



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND LAND REFORM

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25 January 2022

VETERINARY PUBLIC NOTIFICATION NO. 2/2022

(Issued in terms of the Animal Health Act, (Act No. 1 of 2011))

CONFIRMED OUTBREAK OF HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA IN WILD BIRDS ALONG THE COASTAL LINE OF WALVIS BAY AND SWAKOPMUND, ERONGO REGION, NAMIBIA

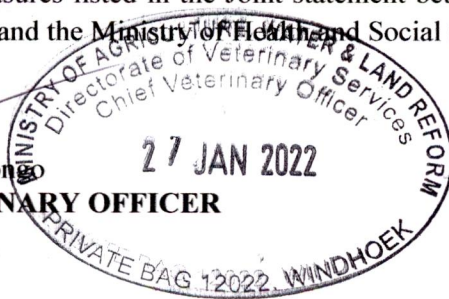
The Directorate of Veterinary Services under the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform hereby informs farmers and the general public about the confirmed outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1 strain in wild birds occurring along the coastal line of Walvis Bay and Swakopmund in Erongo region. HPAI H5N1 is a zoonotic strain and can be transmitted to humans from infected birds.

Over 200 dead wild birds, mainly the Cape Cormorants were observed since 13 January 2022 on Bird Island near Walvis Bay and around the Salt Company in Swakopmund. Samples were analysed at the Central Veterinary Laboratory (CVL) in Windhoek and HPAI H5N1 strain was confirmed. The source of the infection is believed to be wild migratory birds.

Farmers and the General public should immediately report any suspicion of any sick or dead domestic and wild birds anywhere in Namibia to the nearest State Veterinary Office or other relevant government officials.

Farmers and the general public are further urged to cooperate, support and comply with the precautionary measures listed in the Joint statement between the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform and the Ministry of Health and Social Services about the HPAI H5N1.


Dr Albertina Shilongo
CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICER





REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE WATER AND LAND REFORM AND
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

Date: 25 January 2022

**JOINT STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND LAND
REFORM AND THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

ON

**THE CONFIRMED OUTBREAK OF HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA IN
WILD BIRDS ALONG THE COASTAL LINE OF WALVIS BAY AND SWAKOPMUND,
ERONGO REGION, NAMIBIA**

Issued in terms of the Animal Health Act (Act 1 of 2011) and Public and Environmental Health
Act (Act 1 of 2015)

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (MAWLR) together with the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) hereby inform farmers and the general public about a confirmed outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1 strain in wild birds occurring along the coastal line of Walvis Bay and Swakopmund in Erongo region. HPAI H5N1 is a zoonotic strain and can be transmitted to humans from infected birds.

Over 200 dead birds, mainly the Cape Cormorants were observed since 13 January 2022 on Bird Island near Walvis Bay and around the Salt Company in Swakopmund. The source of infection is believed to be the wild migratory birds. HPAI H5N1 strain is being detected for the first time in the history of Namibia.

Transmission of HPAI virus

Wild birds play a major role in the maintenance and spread of Avian Influenza (AI) viruses. Infected birds shed the virus in their saliva, nasal secretions and feces / droppings. Domesticated birds (chickens, turkeys, etc.) and other birds may become infected through direct contact with infected wild birds, other infected poultry or through contact with surfaces that have been contaminated with the viruses.

Humans can be infected with AI virus via the eyes, nose and mouth when handling and coming into close contact with infected poultry/birds or through the handling and consumption of their infected products. There is no recorded human to human transmission of Avian Influenza (AI).

Clinical signs of AI in Birds include: swelling and purple discolouration of the head, comb and wattle, swelling and red discolouration of the feet, bleeding of internal organs and muscles, greenish diarrhoea, twisting of the neck, staggering movement and paralysis of wings and legs.

Clinical signs and symptoms of AI in humans include: high fever, general body weakness, cough, sore throat, and muscle aches. Other early symptoms may include abdominal pain, chest pain and diarrhoea. The infection may progress quickly to severe respiratory illness such as difficulty in breathing or shortness of breath and neurologic changes (altered mental status or seizures).

The two ministries are jointly conducting disease outbreak investigation and instituted the following preventative measures:

- Poultry Farmers and the general public should immediately report any suspicion of sick or dead domestic or wild birds along the entire Namibian Coastal Line to the nearest State Veterinary Office or other relevant government officials;
- The public is cautioned not to handle sick and dead birds or consume their products;
- Disposal of dead birds is to be done under supervision of Veterinary and Health Officials;
- The harvesting and movement of Guano (accumulated excrement/droppings of seabirds) from Erongo region has been suspended until further notice;
- Export of Guano that has been harvested by the 31 October 2021 may be allowed provided the importing country gives permission for its importation;
- Movement of live domestic and wild birds from coastal areas of Erongo region is prohibited in exception of the imports and in-transit consignments originating from other countries;
- Poultry farmers should apply biosecurity measures to prevent introduction of infection into their poultry farms/premises and keep their poultry away from areas frequented by wild birds;
- Elements that may attract wild birds such as feed and water should not be kept outside the poultry houses;
- People who become sick following the handling of wild or domestic birds or their products should report immediately to the nearest health facility.

For more information, please contact the nearest State Veterinary Office, Health facility or the following officials: Dr. EH. Hikufe 0811434386 (MAWLR) and Ms. Iyaloo Mwangingange 0811413190 (MoHSS).

Farmers and general public are urged to cooperate, support and comply with the control measures put in place in order to contain and prevent further spread of the infection.


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Ms. Ndiyakupi Nghituwamata
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MAWLR




.....
Mr. Ben Nangombe
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MoHSS

