

AFRICAT VISITS BERLIN

as invited guest to the German-Namibian Society's (Deutsch-Namibische Gesellschaft e.V) *Nature Conservation Event.*

This nature conservation event, held on 3 and 4 July 2010 at the Berlin Zoo, was planned to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the partnership between the twin cities, Berlin and Windhoek.

The German-Namibian Society (DNG) has a long history of supporting projects in Namibia, specifically black rhino conservation.

Twenty years ago, members of the DNG (and our hosts), Karl-Heinz Busch and Andreas and Birgit Moehring, visited Namibia as tourists and were so taken with the efforts of 'Save the Rhino Trust' to protect our black rhino, that once back home, they set up the *Rhino Cops* (Andreas is a member of the Berlin police force), raising substantial sums of money through fund-raising projects as well as recording their own song in support of black rhino conservation, "Run Rhino Run". Not long thereafter, Karl-Heinz and the Moehrings purchased a farm along the southern boundary of the renowned Etosha National Park, with the sole intention of conserving ideal rhino habitat.

The main theme of this event included "Nature Conservation and Regional Development in Namibia", where a number of speakers were invited to lecture on the management of endangered species and protected areas since Independence.



Invited guests included AfriCat, Namibia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Cheetah Conservation Fund and Dr. Thomas Goettert (of the Berlin University), amongst others.

Pierre du Preez, conservation scientist with Namibia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism, spoke of the successful Black Rhino Custodianship Programme which encourages and supports rhino conservation on

both free-hold (commercial) and communal farms. Birgit Braun, enlightened the audience to various projects undertaken by the Cheetah Conservation Fund, especially the guard-dog programme. AfriCat, represented by Tammy Hoth, took this opportunity to announce the recent merging of the two sister organisations, Afri-Leo and AfriCat, as well as present the new face of AfriCat with its rescue and release, research, environmental education and rehabilitation programmes.

Despite soaring summer temperatures and the fact that the German National Football team beat Argentina in the 2010 World Cup, a large number of guests attended this event, entertained by Namibia's Ambassador, Mr Neville Gertze as well as the Mayor of Berlin, Mr Klaus Wowereit.

Sunday 4 July, proved to be a beautiful day under the massive oaks, with keenly interested children hugging the huge, cuddly Rhino (Cop) named 'Bijahni', enthralled by AfriCat's leopard poster and the cheetah-cub stickers....a most fitting end to an event which provided not only informative detail but also **new-found partners with a common goal – 'the conservation and protection of Namibia's wildlife'**.

Tammy Hoth
AfriCat North
July 2010