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Subject: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (181): Germany (BY), France (AC), cat, OIE animal case defin.

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 UPDATE (181): GERMANY (BAVARIA), FRANCE (NOUVELLE-AQUITAINE), CAT, OIE ANIMAL CASE DEFINITION

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A ProMED-mail post

<http://www.promedmail.org>

ProMED-mail is a program of the

International Society for Infectious Diseases

<http://www.isid.org>

In this update:

[1] Germany: 1st case in a cat

[2] France: 2nd case in a cat

[3] OIE, COVID-19 in animals: case definition, reporting

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[1] Germany: 1st case in a cat

Date: Wed 13 May 2020

From: Asisa Volz <Asisa.Volz@tiho-hannover.de> [edited]

SARS-CoV-2 infection, cat, Germany

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SARS-CoV-2-infected domestic cats, large felids, and, most recently, also minks, all living in close contact with humans, have been reported from several countries. Here we report a SARS-CoV-2 infection of a cat in Germany confirmed by SARS-CoV-2-specific RT-PCR diagnostics by the Bavarian Office for Health and Food Safety, Erlangen, Bavaria. The 6-year-old female cat lived together with its owner in a retirement home in Upper Palatinate, Bavaria, Germany. The owner died due to COVID-19 on 12 Apr 2020. There were also 2 other cats (female 15-year-old, male 10-year-old) living in the same retirement home, which has an ongoing COVID-19 outbreak scenario. All 3 cats had contacts with the residents, but none of the cats had any signs of respiratory disease. Throat swabs of all cats were analysed for SARS-CoV-2 on 29 Apr 2020. The cat from the deceased owner showed a weak positive PCR result for SARS-CoV-2. The other 2 cats were PCR-negative. All cats together were immediately isolated in a local quarantine facility supervised by the local competent veterinary office and were sampled again by throat swabs on 4 May 2020. The 2 negative cats remained negative. The PCR-positive cat was confirmed as clearly positive for SARS-CoV-2. All cats have been subsequently transferred to an appropriate quarantine isolation facility at the University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover (TiHo), Germany. To date (6 May 2020), none of the cats has shown any signs of respiratory disease. All 3 cats are currently housed together. The cats will be closely monitored for SARS-CoV-2, including development of specific disease symptoms, viral shedding patterns, and seroconversion. PCR-positive samples will be further investigated by TiHo and also confirmed and

analysed by whole genome sequencing at the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut (FLI), Insel Riems, Germany.

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Communicated by:

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[We are grateful to Prof Asisa Voltz and her colleagues for the above report of the 1st diagnosed COVID-19 case in a cat in Germany.

For the OIE-suggested case definition of COVID-19 in animals, see section [3]. - Mod.AS]

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[2] France: 2nd case in a cat

Date: Wed 13 May 2020

Source: Le Figaro [in French, machine trans., edited]

<https://www.lefigaro.fr/sciences/un-deuxieme-chat-teste-positif-au-coronavirus-en-france-20200512>

A 2nd cat has tested positive for coronavirus in France after having probably been infected by its owners, announced the National Veterinary School of Toulouse (ENVT) in a press release Tuesday [12 May 2020]. "This is the 2nd case reported in France of natural infection of a cat after a 1st case identified near Paris on 2 May [2020]. Less than a dozen cases have been described worldwide so far," said the statement.

This "new cat infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus has been identified in Bordeaux" by the ENVT. "As in previously identified cases around the world, the cat lived with people who were highly suspected of having contracted COVID-19," said the ENVT.

The animal "suffered from respiratory disorders and was examined several times by a practicing veterinarian," explains the ENVT, according to which "the cough persisted despite the anti-infectious and anti-inflammatory treatment."

"The search for virus was positive from a nasopharyngeal sample (...) then confirmed by a 2nd test," details the veterinary school, while "the rectal swabs of this animal were tested negative." Other analyzes are underway to characterize the virus.

"Cats," the statement said, "are not considered to be actors in the human pandemic. Cat infection has always been described in the wake and as the consequence of human infection. In particular, there is no reason to suspect that the cat represents a risk of contamination for humans.

"For the record, in its opinion dated 20 Apr 2020," the health agency Anses "concluded that in the light of available scientific knowledge, there was no evidence that pets and farm animals play an epidemiological role in the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus," the statement continued.

"This 2nd case described in France of cat infection does not change this scientific analysis," concludes the ENVT.

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[3] OIE, COVID-19 in animals: case definition, reporting

Date: Wed 13 May 2020 [accessed]

Source: OIE [abridged, edited]

[https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our\\_scientific\\_expertise/docs/pdf/COV-](https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our_scientific_expertise/docs/pdf/COV-19/Sampling_Testing_and_Reporting_of_SARS-CoV-2_in_animals_final_7May_2020.pdf)

[19/Sampling\\_Testing\\_and\\_Reporting\\_of\\_SARS-CoV-2\\_in\\_animals\\_final\\_7May\\_2020.pdf](https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our_scientific_expertise/docs/pdf/COV-19/Sampling_Testing_and_Reporting_of_SARS-CoV-2_in_animals_final_7May_2020.pdf)

Considerations for sampling, testing, and reporting of SARS-CoV-2 in animals (version 1, 7 May 2020)

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[The above OIE document has been authored by the OIE Preparedness and Resilience Department and the OIE ad hoc Group on COVID-19 and the human/animal interface. Its declared scope is to present considerations that are "intended to be non-prescriptive and broad enough to cover a range of human and animal interactions. The document aims to differentiate individual case management from research." The document "will be reviewed and updated as new scientific evidence of SARS-CoV-2 infection in animals comes to light."

The document includes the following 5 chapters:

1. SARS-CoV-2 as an emerging disease in animals
2. High-level guiding principles for sampling and testing
3. Rationale for testing of animals to manage risk
4. Suggested case definition
5. Reporting to the OIE

For ProMED-mail subscribers' convenience, we hereby duplicate the last 2 chapters. - Mod.AS]

#### 4. Suggested case definition

##### ----- 4.1. SARS-CoV-2 clinical signs in animals:

To date, there is limited knowledge about the susceptibility of different animal species. However, current evidence suggests clinical signs may include, but are not limited to, nasal discharge, respiratory distress, coughing, vomiting, or gastrointestinal disease. As in humans, mild or asymptomatic infections are likely to occur and should be considered in epidemiological investigations.

##### 4.2 Case definitions (may evolve with increasing information):

The following are suggested case definitions that can be adapted to local contexts.

###### 4.2.1 Suspected case:

SARS-CoV-2 infection can be suspected in an animal if

a) Animal has clinical signs suggestive of SARS-CoV-2 infection (described above) and all other likely differential diagnostic aetiologies have been effectively ruled out by a veterinarian;

AND

b) Animal has an epidemiological link with a confirmed human COVID-19 patient or SARS-CoV-2-infected animal, or a suggestive

case history indicating potential exposure.

#### 4.2.2 Confirmed case:

The following defines a laboratory-confirmed case of SARS-CoV-2 infection in an animal (with or without clinical signs):

- SARS-CoV-2 has been isolated from a sample\* taken directly from an animal;

OR

- Viral nucleic acid has been identified in a sample [\*] taken directly from an animal, giving cause for suspicion of previous association or contact with SARS-CoV-2, by

a) Targeting at least 2 specific genomic regions at a level indicating presence of infectious virus; OR

b) Targeting a single genomic region followed by sequencing of a secondary target.

[\*] Samples for virus isolation and viral nucleic acid are preferably nasal swab, oropharyngeal swab, nasal washing, tracheal swab, and/or a rectal sample may be taken, or a faecal sample may be used in situations where direct sampling is not possible due to risks to the animal or testing staff; or from internal organs collected post-mortem.

### 5. Reporting to the OIE

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In accordance with Chapter 1.1. of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code, confirmed cases should be notified as an emerging disease to the OIE through the World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS). As per Article 1.1.6 of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code, member countries are encouraged to report any other relevant information, such as experimental studies or prevalence surveys, to the OIE World Animal Health Information and Analysis Department as a summary report to <information.dept@oie.int>. In the context of early warning, member countries should send these reports in a timely manner.

The purpose of collecting and sharing this information at an international level is to better understand SARS-CoV2 epidemiology with a view to informing risk management and risk communication under a One Health approach.

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[On 18 Feb 2020, ProMED-mail commented, "Some evidence should already have become available to inform whether pets in close association with COVID-19-infected owners have become infected and/or pose any public health hazard. Such tests are required as soon as possible, for the sake of human AND animal health" (COVID-19 update (08): companion animals, RFI 20200218.7002276). The 1st infected cat was reported from Belgium on 27 Mar 2020 (20200327.7151215). Since then, additional infected cats have been reported from USA, Hong Kong, France, and Spain, now joined by Germany. In difference from SARS-CoV-2 in exposed dogs, which, even when experimentally infected, remained subclinical, infected cats have reportedly presented some clinical signs.

The need for a case definition for COVID-19 in animals to allow notification of confirmed cases was raised by ProMED-mail in 20200302.7040373. Subscribers are encouraged to visit the full text of the commendable OIE document, at the source URL. - Mod.AS

HealthMap/ProMED-mail maps:

Bavaria, Germany: <https://promedmail.org/promed-post?place=7332909,3744>

Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France: <https://promedmail.org/promed-post?place=7332909,61202>

## See Also

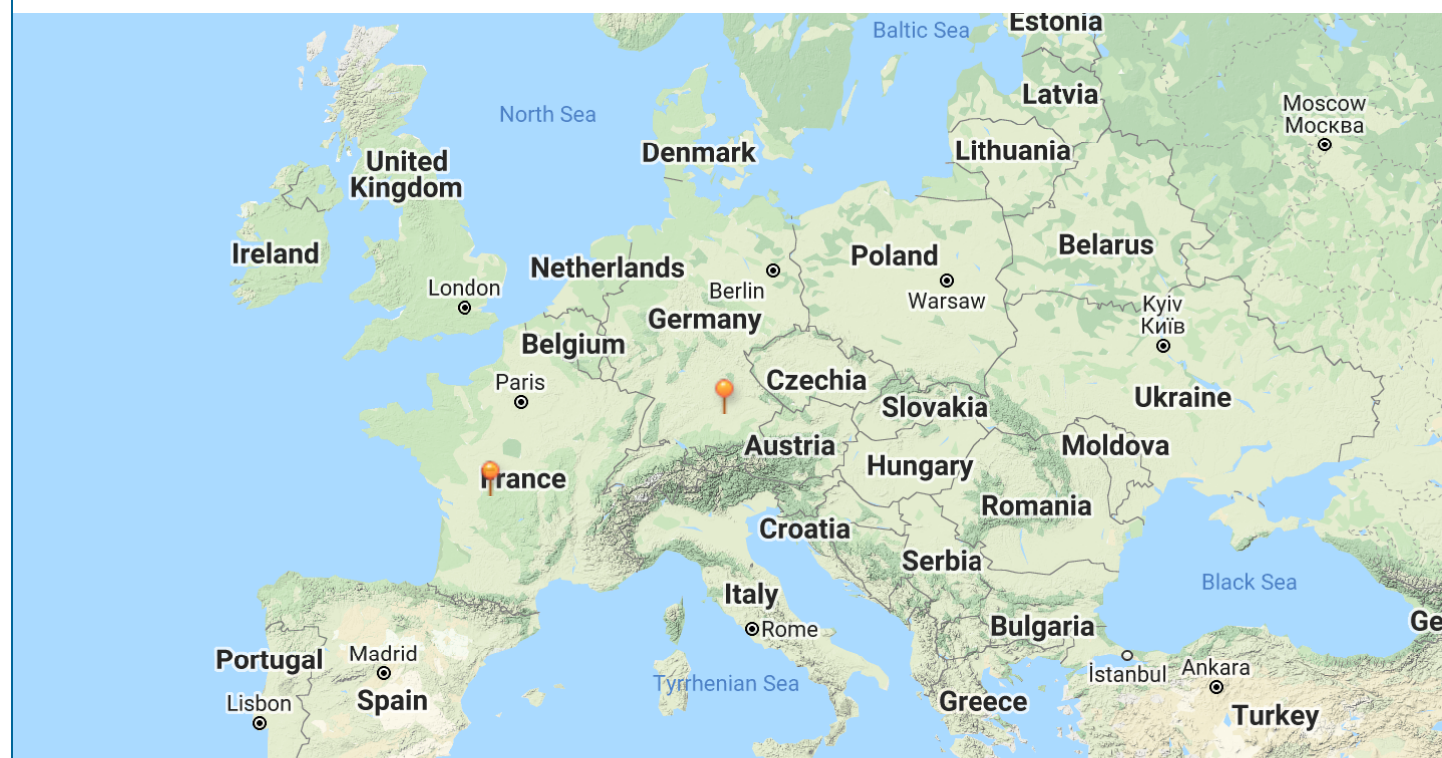
COVID-19 update (174): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, comment 20200511.7323845

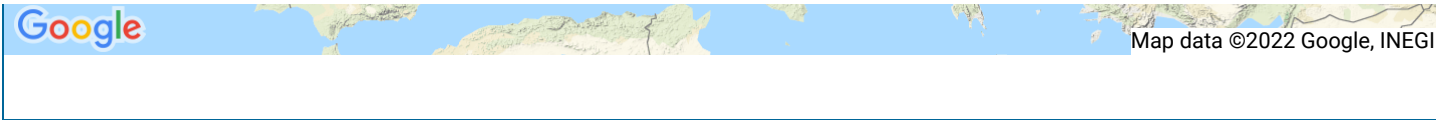
COVID-19 update (169): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, spread, rabbit susp 20200509.7316646

COVID-19 update (154): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research 20200503.7294846  
COVID-19 update (146): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, epidemiology 20200501.7286113  
COVID-19 update (135): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink 20200427.7272289  
COVID-19 update (146): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, epidemiology 20200501.7286113  
COVID-19 update (143): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, tests 20200430.7284183  
COVID-19 update (141): India, animal, wild tiger, susp, clarification, RFI 20200430.7281768  
COVID-19 update (138): India, animal, wild tiger, fatal 20200428.7275765  
COVID-19 update (135): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink 20200427.7272289  
COVID-19 update (130): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, new cases 20200425.7266556  
COVID-19 update (124): USA (NY) animal, cat, lion, OIE 20200423.7259119  
COVID-19 update (123): USA (NY) animal, cat, conf 20200422.7256272  
COVID-19 update (113): USA (NY) cat, animal, susp, RFI 20200418.7240811  
COVID-19 update (88): Germany, animal, research, pig, chicken, bat, ferret 20200407.7196506  
COVID-19 update (85): USA (NY) animal, tiger, OIE 20200406.7191480  
COVID-19 update (84): USA animal, tiger 20200406.7191352  
COVID-19 update (76): China (HU) animal, cat, owned, stray, seropositive 20200403.7179946  
COVID-19 update (75): China (Hong Kong) animal, cat, OIE 20200403.7179945  
COVID-19 update (70): China (Hong Kong) animal, cat, pets & stock 20200402.7173286  
COVID-19 update (58): Belgium, animal, cat, clinical case, RFI 20200327.7151215  
COVID-19 update (56): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, final serology positive 20200326.7146438  
COVID-19 update (50): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, 2nd case PCR positive, OIE 20200323.7129951  
COVID-19 update (45): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, 2nd case PCR positive 20200319.7112693  
COVID-19 update (37): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, prelim. serology negative 20200312.7081842  
COVID-19 update (30): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, susp, serology pending 20200306.7057595  
COVID-19 update (25): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, susp, OIE 20200302.7040373  
COVID-19 update (22): companion animals, dog susp, RFI 20200229.7036661  
COVID-19 update (17): China, animal reservoir, wildlife trade & consumption 20200225.7024245  
COVID-19 update (11): animal reservoir, intermediate hosts, pangolin susp 20200220.7009213  
COVID-19 update (08): companion animals, RFI 20200218.7002276  
COVID-19 update (06): animal reservoir, intermediate hosts 20200217.6997782

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