

## Press release

Paris, 22 december 2021

### Veolia and its partners build up their early warning system for identifying and quantifying SARS-CoV-2 variants in wastewater

**The *Vigie Covid-19* solution now can track signs of the Omicron variant in wastewater, acting as an early warning system of monitoring the pandemics progression**

Veolia, the IPMC (CNRS-Université Côte d'Azur), the start-up IAGE and the Bataillon des Marins Pompiers de Marseille (BMPM), continue their collaboration to optimize *Vigie Covid-19*, their pioneering solution to detect and quantify the presence of SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater in record time. Launched in September 2020, this method has already made it possible to detect and quantify the Alpha, Beta and Gamma variants, then the Delta variant this summer, and now the Omicron variant.

Used experimentally as a complement to existing clinical data, the presence of Sars-Cov-2 in wastewater has the potential to become a new indicator to help manage the pandemic. In France, the National Reference Laboratory appointed by the Ministries for Health and for the Ecological Transition<sup>1</sup>, has therefore recently launched a process to harmonize and consolidate such monitoring methods.

The *Vigie Covid-19* solution is the most operational in Europe for quantifying SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater to date. With the PCR screening techniques, the solution allows to identify the presence of known mutations originating from existing variants and evaluate their concentration. Then, the sequencing methods identify the mutations, as well as the variant's proportions.

The campaign on the Omicron variant detection, carried out by Veolia and its partners in December on a dozen municipal and industrial sites across Europe, made it possible to continue reinforcing the *Vigie Covid-19* solution with several significant advances to be noted :

- Only two weeks are needed to launch a monitoring campaign for a new variant;
- PCR screening of a sample now requires only a few hours to one day;
- Sequencing a sample takes less than a day without prior tuning;
- The results can be used as soon as the new variant arises in a region.

**Philippe Sébérac, Veolia Technological and Scientific Expertise Director:** *"With the success of our third campaign that demonstrates the effectiveness of Vigie Covid-19, we are now ready, in agreement with our partners, to make it available to a greater number of stakeholders. A large-scale roll-out would make it possible, by tightening up the territorial network, to cross-reference these data with those of local health authorities. Our method can thus constitute an excellent complement to clinical trials in the fight against the spread of the pandemic, by providing readable information and dynamics consistent with the incidence rates reported by health authorities in Europe".*

---

<sup>1</sup><https://solidarites-sante.gouv.fr/actualites/presse/communiqués-de-presse/article/le-ministere-des-solidarites-et-de-la-sante-et-le-ministere-de-la-transition>

The **Veolia** Group's ambition is to become the benchmark company for ecological transformation. With a presence on five continents and nearly 179,000 employees, the company designs and deploys useful and concrete solutions for water, waste and energy management that help to radically change the world. Through its three complementary activities, Veolia contributes to developing access to resources, preserving available resources and renewing them. In 2020, the Veolia group served 95 million people with drinking water and 62 million with wastewater services, produced nearly 43 million megawatt hours and recovered 47 million metric tons of waste. Veolia Environnement (Paris Euronext: VIE) generated a consolidated revenue of €26.010 billion in 2020. [www.veolia.com](http://www.veolia.com)

## Contacts

---

### **Veolia Group Press Relations**

Laurent Obadia - Evgeniya Mazalova  
Emilie Dupas  
Tel. + 33 (0) 1 85 57 33 33 / 86 25  
[presse.groupe@veolia.com](mailto:presse.groupe@veolia.com)

### **Analysts & Investors**

Ronald Wasylec - Ariane de Lamaze  
Tel. + 33 1 85 57 84 76 / 84 80  
[investor-relations@veolia.com](mailto:investor-relations@veolia.com)