



## **I. INFLUENZA STATUS (UE/OIE)**

Following the first notification dated November 17, 2020, France reported 8 outbreaks in commercial farms and one in a backyard of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) to the OIE, in accordance with the provisions of Article 1.1.3 of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code, as part of monitoring reports. Notifications are made on a weekly basis when there is no significant change in the restricted area and immediately as soon as there is a significant change in the epidemiological situation. The virus belongs to the same H5N8 strain, non-transmissible to humans, which circulates in wild birds in Europe via migratory birds.

First of all, there are 6 fatty duck farms in the South-West of France in the Landes (40) department and one backyard, in the municipalities of Benesse-Maremne (2), Saint Geours de Maremne (2), Angresse, Sort en Chalosse and Bergouey located in proximity to wetlands suitable for wild birds gatherings. The 1<sup>st</sup> outbreak was confirmed on December 7. Preventive euthanasia of ducks was carried out as soon as the first test results were obtained and the appearance of suggestive clinical signs. Epidemiological investigations have made it possible to identify three more outbreaks (2<sup>nd</sup> confirmed on 10/12 and 4<sup>th</sup> on 16/12) in the municipality of Saint Geours de Maremne, a town located 15km from Benesse-Maremne, and a backyard in Benesse-Maremne (confirmed on 12/18) in epidemiological connection with the 1<sup>st</sup> outbreak. Surveillance in and around the restricted area then made it possible to identify three other outbreaks: an outbreak in Angresse (3<sup>rd</sup> outbreak confirmed on 12/12), a town located in the protection zone of 3 kilometers from the 1<sup>st</sup> outbreak, an outbreak in Sort en Chalosse (5<sup>th</sup> outbreak confirmed on 12/21 euthanased the same day, located about 50 km from the 1<sup>st</sup> outbreak) and an outbreak in Bergouey (6<sup>th</sup> outbreak confirmed on 12/22 euthanased on the same day as well and located around 70km from the 1<sup>st</sup> outbreak).

The excellent preparation of the local veterinary services made it possible, in the space of 48 hours, to detect the outbreaks, eliminate all the birds, and proceed with the 1<sup>st</sup> cleaning and disinfection of the site. Then quickly the secondary outbreaks were identified and birds preventively eliminated as soon as cases were suspected. This confirms the good consistency and adaptation of the emergency plans put in place in France, based on the principle of early detection and rapid response, as recommended by the OIE code. Protection and surveillance zones (3 and 10 kilometers from the breeding farms) were immediately put in place in accordance with Directive 2005/94 / EC. All movement of live birds and poultry production in and from the restricted areas is prohibited.

Two H5N8 outbreaks were also confirmed on December 13 and 14 on the West Atlantic coast in the departments of Vendée (85) in Saint Maurice des Noues, and Deux-Sèvres (79) in Saint Sauveur Bressuire. These are respectively a farm of 7,000 lean ducks, and another of 3,700 breeding Muscovy ducks. All the ducks from the first farm were slaughtered on December 14, those from the second farm on December 15. Zoning and movement ban measures were taken quickly, starting with the suspicion stage on December 12.

At this stage, the hypothesis of contamination via wildlife is favored.

As a reminder, France had confirmed on November 16, 2020 a first outbreak of HPAI of this same H5N8 strain in a pet store in the department of Haute-Corse (2B), while the country had been free from the disease for 3 years. The upstream and downstream epidemiological links made it possible to trace the supplier at the origin of the

contamination and all the individuals who bought animals from contaminated animal facilities. Two other pet stores were affected by this episode: one in the Corse du Sud department (2A) and the other in the Yvelines department (78). All birds from establishments identified as outbreaks were euthanized and cleaning and disinfection was implemented. A total of 52 sites were analyzed as part of the investigations. All outbreaks were reported closed to the OIE on December 8, 2020. Protection and surveillance zones may be lifted from mid-January 2021. The three departments may regain their free status from the beginning of March 2021.

In addition, the enhanced surveillance implemented throughout France has made it possible to detect 8 cases of HPAI of the H5N8 type since December 1 in wild birds. Three wild geese have tested positive, two in the Morbihan department (56) the other in the Loire-Atlantique department (44), three swans in the Meurthe-et-Moselle department (54), a palmipede of the species Belon Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) in the department of Calvados (14), a graylag goose in Bouches du Rhône department (13) and a buzzard and a gull in the department of Haute-Corse (2B). These findings were notified in accordance with point 8 of Article 10.4.1. of the OIE code.

## II. MANAGEMENT MEASURES

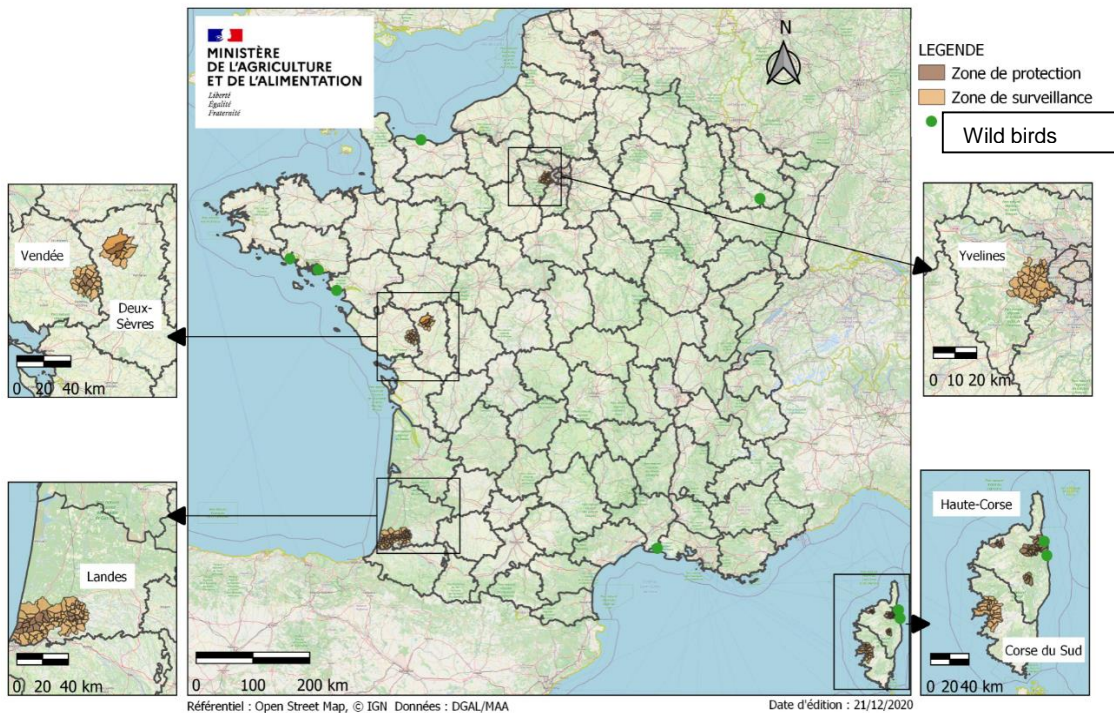
### 1. Implementation of measures in the protection and surveillance zones

<p><b>Measures in the PZ and SZ</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Identification</b> of all commercial farms.</li> <li>• Implementation of <b>protective</b> and <b>biosecurity</b> measures on farms</li> <li>• Implementation of measures for <b>cleaning, disinfection and rest periods</b></li> <li>• Priority deployment of <b>epidemiological investigations</b> to detect potential new cases and to understand the spread and origin of the disease</li> <li>• <b>A ban on the movement</b> of poultry and bird gatherings</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Additional measures in PZ</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Identification</b> of farmyards and health visits to all commercial farms and non-commercial farmyards</li> <li>• <b>Prohibition</b> of placing on the market of any non-plucked poultry that is to be sold to the consumer in its unplucked state</li> <li>• Recommendation to confine all farmyard poultry.</li> </ul>
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## Map of the regulated zones in France

Regulated areas linked to wild cases / HPAI outbreaks detected in France



## 2. Biosecurity

Each holding is required to have a biosecurity plan. The French health authorities have published two decrees on biosecurity, one that applies to poultry farms (8 February 2016, amended in June 2019), and one that applies to the transport of live birds (14 March 2018). The implementation of these measures is subject to official inspections and is combined with specific training and awareness-raising measures.

The introduction risk of HPAI virus originating from wildlife has increased to a "high" level in metropolitan France since November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 ([Ministerial decree of November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020](#)). As a consequence, throughout the country, the following measures have been implemented:

- The confinement or enclosure of poultry farms by a net with a limit on outdoor spaces for the animals;
- The prohibition of bird gatherings (e.g. competitions, fairs or exhibitions); the prohibition of the transport and release of game birds;
- The prohibition of the use of decoys for hunting