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Press release

Lively little Maisha

Zoo Berlin's baby black rhino has a name

Zoo Berlin's one-month-old black rhinoceros spends a good part of each day playfully and curiously exploring her outdoor habitat. And the confident calf now has a name: Maisha.

The word means "life" in East African language Swahili – and that is certainly a fitting moniker for the young female rhino. After all, little Maisha independently showed herself to Zoo visitors for the first time about two weeks ago, bravely venturing outside on her own when mother Maburi (16) wanted to stay indoors. And Maisha's self-confidence continues to show. "She not only displays a great interest in her surroundings, she is also developing very well in other respects," says Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem, who is also a qualified veterinarian. "She now weighs around 50 kg, which is more than double her birth weight." Black rhinos can weigh up to 1.3 tonnes when fully grown.

The sponsor of Maburi and her calf, local financial institution Berliner Sparkasse, launched a widespread call for name ideas. Hundreds of suggestions were submitted, mainly via the social media channels of Berliner Sparkasse and the Zoo. Eventually, the decision was made to call the young rhino Maisha.

Since cold, wet weather is far from ideal for little black rhinos, during the winter Maburi and her baby will only be outside and on show to Zoo visitors for a few hours at a time.

Background information:

The baby black rhinoceros at Zoo Berlin was born on 22 September 2018, which also happened to be World Rhino Day! Following a gestation period of around 15 months, Maburi (16) gave birth to her third calf – a little girl weighing 20 kilos. Rhinoceroses are born without horns to avoid injuring the mother. Not long after her birth, however, two thick patches were already visible on the calf's nose, and these will eventually develop into horns. Maburi will suckle her baby for about two years until she is old enough to feed exclusively on leaves, twigs and vegetables. Black rhinos reach maturity at around five years of age.



The new calf is the 20th black rhino to be born at Zoo Berlin. Berlin's zoos make an active contribution to the protection and conservation of black rhinoceroses, which are currently classified as "Critically Endangered" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). In 2012, female black rhinoceros Zawadi, born at Zoo Berlin, was successfully reintroduced into the wild in the Mkomazi National Park in Tanzania, where she gave birth to her first calf in 2016.