Dr. Prof. RNDr. Jan Tachezy
Chair of the Board

Dear Dr. Tchezy,

This letter is to submit my evaluation of the Ph.D thesis of Mrs. Laura Adrienne André Willen. I have carefully read and made specific comments directly to the PDF document of the PhD thesis of Mrs. Laura Adrienne André Willen that was sent to me. I am attaching the noted document.

Mrs. Laura Adrienne André Willen Ph.D. thesis is very well written and very well structured:
The abstract of the thesis is very concise and provides the information necessary to follow the student’s ideas and main findings. I have made 3 minor comments directly in the abstract of the document.

The introduction of the thesis is very comprehensive discussing the main problem of canine leishmaniasis in the Mediterranean basin, the epidemiology of the disease and the control and vaccination strategies. The student then described the previous use of saliva as markers of vector exposure, which is the main topic of this thesis. Mrs. Laura Adrienne André Willen did a great job in this part of the introduction by describing the concept, the relevance of saliva in blood feeding arthropods, the use of these markers in other vectors of disease, the previous use of these markers in sand flies and the use of peptides as markers of exposure for mosquito exposure. In this part I had couple of minor comments I added directly to the PDF document.

I found the main objectives clearly delineated and the results and the discussion of the thesis fulfilled the stated objectives. I had minor comments that I added directly to the PDF document.
The list of publications and the unpublished manuscript clearly demonstrates Mrs. Laura Adrienne André Willen expertise on this topic and the impactful work the student has performed during her Ph.D. training.

The student presents in the thesis 3 published papers of which she is a co-author in two and primary author in one of them.

The student is the primary author of the written manuscript (unpublished) presented in this thesis. The work presents very important data regarding an optimized vector exposure test that can be used in field conditions. This will have a great impact for vector borne diseases, specifically for vector control strategies. The experimental design in very clear and strong, the concept is very clear, and the data shows the improvement of this immunochromatographic rapid test and its value for field conditions. I have made comments directly to the PDF document for this part of the thesis.

The Summary and Conclusions of the Ph.D. thesis are clear and concise, and they are supported by the data presented in this thesis and by the published work of Mrs. Laura Adrienne André Willen.

Overall, the Ph.D. thesis presented by Mrs. Laura Adrienne André Willen is suitable for the Ph.D. defense and the quality of the Ph.D. thesis fulfills the criteria necessary for obtaining the Ph.D. degree by the candidate.

Sincerely,

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