



Berlin, 24 October 2017

## Press release

### A hippo moves house

#### Male hippo Max bids farewell to Zoo Berlin

On 23 November 2012, a little male hippo named Max was born at Zoo Berlin. Today, almost five years later, he heads out for an exciting new life at Izmir Wildlife Park in Turkey.

The Turkish zoo was recommended for Max by the coordinators of the European hippopotamus studbook. The Berlin-born hippo can look forward to a spacious habitat that resembles the natural landscape of the savannah, complete with zebras, giraffes and more. "We are delighted to have found a nice new home for Max," says Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem. He explains that Max has almost reached sexual maturity – which occurs at around six years of age – and that this is when male hippos in the wild gradually break away from the group and go their own way.

After having spent a few weeks familiarising Max with the large transport crate, at eight o'clock this morning zoo staff enticed the young hippo into the crate with a generous portion of hay and crunchy apples. Once he was safely inside and tucking into his snack, the staff closed the door of the crate. A special crane was required to load the precious 1,000 kg cargo onto the truck. "We made sure that Max was prepared for his journey by feeding him his evening meal of grass in the open transport crate over the last few days," explains Zoological Director at Zoo Berlin, Dr Ragnar Kühne. "Happily, the loading today went very smoothly." There will, of course, be plenty of stops along the way for Max to receive more food and water.

Hippopotamuses are generally very slow-paced animals who spend most of their time sleeping. However, it should not be forgotten that grown male hippos can weigh up to three tonnes and are equipped with long teeth that can function as a dangerous weapon. Max is also well prepared for the blazing Turkish sun, as hippos have special glands that produce a sort of natural sun cream, protecting their skin from harmful UV rays.

Following Max's departure, Zoo Berlin is now home to four hippos: his parents Kathi (42) and Ede (22) plus two females Nicole (17) and Nala (6).