



Press information

FLI and Institut Pasteur intensify cooperation

Insel Riems, 19 September 2014. The Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut (FLI) on the Isle of Riems and the Institut Pasteur in Paris will intensify their cooperation in research and diagnosis of infectious animal diseases and zoonoses (infectious diseases which can be transmitted between humans and animals). To this end, the Presidents of both institutes, Prof. Thomas C. Mettenleiter and Prof. Christian Brechot, signed a cooperation agreement in Paris on September 19. „This agreement will further strengthen the good relations between the two long-established institutions Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut and Institut Pasteur.“, says Prof. Mettenleiter. The two institutions will intensify their cooperation particularly in rabies research, a field where Louis Pasteur was a pioneer, and in research on herpes- and bunyaviruses.

Joint projects and laboratory visits of scientists at the respective partner institute are planned to strengthen the cooperation between the two institutes. The partners will meet at least once a year to discuss joint activities and goals. The cooperation agreement has been concluded for a duration of three years with an option of extending.

The FLI and the Institut Pasteur have been cooperating for years on various research subjects. Intensive contacts between the two institutions exist particularly in the field of rabies research. One of the founders of rabies research was Louis Pasteur who developed and successfully applied the first vaccine against rabies at the end of the 19th century. The institute named after him was founded in 1887 and today operates worldwide in a network of 32 institutes as an independent center for basic research.

The FLI was founded in 1910 and is the oldest research institution founded explicitly for virus research. Scientists of the FLI have been conducting research on rabies for decades. The institute has been working successfully since 1974 as designated Collaborating Centre for rabies research and

surveillance of the WHO. The FLI was significantly involved in the development of bait vaccination of foxes against rabies and has helped eliminate the much-feared infectious disease in many countries. Germany has been officially free of terrestrial (canine) rabies since 2008. Currently, the FLI is in the process of establishing a research network "Lyssaviruses" involving several FLI institutes with the aim to investigate rabies viruses on the molecular level and to develop faster detection methods. Furthermore, the network will search for novel rabies-like viruses. The FLI is also significantly involved in research on the further development and improvement of vaccines against rabies for different animal species.