding a continuous
 857 geospatial random effect (*geospatial*; B), or adding a geospatial effect and local detection process
 858 covariates (*geospatial + detection*; C). The geospatial random effect (Gauss-Markov random field; D)
 859 reflects residual (unexplained) spatial variation in observed outbreak events, largely due to macro-
 860 scale sampling processes such as biases in awareness and reporting. Map color scale denotes
 861 contribution to the observed pattern of outbreak events (log-odds scale) with outbreak events
 862 overlaid as translucent points. The geospatial effect was only inferred within the latitudinal range of
 863 available data; areas outside these bounds are shaded in gray. Inferred effects were very similar for
 864 models fitted to subsets of diseases with different transmission characteristics (either zoonotic or
 865 vector-borne; Extended Data Figure 3).



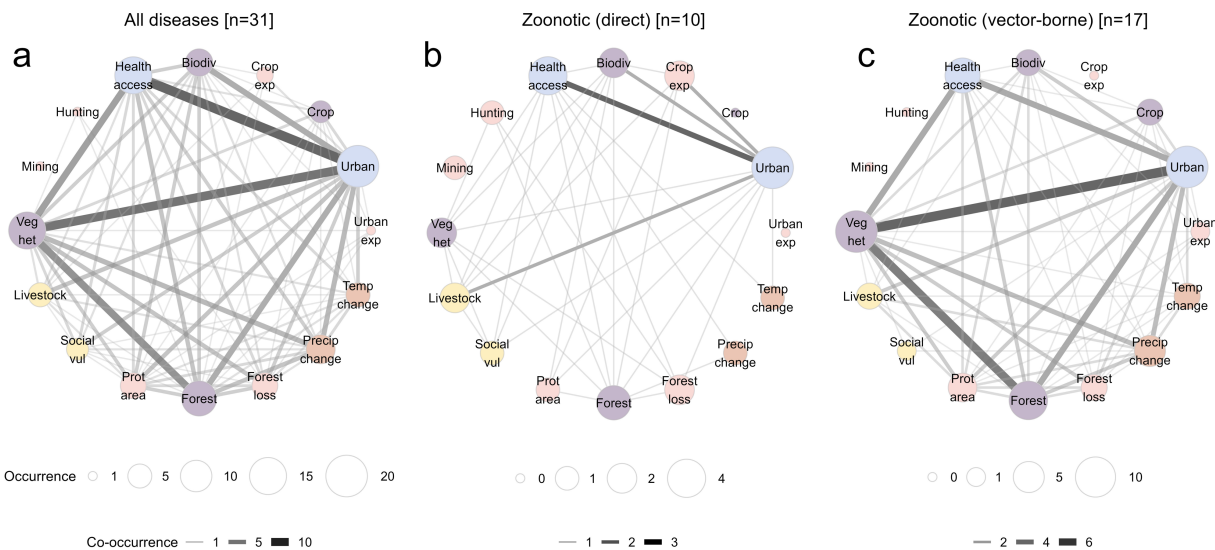
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867 **Figure 3: Drivers of outbreak risk across 31 emerging infectious diseases.** Results are summarized
 868 from separate hypothesis-based geospatial logistic regression models for all 31 diseases in the dataset
 869 (Extended Data Figure 5). Drivers are shown ranked by the number of diseases for which there was
 870 strong evidence of a relationship (95% credible interval not overlapping zero) (left column). The
 871 prevalence and directionality of driver effects is summarized for each driver (middle column), with point
 872 size showing the number of diseases for which relationships were either not tested (*NT*; gray),
 873 negative (*Neg*; blue), positive (*Pos*; red), or no strong evidence (*None*; i.e. 95% credible interval
 874 overlapping zero). Points and error segments (right column) show driver fixed effect parameters on the
 875 log-odds scale (posterior marginal mean and 95% credible interval) for all tested diseases, with filled
 876 points denoting strong evidence of a relationship, and point color denoting the broad class of socio-
 877 environmental driver. Results are based on hypotheses generated using a broad “majority rule”
 878 criterion; results for stricter models testing only top-ranked drivers per-disease are qualitatively very
 879 similar (Extended Data Figure 6).
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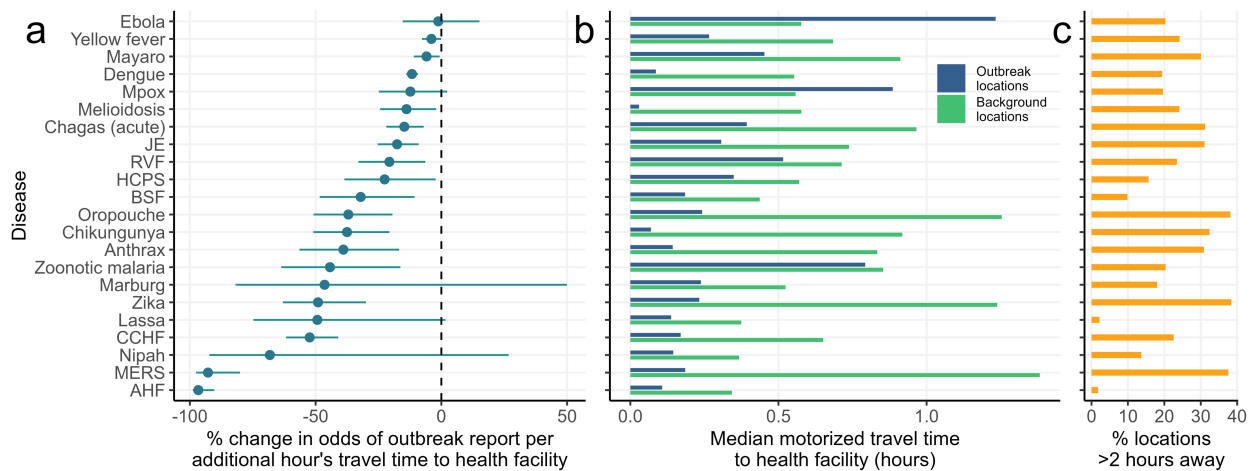
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882 **Figure 4: Co-occurrence of outbreak drivers across emerging infectious disease groups.** The
883 patterns of co-occurring drivers across individually-modeled diseases are represented as unipartite
884 networks, for all diseases (n = 31; A) and for subsets of zoonotic diseases whose predominant mode of
885 transmission to humans is either direct (B; n = 10) or vector-borne (C; n = 17). Nodes represent drivers,
886 with node size proportional to the number of diseases with strong evidence of a non-zero effect
887 (“driver occurrence”), and edge weight is proportional to the number of diseases for which driver pairs
888 co-occur (“driver co-occurrence”; i.e., non-zero inferred effects of both drivers in multivariable
889 models). Node colors denote driver type, as in Figure 3. Larger nodes reflect more prevalent drivers and
890 darker edges reflect a higher prevalence of driver co-occurrence within each group of diseases.
891 Results are derived from multivariable models testing hypotheses under the “majority rule” criterion;
892 the pattern of clustered drivers is the same under the stricter “top ranked” criterion (Extended Data
893 Figure 6). The pattern of co-occurring drivers does not simply reflect observed correlation between
894 variables, as many of these variables are weakly or uncorrelated globally (Extended Data Figure 8).
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897 **Figure 5: Outbreak detection declines with increasing distance from healthcare facilities.** Using
 898 the inferred slope parameters from each multivariable disease model, we estimated the marginal
 899 percentage change in odds of outbreak reporting for each additional hour of motorized travel time
 900 from the nearest health facility (A; points and error segments show posterior median and 95%
 901 credible interval). Barplot (B) shows, for each disease, the median motorized travel time to the
 902 nearest health facility across outbreak locations (blue) compared to population-weighted
 903 background locations (i.e. a representative background sample across the at-risk area; green).
 904 Barplot (C) shows the percentage of population-weighted background locations falling more than 2
 905 hours from the nearest health center. This covariate effect was tested for 23 diseases (22 shown; St.
 906 Louis encephalitis was not visualized due to extremely wide uncertainty) but not for the remaining 8
 907 diseases (mostly in the US) due to high collinearity with urban cover (Methods).



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Extended Data

Extended Data Table 1: Database of outbreak events for 32 emerging infectious diseases. The table lists all diseases for which we were able to compile georeferenced human case or outbreak data, including the disease, pathogen(s), predominant transmission route to humans, number of outbreak event records and time period. A fuller set of data source descriptions with information about open accessibility for each source dataset is provided in Supp. Table 1. Most disease data were from a single source, but for several diseases we were able to combine and harmonize data from across more than one source database, as shown in the table (Extended Data Figure 1; e.g. hantaviruses; Lassa fever). This table includes all data points across all years (including prior to 1985) and regardless of spatial precision; prior to modeling, these data were subsequently subset to post-1985 records to better harmonize with covariate layers, and records with very low spatial precision were excluded (Methods). Abbreviations: NDSS - national disease surveillance systems.

Disease	Abbr.	Pathogen	Pathogen type	Source type(s)	No. records	Years	Principal route of human infection
Anthrax		<i>Bacillus anthracis</i>	Bacterium	Literature	121	1995-2010	Zoonotic (direct)
Argentine hemorrhagic fever	AHF	Junin virus (Arenaviridae)	Virus	NDSS (Argentina)	415	2000-2020	Zoonotic (direct)
Brazilian spotted fever	BSF	<i>Rickettsia rickettsii</i> ; <i>R. parkerii</i>	Bacterium	NDSS (Brazil)	1,531	2001-2020	Zoonotic (vector-borne)
Chagas disease (acute)		<i>Trypanosoma cruzi</i>	Protozoan	Literature; NDSS (Brazil)	1,776	2000-2020	Zoonotic (vector-borne)
Chikungunya		Chikungunya virus (Togaviridae)	Virus	Literature	1,020	2002-2011	Vector-borne (human-to-human)
Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever	CCHF	Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever virus (Bunyaviridae)	Virus	Literature	1,772	1953-2020	Zoonotic (vector-borne)
Dengue fever		Dengue virus (Flaviviridae)	Virus	Literature	12,668	1985-2015	Vector-borne (human-to-human)
Eastern equine encephalitis	EEE	Eastern equine encephalitis virus (Togaviridae)	Virus	NDSS (USA)	147	2003-2020	Zoonotic (vector-borne)
Ebola virus disease		Ebola virus (Filoviridae)	Virus	Literature	36	1976-2022	Zoonotic (direct)
Hantavirus cardiopulmonary syndrome	HCPS	South American members of the genus <i>Orthohantavirus</i> (Hantaviridae)	Virus	NDSS (Brazil, Argentina)	1,391	2001-2020	Zoonotic (direct)
Hendra virus disease		Hendra virus (Paramyxoviridae)	Virus	Literature	11	1994-2013	Zoonotic (direct)
Influenza (H5N1)		Influenza A/H5N1 (Orthomyxoviridae)	Virus	Literature	257	2003-2014	Zoonotic (direct)
Jamestown Canyon	JCE	Jamestown Canyon	Virus	NDSS (USA)	178	2011-2020	Zoonotic (vector-

encephalitis		virus (Peribunyaviridae)					borne)	
Japanese encephalitis	JE	Japanese encephalitis virus (Flaviviridae)	Virus	Literature	3,367	1935-2015	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
LaCrosse encephalitis	LE	LaCrosse virus (Peribunyaviridae)	Virus	NDSS (USA)	862	2003-2020	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
Lassa fever		Lassa virus (Arenaviridae)	Virus	Literature	456	1970-2020	Zoonotic (direct)	
Lyme disease		<i>Borrelia burgdorferi</i>	Bacterium	NDSS (USA)	17,956	2000-2019	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
Marburg virus disease		Marburg virus (Filoviridae)	Virus	Literature	25	1975-2023	Zoonotic (direct)	
Mayaro fever		Mayaro virus (Togaviridae)	Virus	Literature	168	1981-2021	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
Melioidosis		<i>Burkholderia pseudomallei</i>	Bacterium	Literature	673	1910-2014	Environmental	
Middle East respiratory syndrome	MERS	Middle East Respiratory syndrome coronavirus (Coronaviridae)	Virus	Literature	193	2012-2016	Zoonotic (direct)	
Mpox		Mpox virus (Poxviridae)	Virus	Literature	498	1981-2019	Zoonotic (direct)	
Nipah virus disease		Nipah virus (Paramyxoviridae)	Virus	Literature	76	1998-2018	Zoonotic (direct)	
Oropouche fever		Oropouche virus (Peribunyaviridae)	Virus	Literature	87	1954-2020	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
Plague		<i>Yersinia pestis</i>	Bacterium	Literature	304	1950-2005	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
Powassan encephalitis		Powassan virus (Flaviviridae)	Virus	NDSS (USA)	181	2004-2020	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
Rift Valley fever	RVF	Rift Valley fever virus (Phenuiviridae)	Virus	Literature	477	1987-2018	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
St. Louis encephalitis	SLE	St. Louis encephalitis virus (Flaviviridae)	Virus	NDSS (USA)	152	2003-2020	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
West Nile fever		West Nile virus (Flaviviridae)	Virus	NDSS (USA)	8,990	1999-2020	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
Yellow fever		Yellow fever virus (Flaviviridae)	Virus	Literature; NDSS (Brazil)	1,123	1961-2016	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	
Zika virus disease		Zika virus (Flaviviridae)	Virus	Literature	322	1953-2016	Vector-borne (human-to-human)	
Zoonotic malaria		<i>Plasmodium knowlesi</i>	Protozoan	Literature	185	1996-2013	Zoonotic (vector-borne)	

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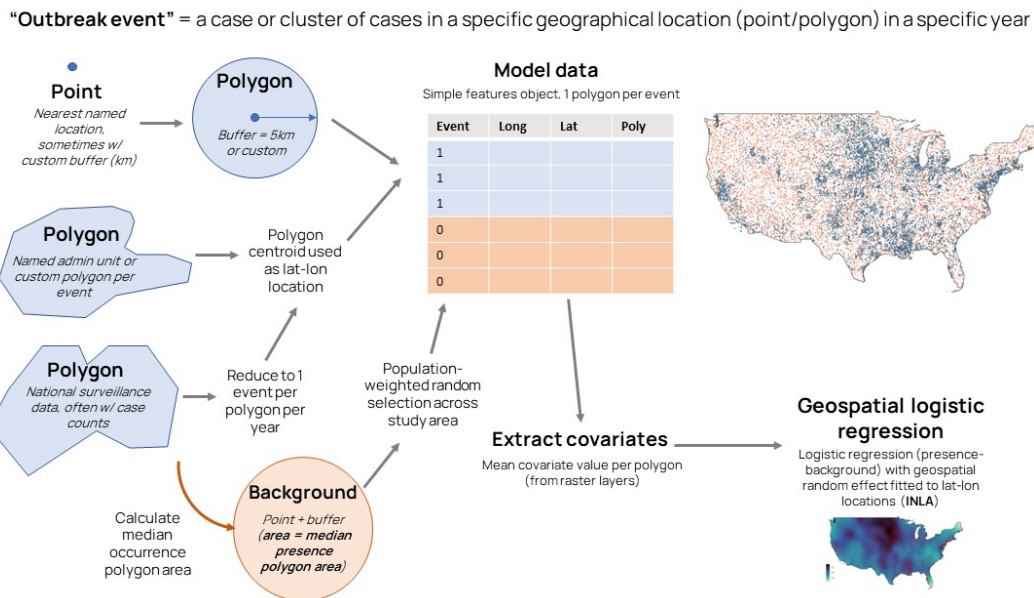
925 **Extended Data Table 2: Socio-environmental covariate data sources.** Table provides descriptions
 926 of the socio-environmental covariates used for each hypothesized driver, including the source, precise
 927 description, and spatial and temporal resolution. Information on open accessibility for each covariate
 928 is provided in Supp. Table 3.
 929

Covariate	Description	Source	Spatial resolution	Temporal resolution	Driver type	
Biodiversity intactness	The Biodiversity Intactness Index: average abundance of originally present species, relative to undisturbed habitat, modeled as a function of land use intensity	Newbold et al. 2016	1km	2005 (single time period)	Ecosystem structure	
Cropland cover	% area covered by cropland	Copernicus Land Cover (PROBA-V satellite)	100m	2015 (single time period)	Ecosystem structure	
Cropland expansion	Net change in cropland 2000 to 2019 (gain-loss) as % of total area	GLAD Global Cropland Expansion (Landsat)	30m	2000-2019	Land use impact	
Forest cover	% area tree cover	Copernicus Land Cover (PROBA-V satellite)	100m	2015 (single time period)	Ecosystem structure	
Forest loss	Tree cover loss 2000 to 2020 as % of total area	Global Forest Change (Landsat)	30m	2000-2020	Land use impact	
Human population	Census estimates disaggregated to pixel level using unconstrained top-down predictive model	WorldPop	1km	2010	Human population	
Hunting pressure	Model-predicted average hunting-related species abundance declines (tropical forest biomes only)	Projected meta-analytic model from Benitez-Lopez et al 2019		Present-day (single nominal time period)	Land use impact	
Livestock density	Mean per-grid-cell density of livestock	Gridded Livestock of the World	1km	2010 (single time period)	Socioeconomic	
Mining	% of area covered in mining land use	Global mining land use maps from Maus et al 2022	1km	2019 (single time period)	Land use impact	
Precipitation change	Difference in mean annual precipitation between reference period (1950-70) and present day (2000-2020)	ERA5-Land monthly precipitation (post-processed)	9km	Focal period 2000-2020, compared to baseline period 1950-1970	Climate change	
Protected area coverage	% area under land-based conservation protection	World Database on Protected Areas	1km	Present-day (single time period)	Land use impact	
Social vulnerability	Global 1km Gridded Relative Deprivation Index (aggregated to 20km grid cells to average across levels of urbanisation)	SEDAC	20km	2010-2020 (single time period)	Socioeconomic	
Temperature change	Difference in mean annual air temperature between reference period (1950-70) and present day (2000-2020)	ERA5-Land monthly air temperature means (post-processed)	9km	Focal period 2000-2020, compared to baseline period 1950-1970	Climate change	
Travel time to healthcare	Mean motorized travel time to the nearest health facility	Modeled travel time based on friction surface, from Weiss et al 2020	1km	2015 (single time period)	Detection	
Urban	Net change in built-up area 2000-2019 as %	ESA-CCI Land Cover	300m	2000-2019	Land use impact	

expansion	of total area					
Urban land cover	% impervious land cover	Copernicus Land Cover (PROBA-V satellite)	100m	2015 (single time period)	Detection	
Vegetation heterogeneity	Second-order dissimilarity of Enhanced Vegetation Index among neighboring pixels	Habitat heterogeneity metrics database from Tuanmu et al 2015	1km	2005 (single time period)	Ecosystem structure	

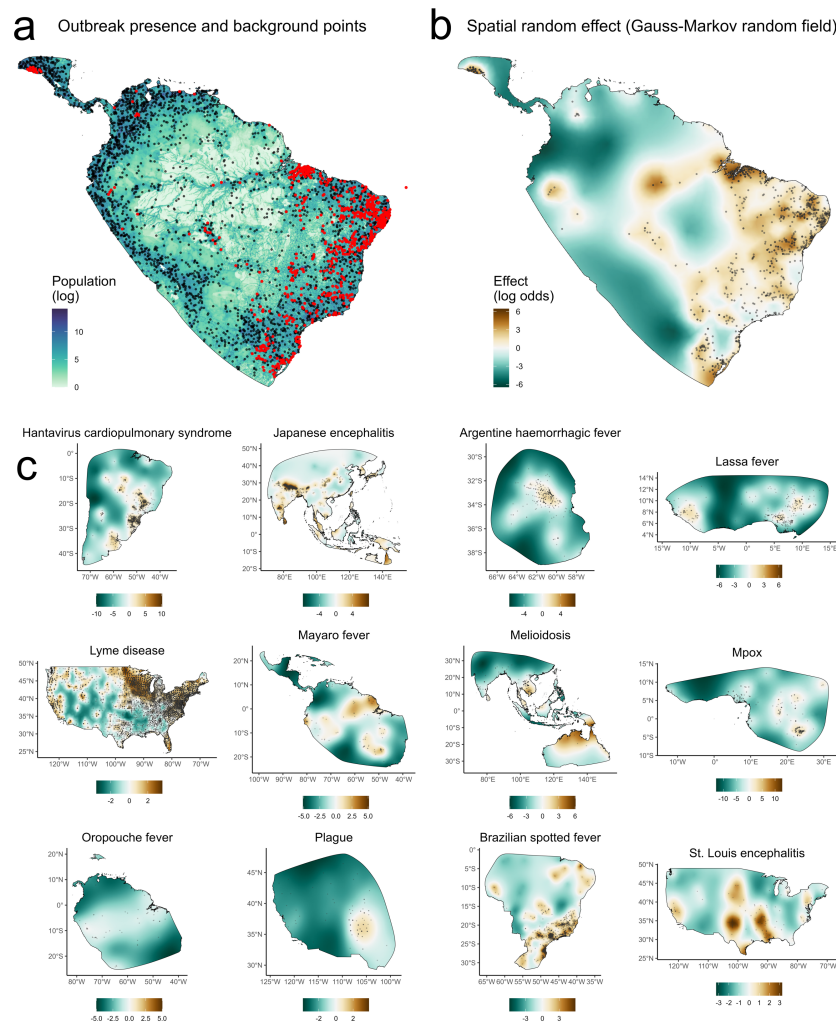
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931 **Extended Data Figure 1: Bringing diverse disease case and outbreak data sources into a common**
 932 **analytical framework.** Disease data sources included georeferenced case or outbreak event
 933 locations in point format (nearest named location), case or outbreak event occurrences within named
 934 administrative polygons, and case surveillance data at administrative polygon levels from national
 935 surveillance systems (sources variously shown in blue). Each contains different information about
 936 transmission intensity and different levels of geographical precision, which necessitated bringing
 937 different data types into a common, standardized analytical framework, shown in this figure. All
 938 outbreak locations (whether natively point or polygon) were converted into polygons (blue) and any
 939 polygons covering too large a spatial area were excluded as too imprecise (typically > 5000 km², but
 940 up to 20,000 km² for some data-deficient diseases as a compromise to retain as much data as
 941 possible; Methods). Background points were generated across the study area weighted by
 942 population (Methods, Extended Data Figure 2, map shown is for West Nile fever), then buffers were
 943 created around background locations to cover the same median area as the presence locations
 944 (orange), to ensure covariates were averaged across a comparable spatial area for both occurrence
 945 points and polygons and background locations. For each polygon the mean value of each raster
 946 covariate was calculated across the entire polygon, and used as input to geospatial logistic
 947 regression models.



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950 **Extended Data Figure 2: Case-control and geospatial model design for a subset of diseases.**
951 Geospatial logistic regression models were fitted to estimate the effect of covariates on the log odds
952 of outbreak event occurrence (red points). The top row shows an example of model design for acute
953 Chagas disease in Central and South America. Since outbreaks are presence-only data, we generated
954 background points through randomly sampling 1 km grid cell locations across the study area (black
955 border) weighted by log human population (left panel; shown as black points) to create a pseudo case-
956 control design (i.e. comparing socio-environmental conditions at outbreak locations to the background
957 distribution of conditions experienced by human populations overall) (A). To account for unmeasured
958 factors shaping broad-scale outbreak geographies, models included a continuous geospatial random
959 effect (Gauss-Markov random field; fitted field for Chagas disease is shown in top right panel) (B).
960 Additional subpanels show fitted geospatial effects from the hypothesis-driven (“top ranked”) models
961 for 12 randomly-selected diseases (C). Shading denotes the marginal contribution to outbreak risk (log
962 odds scale), with brown denoting higher risk, and green denoting lower risk. Observed outbreak event
963 locations are overlaid as gray points.

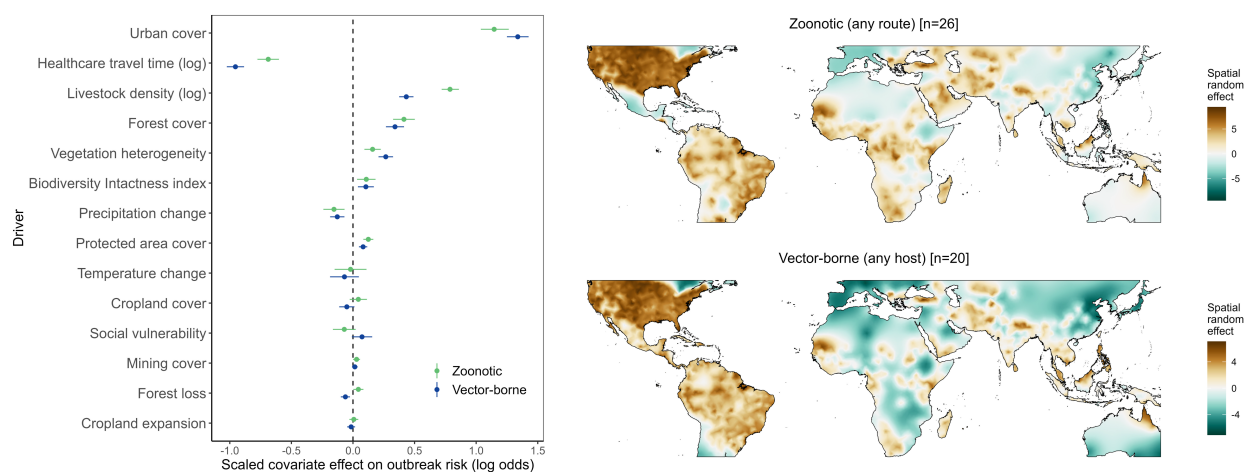


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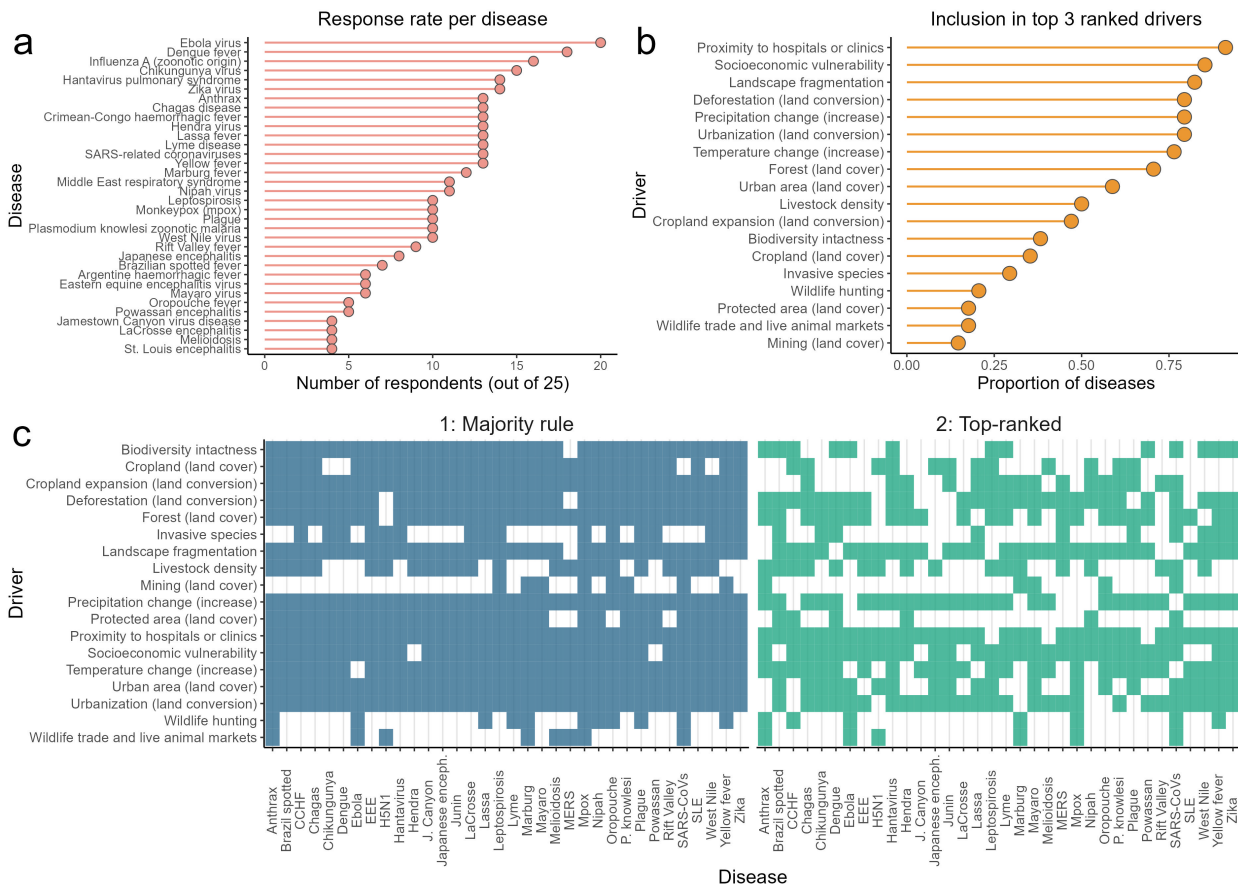
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966 **Extended Data Figure 3: Global drivers of emerging disease outbreaks across different**
967 **transmission groups.** Replicating the analysis of Figure 2 (main text), global geospatial models were
968 fitted separately for groups of diseases defined non-exclusively as either zoonotic (non-human animal
969 reservoir with any mode of transmission; n = 26 diseases, 36,577 outbreak points) or vector-borne
970 (transmitted by invertebrate vectors regardless of host, i.e. including principally anthroponotic
971 arboviruses such as dengue; n = 20 diseases, 45,556 points). Points and error bars show linear fixed
972 effects of scaled covariates (posterior marginal mean and 95% credible interval) from Bayesian logistic
973 regression models fitted to all outbreak points, with point color denoting transmission group (zoonotic
974 or vector-borne). Slope estimates denote the effect of each scaled covariate on spatial outbreak risk.
975 Fitted geospatial random effects for each model (Gauss-Markov random field) are visualized as maps
976 (color scale denotes marginal contribution to outbreak risk on the log-odds scale).

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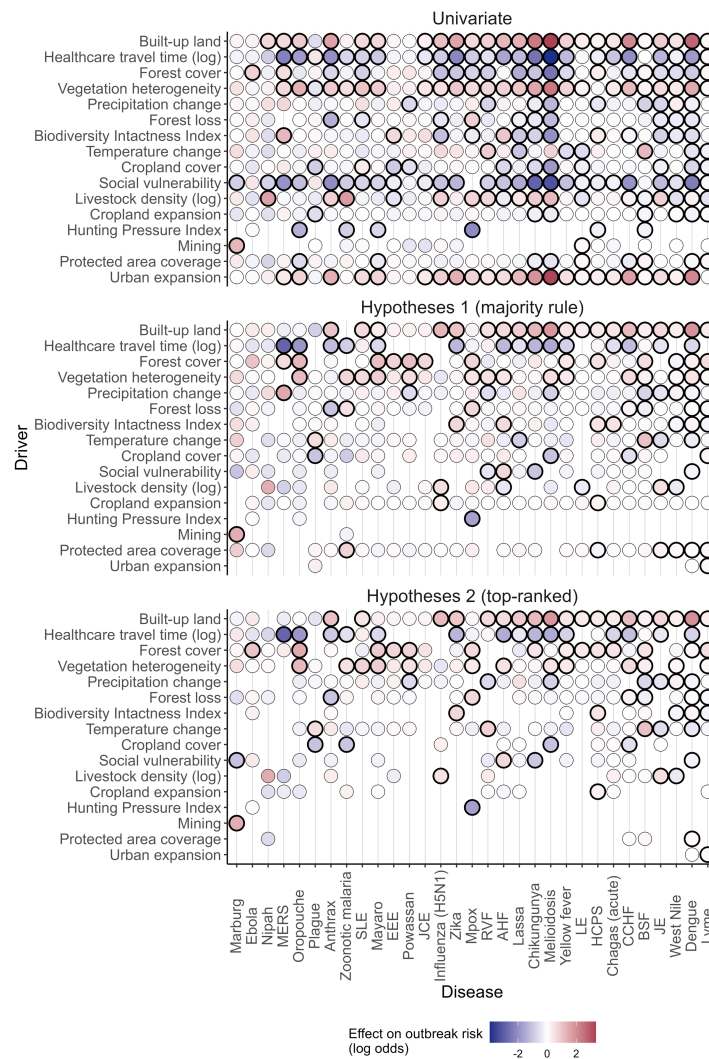


980 **Extended Data Figure 4: Hypothesised socio-environmental drivers for emerging infectious**
 981 **diseases from a collective hypothesis-generation exercise.** To ensure our analyses tested
 982 appropriate, ecologically-plausible drivers for each disease, we used a structured form-based
 983 hypothesis exercise completed by the majority of coauthors (n = 25 out of 31; Methods). Respondents
 984 had the option to either fill in the form or leave blank for each disease (diseases names provided were
 985 as in panel A). There was substantial variability in response rates (A), with most responses for better-
 986 studied or widespread diseases (e.g. Ebola, dengue, influenza A) and vice versa. Respondents ranked
 987 each driver effect as “positive”, “negative”, “none” or “don’t know” and additionally were asked to select
 988 the top 3 most important drivers for each disease. Health systems access and socioeconomic
 989 vulnerability were the most commonly top-ranked drivers, followed by fragmentation, deforestation,
 990 urbanization and climate change (B; shows the proportion of diseases for which each driver was ranked
 991 in the top 3 by at least 1 respondent). Bottom panels (C) show hypothesized drivers to test for each
 992 disease based on two schemes: a broad “majority rule” criterion (drivers for which more respondents
 993 stated any effect than no effect) and a stricter “top ranked” criterion (all drivers that were ranked
 994 among the top 3 by at least 1 respondent).



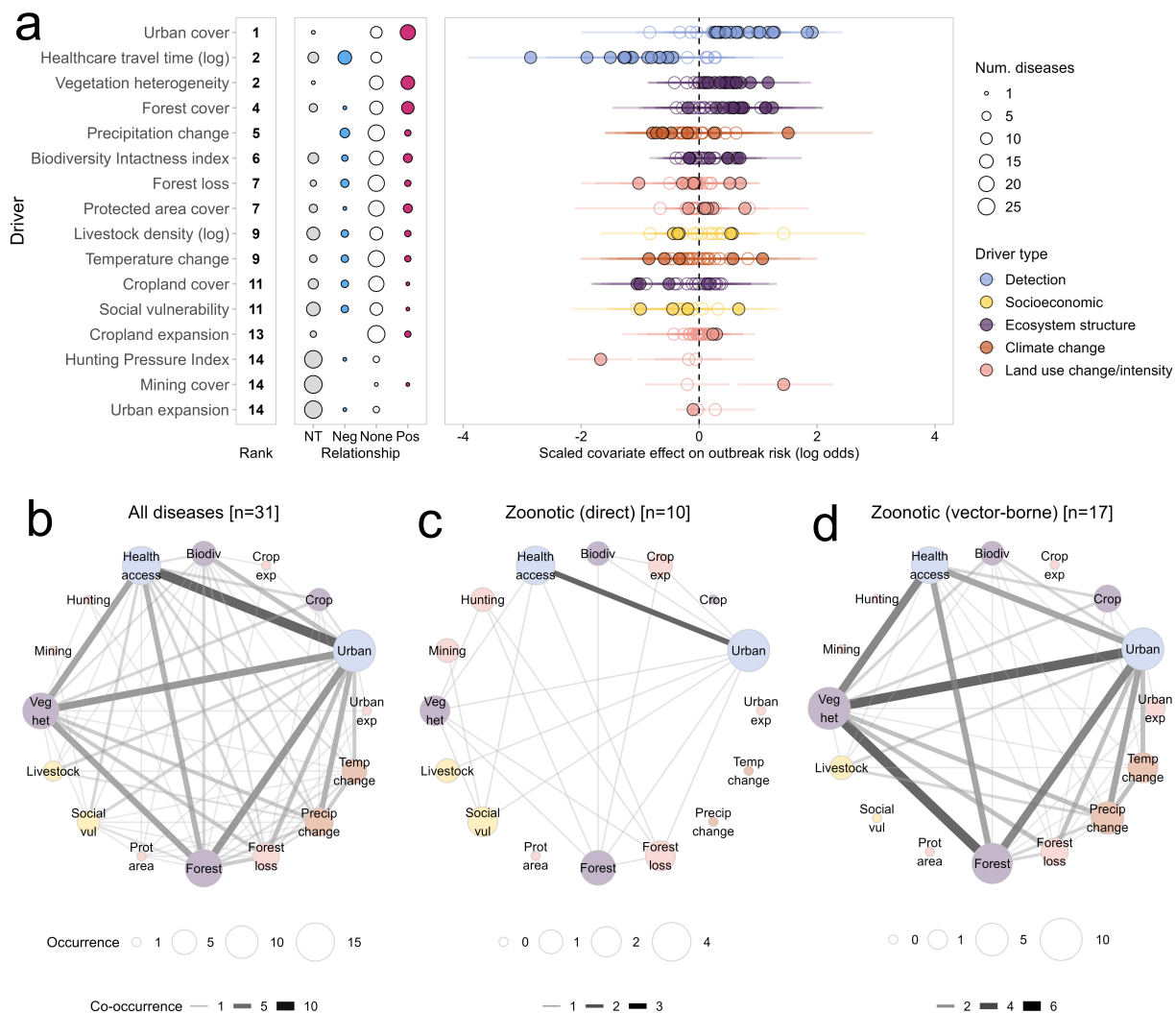
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999 **Extended Data Figure 5: Estimated posterior mean effects of socio-environmental drivers of**
 1000 **emerging infectious disease outbreaks, in univariable and hypothesis-driven models.** Models were
 1001 run in univariable driver-disease pairs (i.e. geospatial random effect plus each driver individually; top)
 1002 and in multivariable models including two sets of hypothesized drivers identified through the
 1003 hypothesis exercise (Extended Data Figure 4). These included a broader definition (“majority rule”:
 1004 covariates that were identified by more respondents as having an effect on risk, than having no effect
 1005 on risk; middle row), and a stricter definition (“top-ranked”: only covariates that were ranked among the
 1006 top 3 drivers by any respondent; bottom row). Color represents the posterior mean linear effect of the
 1007 scaled covariate (log odds scale), where red denotes increasing risk and blue denotes decreasing risk.
 1008 Black borders denote evidence of a non-zero effect on risk (i.e. 95% credible interval not overlapping
 1009 zero). Drivers are ranked by number of non-zero effects from the “top-ranked” models (top to bottom),
 1010 and diseases are ordered from left to right by number of outbreak records (lowest to highest).



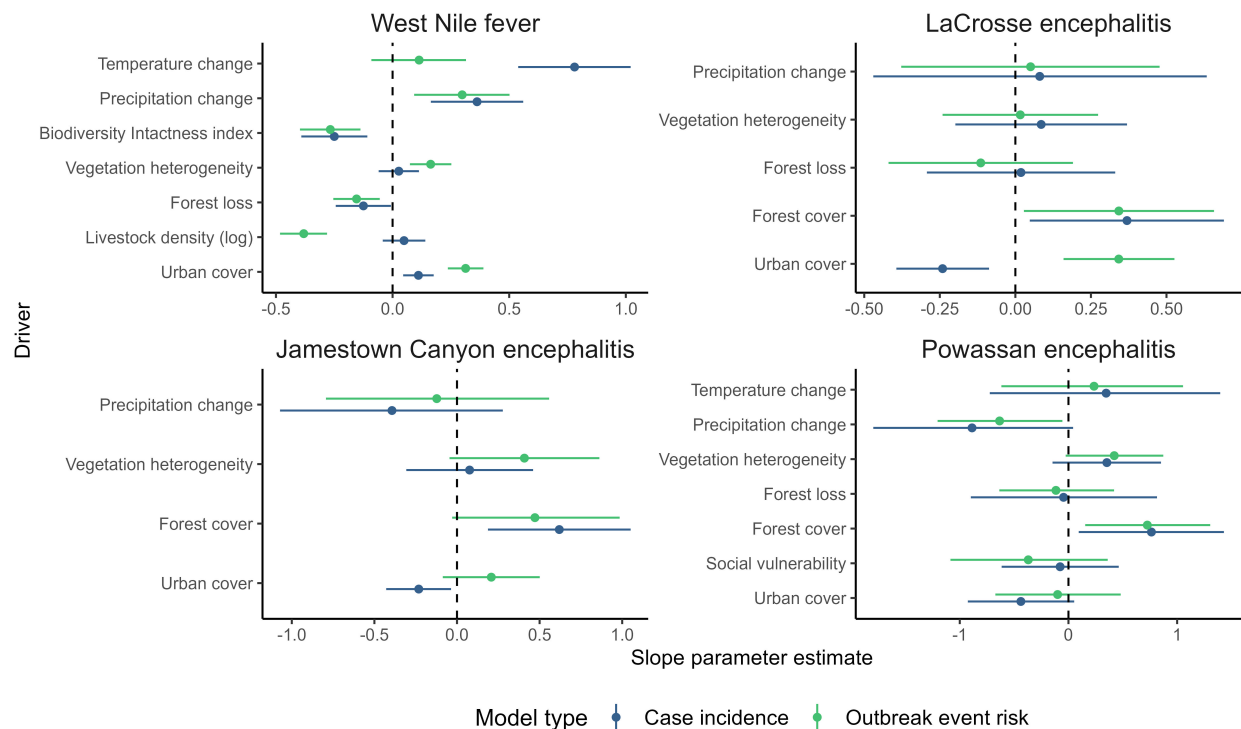
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1013 **Extended Data Figure 6: Drivers of outbreak risk for 31 emerging infectious diseases based on “top**
 1014 **ranked” hypothesis criterion.** The figure replicates the results from main text Figures 3 and 4, but
 1015 based on hypotheses generated using the stricter “top ranked” criterion (Extended Data Figure 4c).
 1016 Top row (A): panels show ranked drivers by number of diseases with strong evidence of a relationship
 1017 (right column), prevalence and directionality of driver effects (middle column, with point size denoting
 1018 number of diseases), and posterior marginal mean and 95% credible interval for all tested diseases
 1019 (right column, filled points represent evidence of a non-zero effect). See Figure 3 legend for full
 1020 description. Bottom row (B-D): unipartite networks show the pattern of co-occurring drivers for all
 1021 diseases; directly-transmitted zoonoses; and vector-borne zoonoses. Nodes represent drivers with
 1022 size proportional to the number of diseases with evidence of a non-zero effect; edge weight denotes
 1023 the number of diseases for which driver pairs co-occur. See Figure 4 legend for full description.
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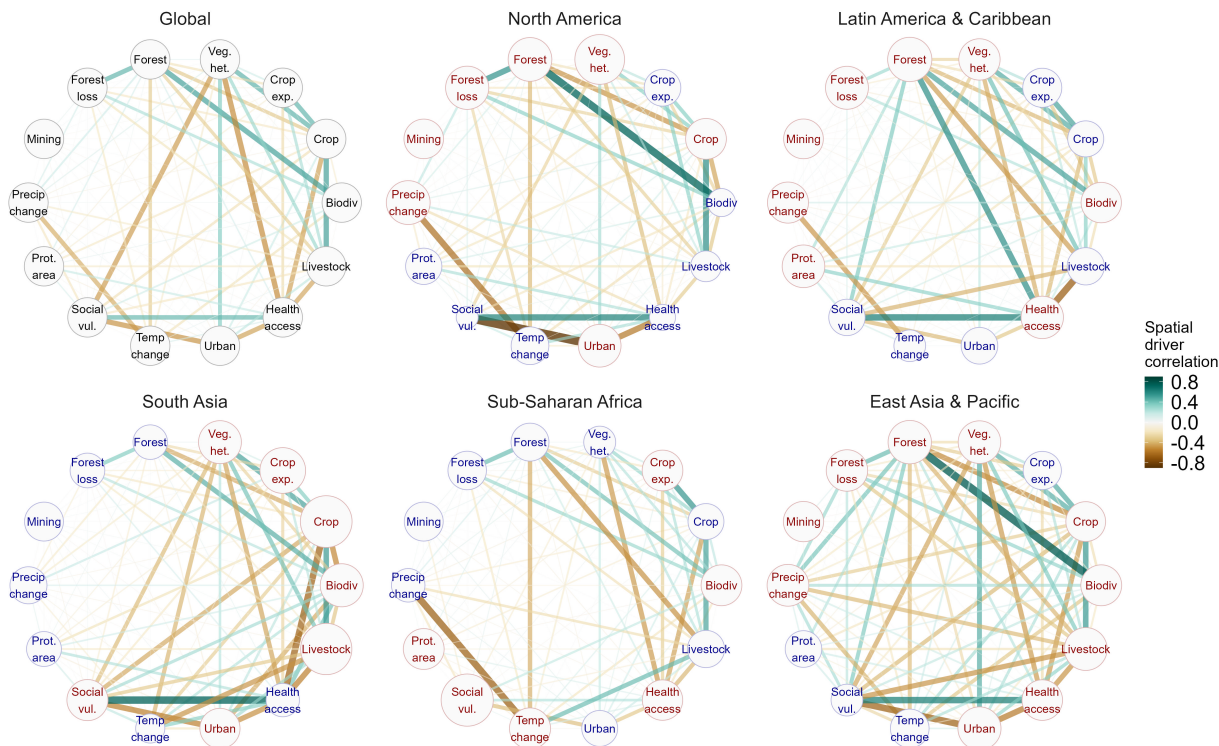
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1028 **Extended Data Figure 7: Comparison of detected socio-environmental drivers of disease**
 1029 **incidence and outbreak event risk for arboviruses in the USA.** Developing a common analytic
 1030 framework based on outbreak events required discarding information about transmission intensity
 1031 (i.e. number of cases) that is contained within national case surveillance datasets. To examine how
 1032 this might affect inferred drivers, we compared coefficient estimates between full geospatial models
 1033 of county-level case incidence, and our outbreak event risk modeling framework (Methods), for 4
 1034 diseases with varying quantities of case incidence data from the US CDC's ArboNET surveillance
 1035 platform. Incidence slope parameters (blue points and error segments) measure the inferred effects
 1036 of each driver on observed log incidence (mean and 95% credible interval). These are shown
 1037 alongside slope parameters from outbreak event models (green), which measure covariate effects on
 1038 log odds of outbreak event occurrence compared to population-weighted background points (i.e. our
 1039 standardized framework for this study; Methods). Drivers tested were based on the "top ranked"
 1040 criterion in the hypothesis exercise (Extended Data Figure 4). Data: West Nile fever (annual 2004-
 1041 2020; total cases=35,233; number of outbreak events=1,895; total counties included in model study
 1042 area=3,084); LaCrosse encephalitis (annual 2003-2020; cases=1,369; outbreaks=306;
 1043 counties=2,354); Jamestown Canyon encephalitis (annual 2000-2020; cases=225; outbreaks=112;
 1044 counties=2,642); Powassan encephalitis (annual 2004-2020; cases=199; outbreaks=93;
 1045 counties=1,146).



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1051 **Extended Data Figure 8: Clustering of emerging infectious disease drivers at global and regional**
1052 **scales.** Networks show pairwise Pearson correlations between all driver covariates (nodes), with edge
1053 color showing direction and strength of correlation (positive in green, negative in brown) and edge
1054 weight denoting strength of correlation (i.e. absolute value). Correlations were calculated based on
1055 50,000 population-weighted background points generated across the global study area (bounding box
1056 around all outbreak occurrences; Methods), with covariate values averaged across a 10km radius buffer
1057 around each point. Networks are shown using all background points (global) and separately for the five
1058 subregions containing most of the outbreak data. To visualize regional differences in covariate
1059 intensity per region, node sizes in region-specific networks are proportional to each covariate's mean
1060 scaled value, with node text color denoting whether this was above (red) or below (blue) the global
1061 average (for example, North America has substantially lower mean social vulnerability than the global
1062 average across all points, and sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia substantially higher). Urban
1063 expansion was excluded as it was consistently highly correlated with urban cover ($\rho > 0.85$), and
1064 hunting was excluded as its restriction to tropical forest biomes resulted in a high proportion of missing
1065 values. Most variable pairs were uncorrelated or very weakly correlated (mean 13% of driver pairs with
1066 absolute $\rho > 0.5$, and 8% with absolute $\rho > 0.7$, across all regions).
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Supplementary Material

- Supplementary Table 1: Disease data sources, links and access.
- Supplementary Table 2: Hypothesis generation exercise form as completed by study coauthors.
- Supplementary Table 3: Socio-environmental driver data sources, links and access.
- Supplementary Figure 1: Forest plots of linear fixed effects from disease-specific multivariable models.