



UW REF.

ONZE REF.

DATUM 13/01/2022

BIJLAGE(N) 2

CONTACT H Claeys

TEL.

E-MAIL herman.claeys@health.fgov.be

Dr. Monique Eloit
Director General
World Organisation for Animal Health
12, Rue de Prony
75017 Paris
FRANCE

Subject: 2 Belgian Hippopotamus positive SARS-COV-2

Dear Dr. Eloit,

I would like to inform you in the context of Art 1.1.6 on the discovery and follow up of 2 Hippopotamus which were tested positive for SARS-COV-2 begin december. These are located in the Royal Zoo of Antwerp.

On 2 December 2021, a SARS-Cov2 PCR positive result was notified to the Belgian Federal Agency for the Security of the Food Chain. Firstly tested positive in a private lab, the samples were further sent the same day to the national reference centre (Sciensano) and were confirmed positive. The sequencing was resulting in a Deltatype which circulated commonly in Belgium at that moment. The sequencing itself is available in GISAID.

The first positive sample was taken on 26 November from 1 hippo already kept inside in the zoo of Antwerp. New samples were taken from the 2 resident hippos on 30 of November and were also tested positive, but with a lower viral load. The only observed symptoms were increased nasal secretions (sticky mucous) when initial samples were taken. On Monday 6 of December, no clinical signs were shown anymore.

The hippos were already in their winter housing. From the moment the first test was positive, no contact with the public was allowed anymore. There is no close direct contact with other animals neither.

Since, no further information was delivered nor any more symptoms seen. We will keep you informed if any further development would appear.

Yours sincerely,

Herman Claeys
Delegate to the OIE for Belgium