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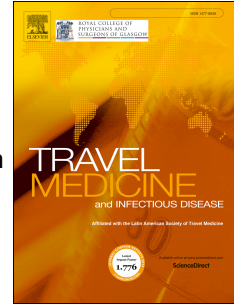
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Spatial and temporal variation of dengue incidence in the island of bali, Indonesia: An ecological study

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1 **Spatial and temporal variation of dengue incidence in the island of Bali,**
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61 **ABSTRACT**

62 **Background:** Dengue fever control in the tropical island of Bali in Indonesia carries important
63 significance both nationally and globally, as it is one of the most endemic islands in Indonesia
64 and a worldwide popular travel destination. Despite its importance, the spatial and temporal
65 heterogeneity in dengue risk and factors associated with its variation in risk across the island are
66 not well understood. This study aimed to analyze for the first time the geographical and temporal
67 pattern and the environmental and social drivers of dengue incidence in Bali.

68 **Methods:** We analyzed retrospective dengue notification data at the sub-district level
69 (*Kecamatan*) from January 2012 to December 2017 obtained from the Indonesian Ministry of
70 Health. Seasonality in notified dengue incidence was assessed by seasonal trend decomposition
71 analysis with Loess (STL) smoothing. Crude standardized morbidity rates (SMRs) of dengue
72 were calculated. Moran's *I* and local indicators of spatial autocorrelation (LISA) analysis were
73 employed to assess spatial clustering and high-risk areas over the period studied. Bayesian
74 spatial and temporal conditional autoregressive (CAR) modeling was performed to quantify the
75 effects of rainfall, temperature, elevation, and population density on the risk of dengue in Bali.

76 **Results:** Strong seasonality of dengue incidence was observed with most cases notified during
77 January to May. Dengue rate was spatially clustered during the period studied with high-risk
78 *kecamatans* concentrated in the south of the island, but since 2014, the high-risk areas expanded
79 toward the eastern part of the island. The best-fitted CAR model showed increased dengue risk in
80 *kecamatans* with high total annual rainfall (relative risk (RR): 1.16 for each 1-mm increase in
81 rainfall; 95% Credible interval (CrI): 1.03-1.31) and high population density (RR: 7.90 per 1000
82 people/sq.km increase; 95% CrI: 3.01-20.40). The RR of dengue was decreased in *kecamatans*
83 with higher elevation (RR: 0.73 for each 1-m increase in elevation; 95% CrI: 0.55-0.98). No

84 significant association was observed between dengue RR and year except in 2014, where the
85 dengue RR was significantly lower (RR: 0.53; 95% CrI: 0.30-0.92) than that in 2012.

86 **Conclusions:** Dengue incidence was strongly seasonal and spatially clustered in Bali. High-risk
87 areas were spread from *kecamatan*s in Badung and Denpasar toward Karangasem and
88 Klungkung. The spatial heterogeneity of dengue risk across Bali was influenced by rainfall,
89 elevation, and population density. Surveillance and targeted intervention strategies should be
90 prioritized in the high-risk *kecamatan*s identified in this study to control dengue transmission in
91 this most touristic island in Indonesia. Local health authorities should recommend travelers to
92 use personal protective measures, especially during the peak epidemic period, before visiting
93 Bali.

94 **Keywords:** dengue, Bali, spatial analysis, conditional autoregression model, risk factors, travel
95 medicine

96

97

98 1. Introduction

99 Dengue fever (DF) is an important mosquito-borne viral infectious disease that affects
100 populations living in tropical and subtropical regions [1]. The infection is caused by four unique
101 dengue virus strains (DENV-1 to DENV-4) belonging to the Flaviviridae family and are
102 transmitted by *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquito [2]. Annually, worldwide,
103 approximately 390 million cases are reported and at least 2.5 billion people are at high risk, of
104 which more than 70% population at risk are living in Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific
105 Region [1]. International travel, climate change, and urbanization are claimed to drive the
106 geographical spread of the disease from endemic regions throughout nonendemic regions, thus
107 leading to increased risk and burden worldwide [3-6]. Furthermore, currently, there are no
108 effective vaccines available for dengue [7, 8]. Vaccination has been trialed in many endemic
109 Asian countries including Indonesia [9, 10]. Although these studies have demonstrated the
110 potential benefit of vaccination, the potential adverse effects after vaccination remain
111 concerning, which may increase the incidence of severe dengue cases in particular age groups, in
112 areas with low prevalence, and among those individuals who have not previously been infected
113 by dengue virus [11, 12].

114 Indonesia, the most populous archipelagic tropical country in Southeast Asia, is a dengue-
115 endemic country where dengue transmission occurs continuously [13]. Dengue outbreak was
116 first reported in Jakarta and Surabaya in 1968 [14]. Since then, the disease has been spreading
117 among all provinces, and it continued to increase, reaching the highest reported incidence in
118 2010 (85.70 per 100,000 people). Dengue infection disproportionately affected children of age 5
119 to 14 years and adults of age more than 15 years [15]. To date, dengue outbreaks have been
120 reported in all 34 provinces and 514 districts across the country, indicating that dengue remains a

121 significant public health problem in the country. To reduce its burden, Indonesia health
122 authority-implemented strategies focus on controlling the vector population through community-
123 based vector-control action (e.g., reduction in breeding sites) as well as chemical-based control
124 approaches (e.g., spraying larvicide and insecticide).

125 In Indonesia, Bali is one of the provinces with the highest dengue incidence [16]. All four
126 dengue virus strains have been found to circulate in the island [17, 18], thereby emphasizing that
127 Bali is an important spot for dengue circulation in the region [19-21]. This situation is
128 particularly problematic, as the island of Bali is also a popular tourism destination in the Asia
129 Pacific that attracts millions of international travelers annually. It is estimated that more than 4
130 million international tourists visit Bali each year [22], as well as millions of domestic visitors
131 come from other dengue endemic islands of Indonesia. Recent studies have shown that Bali is
132 one of the endemic sources of dengue infection among international travelers [23, 24]. Despite
133 the high importance of dengue in Bali, the geographical variation, as well as factors driving it,
134 such as spatial heterogeneity in the risk of dengue across the island, is far from clear. This
135 information would be paramount to enhance current dengue control strategies to protect the local
136 Balinese population as well as global travelers in this region.

137 Geographical information system (GIS) and remote sensing (RS) have currently been widely
138 used in public health to help reveal the spatial epidemiology of diseases and improve
139 surveillance systems for vector-borne diseases [25, 26]. Spatial analytical tools could help
140 provide evidence to support intervention strategies including identifying high-risk areas and
141 determining where resources should be allocated the most. In Indonesia, few studies have
142 demonstrated both the value of GIS/RS technologies and spatial statistics in investigating the
143 geographical and temporal pattern of diseases and predicting risks, especially for dengue

144 infections [27-31]. To date, there have been no studies on the geographical and temporal pattern
145 of dengue incidence and its associated drivers, especially in the island of Bali.

146 In this study, therefore, we aimed to analyze the spatial and temporal pattern of notified dengue
147 incidence in Bali between 2012 and 2017 and to quantify the role of social and environmental
148 factors in the spatial variability of dengue risk in Bali. This study was expected to provide
149 evidence base to better inform local health authorities to identify high-risk areas as well as the
150 drivers associated with variation in dengue risk in mainland Bali, so that cost-effective and
151 targeted interventions could be strengthened.

152

153 **2. Methods**

154 **Study site**

155 Bali is one of the 34 provinces of Indonesia and is located between Java and Lombok (-8.0611 to
156 -8.8466 S and 114.4314 to 115.7111 E). Bali consists of the mainland and five small islands,
157 namely, Nusa Penida, Nusa Ceningan, Nusa Lembongan, Serangan, and Menjangan. It has a
158 tropical climate, with an average annual temperature and rainfall of 26-27°C and 148.75-188.43
159 mm, respectively. The wet season extends from October to April, whereas the dry season is from
160 May to September. Bali has a mountainous landscape, especially in the north, where the highest
161 altitude is in Mt. Agung (~3148 m) located in Karangasem district [32].

162 Bali is divided into 9 districts (administrative level 1, called as “*Kabupaten/Kota*”) and 57 sub-
163 districts (administrative level 2, called as “*Kecamatan*”) and 176 counties (administrative level
164 3, called as “*Kelurahan/Desa*”). Bali is inhabited by approximately 4.2 million people living in
165 an area of 5636.7 km². Bali’s capital city Denpasar has the highest population density (~6500

166 inhabitants per km²), and Buleleng district has the largest area accounting for 24% of the total
167 land (~1365.9 km²). By *kecamatan*, the population was spatially varied ranging from 19,340
168 (West Selemadeg) to 286,060 people (South Denpasar) and area size ranging from 17.52 (Kuta)
169 to 366.92 km² (Kintamani). In the present study, we used *kecamatan* as the spatial unit of
170 analysis.

171 **Data collection**

172 **Dengue notification data**

173 Dengue infection has been a notifiable disease in Indonesia since 1968. All dengue infections
174 (including dengue fever (DF), dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF), and dengue shock syndrome
175 (DSS)) captured by district hospitals must be reported to the District Health Office (DHO) within
176 24 hours of diagnosis. All cases are then summarized weekly and reported monthly to the
177 Provincial Health Office (PHO) before it is sent to the Indonesian Ministry of Health. Dengue
178 case definitions are applied based on the Indonesian Ministry of Health guidelines [14, 33, 34].
179 DF is defined as when the patient presents with fever and with two or more of the following
180 symptoms: headache, retro-orbital pain, myalgia, arthralgia, rash, hemorrhagic manifestations,
181 and no evidence of plasma leakage with positive leukopenia [≤ 5000 cells/mm³,
182 thrombocytopenia (platelet count $< 150,000$ cells/mm³)], an increase in hematocrit (5–10%), and
183 no evidence of plasma loss. DHF is defined as having at least the first two of the following four
184 clinical manifestations: sudden-onset acute fever of 2–7 days duration, spontaneous hemorrhagic
185 manifestations or a positive tourniquet test, hepatomegaly, and circulatory failure, in
186 combination with hematological criteria of thrombocytopenia ($< 100,000$ cells/mm³) and $\geq 20\%$
187 increased hematocrit. DSS is defined as DHF plus a rapid, weak pulse with narrow pulse
188 pressure (≤ 20 mmHg), hypotension with cold, clammy skin, and restlessness. Dengue cases are

189 confirmed based on a positive antidengue virus IgM in acute or convalescent serum samples
190 and/or a 4-fold increase in specific IgG antibody titers between the acute and the convalescent
191 samples or virus by isolation or detection of dengue antigen or RNA in serum [34]. In this study,
192 monthly notified dengue cases (DF+DHF+DSS) for each district and *kecamatan* from January
193 2012 to December 2017 were obtained from the Bali Provincial Health Office (PHO).

194 **Environmental and population data**

195 The effect of environmental and social factors on the distribution of dengue in Bali was
196 examined. Environmental factors included in this study were rainfall, humidity, temperature, and
197 elevation. Daily meteorological data for the period of January 1, 2012, to December 31, 2017,
198 include total rainfall, annual mean rainfall, humidity, and temperature, which were obtained from
199 three weather stations in Bali. Meteorological data were available online provided by
200 Meteorological, Climatological, and Geophysical Agency (<http://dataonline.bmkg.go.id/>). The
201 Kriging technique was performed to interpolate meteorological data for the whole Bali island,
202 and the annual mean values for each meteorological data were then sampled for every *kecamatan*
203 by using zonal mean statistics toolbox in GIS software. Data for elevation were extracted from
204 Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer (ASTER) Global Digital
205 Elevation Model (GDEM) Global DEM (30 x 30 m resolution). Additionally, population density
206 for each *kecamatan* obtained from the annual reports provided by the Bureau of Statistics of Bali
207 was also considered in the analysis.

208

209 **Descriptive analysis**

210 **Seasonality and trends of dengue notifications**

211 Boxplot of monthly distribution of reported dengue incidence was generated. To assess seasonal
212 patterns and trends in dengue incidence, seasonal trend decomposition with Loess (STL)
213 smoothing [35] was performed using the statistical software R version 3.5.0 package “stlplus” (R
214 Development Core Team, 2017).

215

216 **Spatial analysis pipeline**

217 **Visualization of the crude standardized morbidity ratio**

218 Crude standardized morbidity rate (SMR) of dengue infection for each *kecamatan* was calculated
219 by dividing the observed number (O) of cases by the expected number (E) of cases. The expected
220 cases were estimated by multiplying the total incidence rate for the whole Bali with the
221 population of each corresponding *kecamatan* during the study period. Maps were created to
222 visualize the spatial variation of dengue crude incidence at *kecamatan*-level over the island by
223 using ArcGIS 10.5.1 (ESRI Redlands, CA).

224 **Exploration of spatial clustering in dengue incidence**

225 Moran’s I analysis was carried out to assess the existence of global clustering of the SMR of
226 dengue in Bali during 2012-2017. Before the analysis, a Queen-based spatial contiguity weight
227 matrix (where subdistrict polygon shares a common edge or vertex) was constructed. We did not
228 take into account the five small islands (e.g., Nusa Penida, Nusa Ceningan, Nusa Lembongan,
229 Serangan, and Menjangan) in our analysis, as this could bias spatial weight estimates and thus
230 influence the final results. The values of Moran’s I range from -1 to 1; positive value means
231 positive spatial autocorrelation, and negative value means negative spatial autocorrelation, while
232 a value of zero means no spatial autocorrelation, indicating that the disease is randomly

233 distributed [36]. Anselin's LISA analysis was performed to define the type of *kecamatan*,
234 whether it is a high-high (HH) cluster (later stated as high-risk *kecamatan*) or a low-low (LL)
235 cluster (later stated as low-risk *kecamatan*) [37]. The high-high cluster means that *kecamatan*
236 with a high rate nearby another high-rate *kecamatan*, whereas the low-low cluster means that
237 *kecamatan* with a low rate nearby another low-rate *kecamatan*. Both Moran's *I* and LISA
238 analyses were performed using GeoDA v.1.8 software [38].

239 **Nonspatial modeling**

240 A frequentist nonspatial univariate and multivariable regression model was constructed to
241 identify relationships between dengue incidence and social-environmental factors and select
242 covariates included in the subsequent spatial-temporal modeling. Spearman correlation analysis
243 between covariates was undertaken. To avoid collinearity among environmental predictors,
244 covariates with a correlation coefficient $r \geq |8|$ were not included in the multivariable analysis.
245 Multicollinearity in the final multivariable model was assessed by estimating the variance
246 inflation factor (VIF). Variable with $VIF \geq 4$ was dropped from the model. *P*-values of < 0.05
247 were considered to indicate statistical significance. All statistical analyses were carried out by
248 using STATA 15.1 (StataCorp, College Station, TX, USA).

249 **Spatial and temporal modeling**

250 A Bayesian spatiotemporal model was used to generate a smooth map of dengue relative risk
251 (RR) across the island and examine the relationship between the socio-environmental factors and
252 dengue risk by taking into account spatial autocorrelation. Bayesian statistical software,
253 OpenBUGS version 3.2.3 (Medical Research Council Biostatistics Unit, Cambridge, UK, and
254 Imperial College London, London, UK), was used. This is a Markov chain Monte Carlo

255 (MCMC) simulation-based software program for performing Bayesian analysis. We built three
 256 different models: Model I incorporated rainfall, temperature, elevation, and population density
 257 as explanatory variables and an unstructured random effect for *kecamatan*s; Model II included
 258 all explanatory variables in Model I and a spatially structured random effect; and Model III
 259 included all of the components of Models I and II.

260 Observed cases (O_{ij}) of dengue for the i -th *kecamatan* and year j , ($i = 1, 2, \dots, 57$); $j = 1, \dots, 6$)
 261 were assumed to have a Poisson distribution with mean μ_{ij} . The model was formulated as
 262 follows:

$$O_{ij} \sim \text{Poisson}(\mu_{ij})$$

$$\log(\mu_{ij}) = \log(E_{ij}) + \theta_{ij}$$

$$\theta_{ij} = \alpha + \beta_1 \cdot \text{Temp}_{ij} + \beta_2 \cdot \text{Rainfall}_{ij} + \beta_3 \cdot \text{Elev}_i + \beta_4 \cdot \text{Pop}_{ij} + \beta_5 \cdot \text{Year}_{2013_j} + \beta_6 \cdot \text{Year}_{2014_j} \\ + \beta_7 \cdot \text{Year}_{2015_j} + \beta_8 \cdot \text{Year}_{2016_j} + \beta_9 \cdot \text{Year}_{2017_j} + u_i + s_i$$

263 where E_{ij} is the expected cases in i -th *kecamatan* in year j ; θ_{ij} is the mean log RR; α is the
 264 intercept, β_{1-5} is the coefficients for variable, β_{6-9} is the coefficients for time (years), and s_i is the
 265 spatially structured random effect with mean zero and variance σ_s^2 ; u_i represents the unstructured
 266 random effect (assumed to have a mean zero and variance σ_s^2). The spatially structured random
 267 effect was modeled using conditional autoregressive (CAR) prior structure. An adjacency weight
 268 matrix was constructed to determine spatial relationships between *kecamatan*. If two *kecamatan*s
 269 share a border, it was assumed that weight = 1 and, if they do not, then weight = 0. The adjacency
 270 matrix was constructed using the ‘‘Adjacency for WinBUGS Tool’’
 271 (https://www.umesc.usgs.gov/management/dss/adjacency_tool.html), which runs in ArcGIS
 272 software. A flat prior distribution was specified for the intercept, whereas a normal prior

273 distribution was used for the coefficients (with a mean = 0 and a precision = 0.0001). The priors
274 for the precision ($1/\sigma_t^2$) of spatially structured random effects were specified using
275 noninformative gamma distributions (0.1, 0.1).

276 Environmental, social, and time covariates were included in the model as fixed effects and a
277 CAR random effect. Standardization of all environmental variables was performed to allow
278 comparability of the effects (providing a more meaningful interpretation of the results) and to
279 improve model fit. Standardization involved subtracting the mean from each environmental
280 variable, and the difference was divided by the standard deviation, which resulted in a standard
281 deviation of one.

282 An initial burn-in of 5,000 iterations was used, followed by 20,000 iterations, where values for
283 the intercept, coefficients, and predicted probability of infection at the prediction locations were
284 stored. We assessed the convergence of each variable by visually observing the history and
285 density plots; convergence was successfully achieved after approximately 120,000 iterations for
286 each model. The outputs of Bayesian models, including parameter estimates and spatial
287 prediction at unsampled locations, are distributions termed as posterior distributions. These
288 posterior distributions represent fully the uncertainties associated with the parameter estimates.
289 The deviance information criterion (DIC) was used to compare the goodness-of-fit between
290 models, where a lower DIC indicates a better model fit. We summarized the posterior
291 distributions in terms of the posterior mean and 95% Bayesian credible interval (CrI). The
292 posterior distributions of RR of the best-fitted model were mapped by using GIS software
293 ArcGIS 10.5 (ESRI, Redlands, CA).

294

295 **3. Results**

296 **Descriptive analysis**

297 We analyzed a total of 55,963 dengue infection cases reported during 2012-2017 in Bali. In
 298 general, there was a substantial increase in the number of notified dengue cases since 2012, with
 299 the highest cases was reported in 2016 (21,668 cases) (Table 1). A high incidence was reported
 300 during the first semester of the year, and the highest incidence was identified during April/May,
 301 whereas the lowest incidence was recorded in October (Fig. 1). The STL plot revealed strong
 302 seasonality in dengue incidence and showed an upward trend in incidence during 2012-2017
 303 (Fig. 2).

304 **Table 1.** Summary statistics of the number of notified dengue cases and incidence (per 100,000
 305 people) in Bali during 2012-2017

Year	Number of cases	Monthly statistics				Incidence (per 100,000 people)
		Mean	Minimum	Maximum	S.D.	
2012	2650	220.83	83	389	122.75	65.90
2013	6813	567.75	261	960	261.43	168.48
2014	8629	719.08	318	1087	310.08	204.23
2015	10704	892	212	1685	581.85	257.75
2016	21668	1805.67	919	3414	876.05	515.90
2017	4499	374.91	100	809	261.74	105.95

306

307 At *kecamatan* level, the crude SMRs of dengue was spatially heterogeneous across the island
 308 (Fig. 3). The highest crude standardized morbidity rates (SMR) of dengue was observed in
 309 Mengwi (*Kecamatan* Badung) and Ubud (*Kecamatan* Gianyar). *Kecamatan* Buleleng,
 310 Karangasem, Bebandem, Banjarakan, and Bangli were also found to have high crude SMRs
 311 during the period studied.

312 **Spatial autocorrelation**

313 We identified significant positive spatial autocorrelation for dengue incidence at the *kecamatan*
 314 level during 2012-2017. Moran's *I* values ranged from 0.148 to 0.743 (Table 2), indicating that
 315 dengue incidence was geographically clustered. However, the spatial autocorrelation index
 316 showed a declining trend, with the lowest value observed in 2017 (Moran's *I* = 0.148; $P < 0.05$).
 317 Based on LISA analysis, high-high (HH) *kecamatan*s were observed in the south during 2012,
 318 covering all *kecamatan*s of Denpasar, 5 *kecamatan*s in south Badung, and *kecamatan* Kediri in
 319 Tabanan district (Fig. 4). Changes in the distribution of high-risk *kecamatan*s were observed
 320 since 2014 when the high-risk cluster moved toward 5 *kecamatan*s in south Gianyar, 3
 321 *kecamatan*s in Karangasem and 1 *kecamatan* in Klungkung. Most low-low (LL) *kecamatan*s
 322 were found in the west and central part of the island.

323

324 **Table 2.** Spatial autocorrelation analysis for annual dengue incidence in Bali, 2012-2017

Year	Moran's <i>I</i>	<i>P</i> -value
2012	0.743	0.001
2013	0.414	0.001
2014	0.219	0.004
2015	0.271	0.002
2016	0.231	0.005
2017	0.148	0.041

325

326

327 **Spatial modeling and risk prediction**

328 Pairwise Pearson correlation analysis indicated that humidity was strongly associated with
 329 temperature ($r=-0.89$, $P < 0.05$) (Supplementary Table S1). Thus, we did not included humidity in
 330 the model to avoid collinearity. Both univariate and multivariate regression analyses

331 demonstrated that year, rainfall, temperature, elevation, and population density were significantly
332 associated with dengue incidence (Supplementary Table S2).

333 Based on DIC estimates, Model III (which contained the Bayesian model with both the
334 unstructured and spatially structured random effect) had the lowest DIC value (DIC=222.9),
335 indicating the best-fitted model for dengue compared to the other models (Table 3). In this
336 Model III, the dengue risk was positively significantly associated with rainfall and population
337 density. The best-fitted CAR model showed increased log RR of dengue in *kecamatan*s with
338 high total annual rainfall (log RR: 0.18 for each 1-mm increase in rainfall; 95% CrI: 0.05-0.32)
339 and high population density (log RR: 2.13 per 1000 people/sq.km increase; 95% CrI: 1.27-2.99).
340 The association between temperature and dengue risk was found to be insignificant. The log RR
341 of dengue was decreased in *kecamatan*s with higher elevation (log RR: 0.28 for each 1-m
342 increase in elevation; 95% CrI: 0.02-0.54). In addition, no significant association was observed
343 between dengue RR and year except in 2014. The log RR in 2014 was significantly lower (log
344 RR: 0.63; 95% CrI: 0.04-1.23) than the reference (2012).

345 The RRs of dengue ranged from 1.05 to 10.54 across Bali (Fig. 5), with the highest RR identified
346 in *kecamatan*s in southeast Karangasem district, Bangli and Buleleng. The map of the posterior
347 means of the spatially structured random effects showed evidence of spatial clustering after
348 accounting for covariates covering *kecamatan*s in Karangasem, Klungkung and Bangli, whereas
349 the unstructured random effects showed a spatially random pattern (Supplementary Fig. S1).
350 High standard deviation was observed in *kecamatan*s in the east and northwest parts of the island
351 (Supplementary Fig. S2), which also correlated with the *kecamatan*s that exhibited a high RR.

352

353

354 **Table 3.** Regression coefficients and 95% credible interval (CrI) from Bayesian nonspatial and spatial models for dengue in Bali

Variable	Coefficient posterior mean (95% CrI)		
	Model I ^a	Model II ^b	Model III ^{c*}
α (Intercept)	-0.26 (-0.81 to 0.28)	-0.18 (-0.65 to 0.28)	-0.19 (-0.72 to 0.31)
Total annual rainfall (mm)	0.21 (0.08 to 0.35)	0.14 (0.03 to 0.27)	0.18 (0.05 to 0.32)
Annual maximum temperature (°C)	1.5×10^{-2} (-0.19 to 0.19)	-0.03 (-0.20 to 0.12)	-0.03 (-0.21 to 0.14)
Mean elevation (m)	-0.40 (-0.62 to -0.17)	-0.30 (-0.58 to -0.02)	-0.28 (-0.54 to -0.02)
Population density (1000 persons/sq.km)	2.06 (1.26 to 2.91)	2.07 (1.10 to 3.01)	2.13 (1.27 to 2.99)
Time (year)			
2012	Ref	Ref	Ref
2013	0.43 (-0.16 to 1.03)	0.31 (-0.15 to 0.79)	0.35 (-0.19 to 0.91)
2014	-0.59 (-1.24 to 0.06)	-0.63 (-1.17 to -0.08)	-0.63 (-1.23 to -0.04)
2015	-0.02 (-0.65 to 0.63)	-0.08 (-0.64 to 0.45)	-0.02 (-0.63 to 0.60)
2016	-0.51 (-1.18 to 0.15)	-0.07 (-1.22 to -0.08)	-0.53 (-1.14 to 0.10)
2017	-0.09 (-0.75 to 0.56)	-0.08 (-0.62 to 0.47)	-0.09 (-0.69 to 0.50)
Heterogeneity unstructured	2.63 (1.48 to 4.23)	-	5.71 (2.07 to 16.09)
Heterogeneity structured	-	0.86 (0.47 to 1.41)	4.02 (0.79 to 14.78)
DIC	418.2	316.4	222.9

355 ^a unstructured; ^b structured; ^c unstructured and structured; * best-fit model; DIC, deviance information criteria

356

357 4. Discussion

358 Using recent dengue notification data, to the best of our knowledge, this was the first ecological
359 study on assessing the spatial and temporal pattern of dengue as well as quantifying factors
360 associated with the incidence of dengue in the world-renowned tropical island of Bali. Our
361 findings demonstrated that, in general, the dengue incidence was spatially clustered and the most
362 high-risk *kecamatan*s were identified along the lowlands areas in the south and east coast
363 covering all *kecamatan*s in the Denpasar metropolitan area, Badung, Tabanan, Gianyar,
364 Klungkung, and Karangasem district. Indeed, the results from this study showed that socio-
365 ecological factors including climate, elevation, and population density played an important role
366 in the spatial and temporal pattern of dengue risk in the island.

367 Our study demonstrated a strong seasonality trend in dengue incidence, with most dengue cases
368 reporting during December to April, which coincided with the rainy season [39]. During the
369 rainy season, a large amount of water bodies exist, and thus, they provide tremendous
370 opportunity for *Aedes* mosquitoes to complete their aquatic stage and maintain their population
371 in the environment. In addition, lowland areas in south Bali were often affected by flooding
372 following heavy rainfall due to insufficient drainage system [40] and poor waste management
373 [41]. Rainwater accumulated in any container including both natural and manmade containers
374 (including bottles, cans, open sewage, and tires) is known to be a potential larval habitat for the
375 mosquitoes *A. aegypti* and *A. albopictus* [42]. Studies on the association of vector abundance and
376 season in an island setting have also been described elsewhere [43, 44]. Our findings highlight
377 the need for timely integrated vector-control strategies during both wet and dry seasons by
378 controlling immature *Aedes* mosquitoes through routine inspection on potential breeding sites
379 and improving sanitation and waste management. From a travel medicine perspective, travel to

380 Bali during this period may increase the likelihood of dengue infection. Therefore, travelers
381 should consider taking necessary health preventive measures (e.g., repellents or bed nets) and
382 future reliable vaccination to minimize risk.

383 Our analysis identified clustering in the incidence of dengue spatially and temporally during the
384 period studied. However, the propensity for dengue clustering in the island of Bali appears to
385 reduce during the 5-year period, which means that the distribution of high-risk areas becomes
386 randomly spread over the island. This finding could be due to dynamic changes in local socio-
387 ecological factors and the effect of ongoing control measures that have been undertaken at the
388 local level. The spread of the high-risk cluster was initially identified in the southern *kecamatan*s
389 including all *kecamatan*s in Denpasar city, Badung district, and *kecamatan* Tabanan, before it
390 expanded to *kecamatan*s in the east coast of the island (e.g., *kecamatan* Karangasem, Abang,
391 Babandem, and Gianyar) in 2016. Such changes appear to be driven by human migration and
392 local environment and socioeconomic conditions. Bali is relatively a small island in which the
393 distance between districts or *kecamatan*s is relatively close and thus allow people to commute
394 easily. This frequent mobilization may facilitate the spread of the infection easily from one
395 community to another. Further studies, however, are needed to investigate the effect of migration
396 (inland travel) on the control of dengue transmission within the island.

397 Additionally, these lowland areas also known to be a favorite destination that provides attractive
398 landscapes for international tourists, such as beaches, irrigated rice fields, rainforest, cultural
399 heritage sites, and temples. Moreover, approximately 2 million people residing in this southern
400 area account for 50% of Bali's total population [32], and 4 million tourists visit this place
401 annually. Tourism might have partly driven dengue transmission in the island [45]. The
402 increased flow of incoming travelers originating from various levels of dengue endemicity

403 toward Bali is likely to have increase dengue transmission in recent years, as it might have
404 facilitated the spillover of DENV strains between travelers and local Balinese [15], which was
405 evidenced by a dramatic shift in the diversity of DENV serotypes in Bali since 2011 [17, 18]. A
406 vast number of studies have documented the dengue infection acquired by travelers who returned
407 from this island [17, 19, 46], highlighting the Bali as a source of dengue transmission in the
408 region. Our findings suggest the need for strengthening disease control in touristic areas in Bali,
409 travel medicine recommendations, and surveillance targeting tourists visiting Bali island.

410 Our results indicate that the geographical distribution of DENV infection in Bali is influenced by
411 the complex interaction between climatic, environmental, and population factors. In our analysis,
412 we found that rainfall was positively associated with spatial variation in risk for dengue in Bali.
413 This finding was consistent with those of other studies conducted in Yogyakarta [29], Timor
414 Leste [47], and Colombia [48]. Our results indicate an increase in the RR of dengue by every
415 unit increase in the annual precipitation. In contrast, the effect of temperature on the
416 heterogeneity of risk of dengue over Bali was not evident compared to the effect of rainfall. This
417 could be due to the small variation in temperature across *kecamatan*s in Bali. Our study also
418 supports other findings in Yogyakarta [29], which found no significant effect of temperature
419 variability on the dengue incidence. Studies show that mosquitoes required a temperature of 25-
420 30°C for their optimal development [49]. Bali has a mean annual temperature ranging from 26 to
421 27°C and average humidity ranging from 79% to 85% [32], which is favorable for mosquito
422 survival. Our study also identified the negative relationship between elevation and dengue
423 incidence, which confirmed that the risk of dengue is relatively high in *kecamatan*s located at the
424 lowland area. This relationship is also observed in other parts of Indonesia [29]. It has been
425 known that elevation is closely related to climate, which is the fundamental variable for

426 mosquito propagation. Furthermore, our findings showed that population density was significant
427 factor associated with variation in dengue risk in the island. The RR was higher in the much
428 dense *kecamatan*s; this could be explained by the availability of a more favorable habitat (e.g.,
429 water containers) nearby human settlements, and this led to higher mosquito density and longer
430 survival rate [50]. These results support the presumption that increasing urbanization would
431 increase the risk of dengue transmission. Increased dengue transmission has also been reported to
432 be associated with high population density elsewhere [51].

433 Our predictive map showed that after controlling for environmental factors, the highest RR of
434 dengue was found in Karangasem, Bangli, and Buleleng. Although inconsistent with our crude
435 incidence map, these findings have important operational implications in the way that dengue
436 control can be deployed locally. Local health authorities should be aware of the potential risk
437 factors that may directly or indirectly facilitate dengue transmission in these high-risk
438 *kecamatan*s. Water scarcity has become an issue in Bali during the last few years due to
439 increased water demand, as Bali's tourism industry is rocketing [52, 53]; this has largely affected
440 the local Balinese, especially in suburban areas. During the dry season, households that have
441 limited access to pipe water, especially in urban and peri-urban such as in Buleleng, may greatly
442 rely on other sources (e.g., rainwater, boreholes) and tend to use containers to store water for
443 their daily needs, which more likely increases infestation of *A. aegypti* and *A. albopictus* [54,
444 55]. In addition, the Balinese community has strong sociocultural practices related to water; for
445 instance, households often have a water container for their "holy water" (known as *Air Tirta*) in
446 their home, and most temples in Bali had pools for their religious practices. Such behaviors may
447 have played an important role in maintaining vector abundance in the environment. Economic
448 and tourism growth have generated rapid land use conversion from paddy fields into built-up

449 areas and human settlements [52], which could provide more mosquito habitats and increase
450 human-vector contact rates. Climate and land cover could also partly explain the high predicted
451 dengue RR in these areas. Both areas, Bangli and Karangasem, have similarity in climate and
452 land cover. The annual precipitation rate in Bangli tends to be higher relative to that in other
453 areas in Bali [32], as it is located in the mountainous zone. In the lowland areas in Bangli,
454 Buleleng, and Karangasem, forested land, plantations, and rainfed paddy fields are common and
455 very close to the human settlements. This condition provides a favorable habitat for the
456 secondary vector of the dengue fever *A. albopictus* mosquito [56]. Furthermore, a nationwide
457 basic health survey in 2013 indicated that 41% of Balinese households used coil to prevent
458 mosquito bite, with a high proportion found in Gianyar, Buleleng, and Klungkung [40], which
459 may likely increase mosquito resistance against common insecticides [57] and thus hinder the
460 effectiveness of vector control programs in these areas. Indeed, our predictive map also shows
461 that high-risk areas were on the outside of Denpasar metropolitan city, which means that a
462 relatively high incidence in Denpasar might partly be due to people migrating from those high-
463 risk areas who seek for better economy. Intervention strategies including promoting community-
464 based vector control and health education as well as improving access to health services,
465 sanitation, and waste management should be more directed in these predicted high-risk areas.

466 Some climatic and environmental factors assessed in this study influenced the spatial variability
467 of dengue in Bali; however, we also noticed significant residual spatial variation indicating some
468 unmeasured factors, which could partially influence geographical patterns of dengue incidence in
469 Bali, such as water storage behavior, sanitation, vector control measures, and traveling pattern. In
470 addition, our findings also showed a high standard deviation in high RR areas, which indicates
471 high uncertainty in the model. Therefore, further local epidemiological surveys, especially in

472 Karangasem, southern Bangli, and Buleleng, should be conducted to reveal the local socio-
473 ecological factors that are associated with dengue transmission to better inform local health
474 authorities on planning and implementing effective control strategies.

475 The results of the study should be interpreted in light of some study limitations. First, this study
476 used reported dengue cases captured through passive surveillance (hospitals), which may not
477 represent the actual dengue infection in the population, and hence, the results may be
478 underestimated. Second, variation in the quality and completeness of the reported dengue data
479 from each *kecamatan* may also likely impact the geographical variation of the disease incidence
480 of dengue in Bali. It is important to note that incompleteness and variation in reporting
481 procedures remain an important issue in the dengue surveillance system in Indonesia [58]. In
482 addition, the accuracy and variation of the data could also be influenced by a varied level of
483 awareness on dengue fever among local physicians to diagnose dengue, Balinese health-seeking
484 behavior, and dengue confirmation approaches. These factors, in turn, could potentially lead to
485 under/over-reported dengue cases and thus may lead to bias in our analysis. However, as this
486 study used time-series data and was primarily focused on the seasonality and the spatial
487 distributions of disease, these potential imperfections in the data should not significantly
488 influence the findings. Third, this study was an ecological study and solely focused on the effects
489 of climate and environment. There might be potential confounding factors at the *kecamatan* level
490 that were not included in this study, which may have affected our findings. Data for urbanization
491 rate, human migration, vector density, drinking water infrastructure, and control measures that
492 undergone at the *kecamatan* level were not available; therefore, we were not able to take these
493 variables into consideration into the model. Fifth, during the epidemic, dengue cases were
494 commonly classified by clinical and epidemiological criteria particularly in resource-limited

495 settings. Although local physicians were very familiar with dengue fever clinical diagnosis,
496 laboratory diagnosis is not generally and routinely performed in every health provider across
497 Bali due to its cost. Given that inadequacy and variation in diagnostic capacity and the nature of
498 dengue infection (i.e., broad clinical manifestations, which exhibit similar symptoms as those of
499 other arboviral diseases), other emerging/re-emerging vector-borne diseases that also exist in
500 Bali include Chikungunya [21, 59] and Zika virus disease [60, 61], which may likely be
501 misdiagnosed and reported as dengue and that might influence the findings of this study.
502 Therefore, further local epidemiological surveys are highly needed especially focusing on
503 dengue high-risk *kecamatan*s identified in this study to provide more robust predictive maps as
504 well as to help ascertain dengue and other arboviruses in Bali.

505

506 **Conclusion**

507 In general, geographical distribution of dengue incidence in Bali was spatially clustered along
508 the south toward the eastern part of the island, and the incidence of dengue in Bali was strongly
509 seasonal, with most incidence reported during January to May. Local weather and
510 socioecological condition including rainfall, elevation, and population density were associated
511 with spatial and temporal dynamics of dengue across the island. Locally enhanced disease
512 surveillance and targeted intervention strategies should be prioritized in the high-risk *kecamatan*s
513 identified in this study to control dengue transmission as well as other arboviruses in the island
514 of Bali. From a travel medicine standpoint, this study provides useful information for travelers as
515 well as health authorities in the region. Travelers may consider taking immunization before
516 travelling to Bali, especially during the high dengue endemic season. In addition, it is highly
517 recommended that they use protection such as insect repellent during their visit. Travel advice

518 should be delivered by the local health authorities to prepare travelers before visiting Bali.

519 Moreover, this finding may also be beneficial as foundation for strengthening regional dengue
520 early-warning systems and surveillance.

521

522 **Ethical approval and consent to participate**

523 The research protocol of this study was reviewed and approved by the Health Research Ethics
524 Committee of National Institute for Health Research and Development
525 (LB.02.01/2/KE.232/2018). All dengue cases were anonymized and aggregated to *kecamatan*-
526 level before the commencement of analysis. No personal identifiers were presented, and maps
527 presented in this paper do not show patients' addresses. Signing of a consent form was not
528 necessary, as secondary data were used.

529

530 **Data availability**

531 Data are available at the Provincial Health Agency (PHA) and Directorate General for Disease
532 Prevention and Control, Indonesian Ministry of Health, for researchers who meet the criteria for
533 access to the data.

534

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536 None.

537

538 **Competing interests**

539 The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

540

541

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546 **Author Contributions**

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560

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747 **List of figures**

748 **Fig. 1.** Monthly reported incidence of dengue infection in Bali during 2012-2017. The graph was
749 created using R software (R Development Core Team; 2017, <https://www.r-project.org/>) with the
750 “ggplot2” package.

751

752 **Fig. 2.** Seasonal trend decomposition plots of notified dengue incidence during 2012-2017.
753 Dengue case clearly shows to have strong seasonality association and reached a peak in the first
754 quarter of the year. Incidence of dengue in Bali showed an increasing trend since 2012, with the
755 highest incidence reported in 2016. The result was generated under R environment (R
756 Development Core Team; 2017, <https://www.r-project.org/>) using “stlplus” package.

757

758 **Fig. 3.** Crude standardized morbidity rates (SMR) for dengue by *kecamatan* in Bali (1 January
759 2012 to 31 December 2017). The crude rate was spatially clustered in the island, with Mengwi
760 and Ubud having the highest rate among *kecamatan*s in Bali. The map was created in ArcGIS
761 10.5.1 software, ESRI Inc., Redlands, CA, USA, (<https://www.arcgis.com/features/index.html>).

762

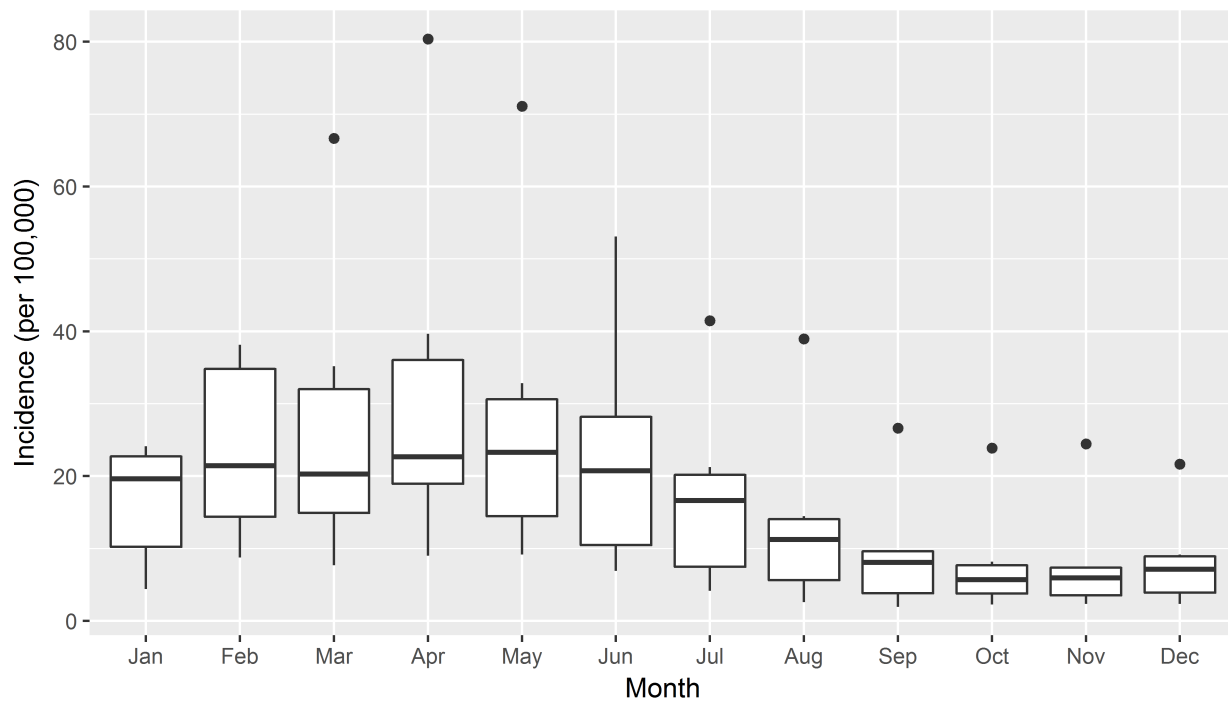
763 **Fig. 4.** Local indicators of spatial association (LISA) clusters of dengue incidence, Bali island,
764 Indonesia, 2012-2017. The map was created in ArcGIS 10.5.1 software, ESRI Inc., Redlands,
765 CA, USA, (<https://www.arcgis.com/features/index.html>).

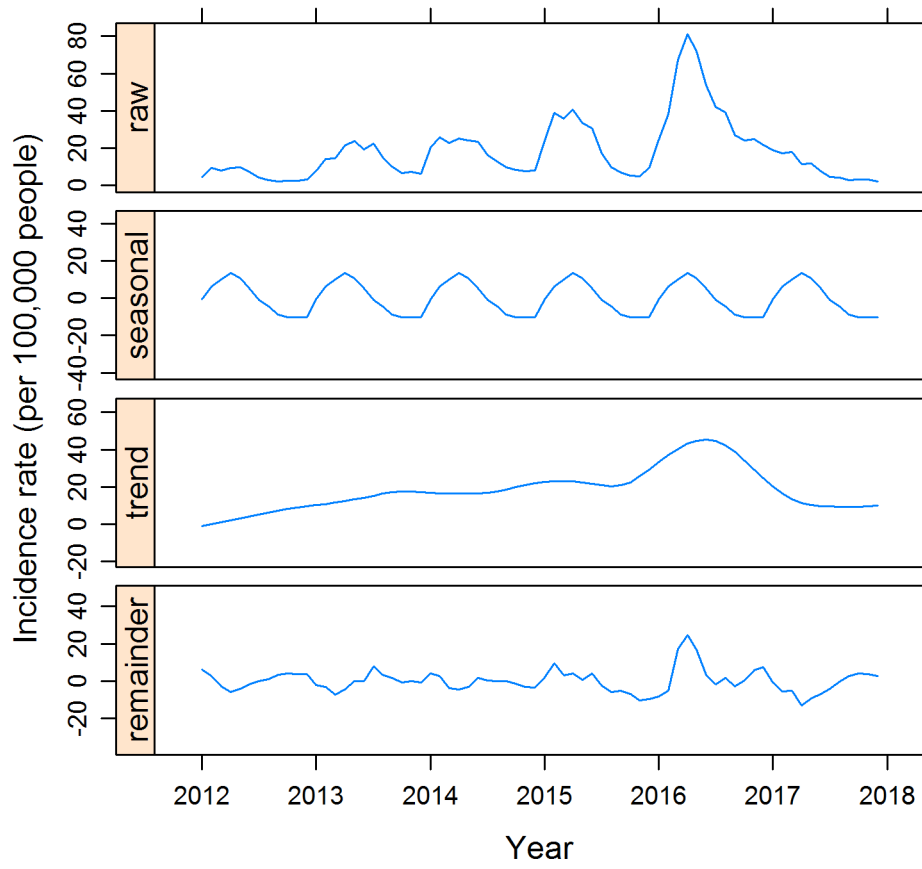
766

767 **Fig. 5.** The spatial distribution of posterior mean of the relative risk of fitted model (Model III)
768 for dengue in Bali. The map was created in ArcGIS 10.5.1 software, ESRI Inc., Redlands, CA,
769 USA (<https://www.arcgis.com/features/index.html>).

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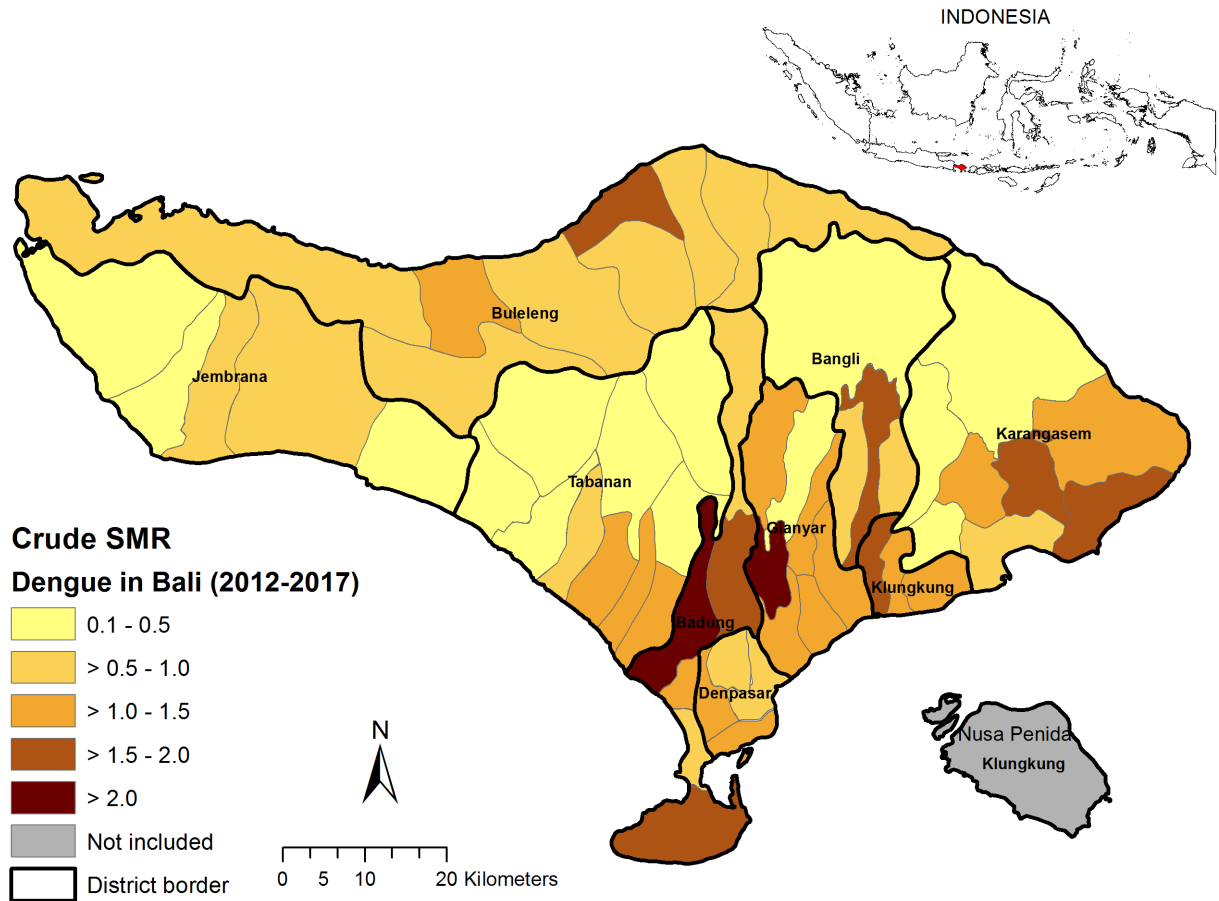
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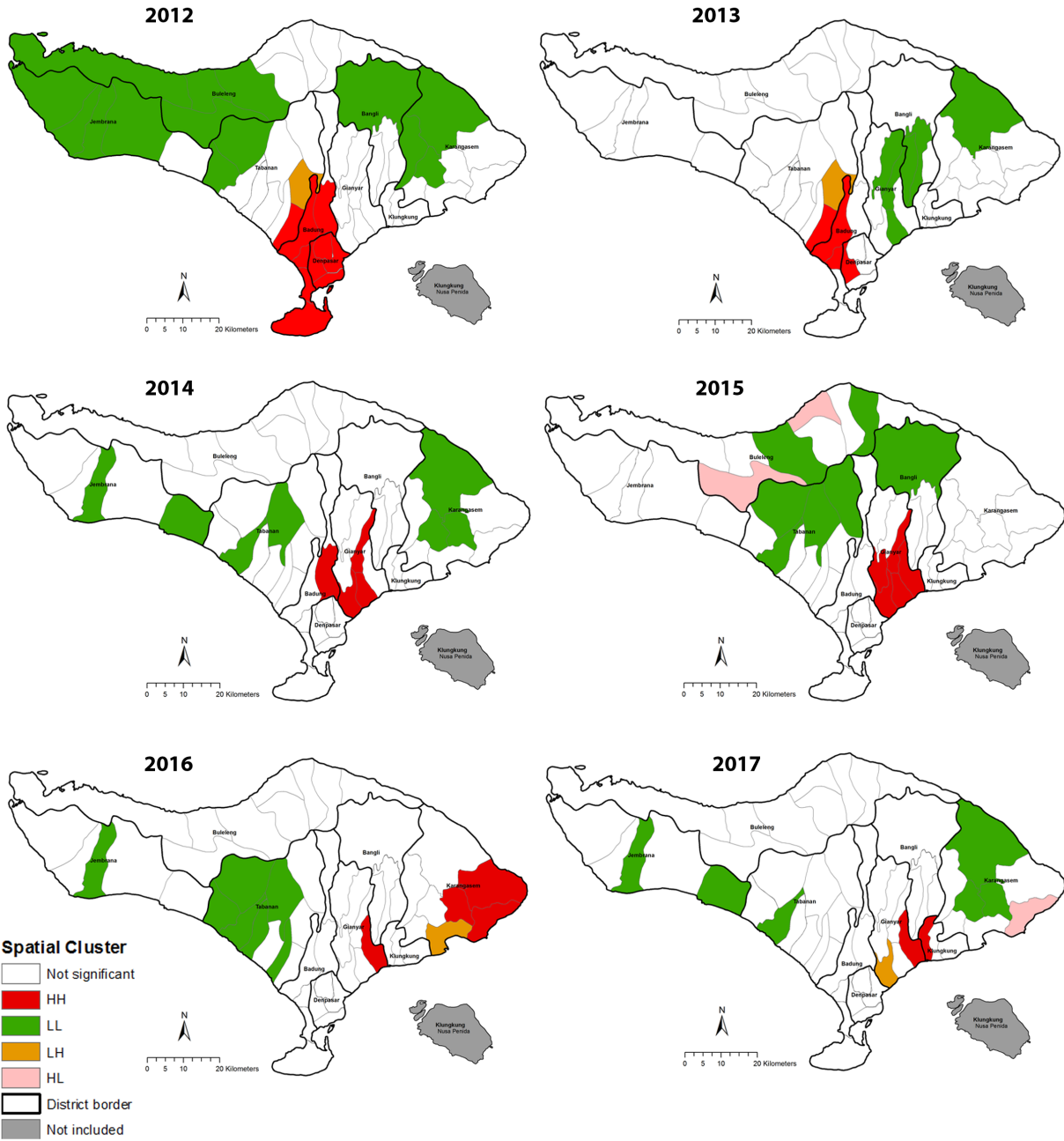




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