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À : information.dept <information.dept@oie.int>

Objet : Information on SARS-CoV-2 confirmed in a lion held in a Zoo in Estonia

Dear colleagues,

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am notifying you of the detection of an emerging Disease SARS-CoV-2 in Estonia as follows:

On 14 January 2021, the laboratory SYNLAB Eesti OÜ confirmed SARS-CoV-2 in a lion held in a Zoo in Tallinn, Estonia.

The lion was a 17-year-old male, which was euthanised 13 January 2021 for animal welfare reasons due to severe kidney failure, high age, and low possibilities for recovery. In addition the lion had upper respiratory symptoms. The kidney failure was diagnosed in the health check of lion on 2020 and rapidly worsened in the first weeks of January 2021.

Animals kept nearby to the lion have not shown any respiratory symptoms, but still it is planned to take random samples from the animals and test them to SARS-CoV-2.

Staff (13 people) in direct and in indirect contact with the lion has tested negative for SARS-CoV-2/Covid-19 virus and for antibodies.

The investigations for detecting the source of infection is ongoing.

Best regards,

Kärt Jaarma

Focal Point for Animal Disease Notification of Estonia

Chief Specialist

Animal Health and Welfare Department

Agriculture and Food Board