A Tale of Pregnant Rhinos

Weighing two tonnes is nothing unusual for heavy load industrial scales from METTLER TOLEDO. However, their use in Werribee Open Range Zoo in Australia is slightly more out of the ordinary. The zoo keeps its animals on a strict diet and uses the scales to measure their weight.

Dusk is falling on the 225 hectare grounds of the Werribee Open Range Zoo just outside Melbourne, Australia. Time for the nocturnal female rhino Si-Si to get up and set off to find water. Si-Si moves more leisurely than usual and seems heavy and ponderous. What is wrong? Her keepers think Si-Si may be pregnant. They have been weighing her at regular intervals with the five-tonne METTLER TOLEDO weighing platform for quite some time. Si-Si has put on weight, which would seem to confirm her keeper's assumption. The female rhino currently weighs 2,214 kg.

Animal weight control at Werribee Open Range Zoo

During the following 16 months of her pregnancy, she will have to stand on the scales regularly so that her keepers can keep a close eye on her weight and the weight of her offspring. And Si-Si is not the only one being weighed. Her partner, the 11 year old male Kapamba, is also required to make regular trips to the fenced-in area for weighing. Like all rhinos, the 2,213 kg heavy Kapamba eats a lot, sometimes too much. To keep tabs on his weight, he has to stand on the scales once or twice a month just like the other nine southern white rhinos in the Werribee Open Range Zoo. Should he gain too many pounds, his keepers adjust his food intake and put him on a diet.

Customer service and expert advice

Rudy Thomas, formerly service manager for weighing platforms at MT Australia, works as a volunteer at the Werribee Open Range Zoo in his free time. He supports the zoo with his specialist knowledge. He calibrates the scales, makes sure that they display the exact weight and also helps in weighing the animals. And when the zoo requires new scales for an animal enclosure, he offers his expert advice regarding the location, size and capacity of the scales.

Maintenance & Installation of Weigh Scales

The location of the scales is particularly important, not only so the animals can be easily weighed, but also to facilitate maintenance work, for example when a calibration weight is required. Si-Si is now back from her trip to the watering hole and goes over to join Kapamba. She could become a mother in just a few months. For the keepers at the Werribee Open Range Zoo and the METTLER TOLEDO industrial scales, this means more weighing and drawing up diet plans.

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