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Press release

Zoo Berlin joins IUCN

Together against species extinction: International Conservation Fellowship Announced

The Earth is home to countless animal and plant species, but this diversity is under threat: humans are currently causing the greatest extinction of species since the end of the dinosaurs. Experts are currently meeting with representatives of many nations at the Cop15 World Conservation Conference in Montreal to stop the destruction of nature by 2030. A global agreement - like the Paris Agreement on Climate Change - is to be negotiated in order to protect nature, ecosystems and species and to promote those who have already committed themselves to the protection of species and nature. Zoo Berlin and Tierpark Berlin are expanding their commitment and published a call for applications for an international conservation scholarship programme.

While the participants of the World Conservation Conference negotiate the future of the planet, "Berlin World Wild" - the conservation programme of Zoo und Tierpark Berlin - has published a new scholarship programme. The scholarship will specifically support young conservationists and scientists with a concrete connection to the long-term protection of endangered species and habitats. The selected fellows will not only receive financial support but will also have the chance to give their projects more visibility. "There are countless young people who show extraordinary commitment to the protection of nature and encourage others to do the same. We want to support these people so that they can conduct meaningful research or lead effective conservation or education projects," explains Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem. "Humans caused the species crisis and are now the only species that can still save our unique animal and plant world. Young and committed people are a great hope for overcoming this gigantic challenge," adds Knieriem. Call for applications for the international conservation scholarship: zoo-berlin.de/conservation-scholarship

And the global situation is dramatic: by the end of the century, around one million species could disappear from the earth. For many animal and plant species, however, the situation is already more than threatening; never before have so many species been listed on the Red List of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). Currently, more than 42,100 species are con-

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sidered threatened with extinction. Species conservation and nature protection are among the core tasks of modern zoological institutions – Zoo and Tierpark Berlin had already been represented in expert committees like the „Conservation Planning Specialist Group“ for some time. Zoo Berlin has now further expanded its commitment to species conservation and has recently been accredited as an official IUCN member. Alongside the Federal Ministry for the Environment, the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and NGOs such as NABU, Zoo Berlin now belongs to the select group of IUCN members in Germany. "Our planet is facing a species crisis and we urgently need to take action together. The IUCN brings together governments and civil society organisations, united under the goal of protecting nature and conserving life on Earth. We are pleased that the Zoo Berlin has joined the Union," announces Boris Erg, Regional Director Europe of IUCN. Since 1964, the IUCN has compiled the Red List of Threatened Species, which is considered the world's most comprehensive source of information on the global status of animal, fungal and plant species. The Red List provides information on range, population size, habitat and ecology, use and trade, threats and conservation measures, which serve as a basis for necessary conservation measures. The Red List also an important tool for policy decisions that are crucial for the protection of biodiversity. Zoo Berlin will expand its involvement in the IUCN and become more involved in its committee work in the future. With its conservation programme "Berlin World Wild", the Zoological Gardens of Berlin support over 35 projects for long-term protection of threatened species and habitats.

Background World Conservation Conference:

Every 14 minutes a species disappears from planet earth. According to estimates, around one million species are threatened with extinction. Of the 72,000 animal, plant and fungus species known in Germany, about a quarter is threatened. The high consumption of resources, intensive agriculture, environmental pollution, climate change and the hunting of wild animals are the main causes of species extinction caused by humans. The 15th World Conference on Nature had to be postponed several times and will be held in Montréal, Canada, until 19 December. The signatory states of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) are working on a plan to stop the global loss of biodiversity by 2030. The agreement is to be finally negotiated and adopted at the conference in Montréal.

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