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# Wanted for lonely Russian female: sanctions-buster

Western curbs have prevented a suitable male from the EU from joining his would-be partner in Ekaterinburg



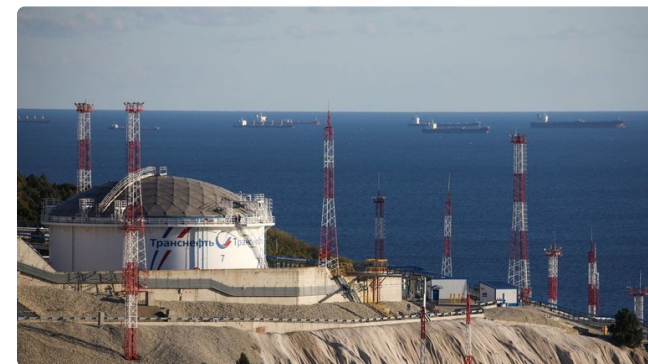
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A female pygmy hippopotamus named Eva who lives at the city zoo of Ekaterinburg in central Russia cannot meet a mate. Western sanctions have blocked efforts to deliver a male hippo from abroad, according to the zoo director, RIA Novosti reports.

Svetlana Prilepina told the news agency on Tuesday that the zoo had found a suitable male pygmy hippo from a partner institution in the Czech Republic. However, logistical and legal barriers tied to international sanctions have prevented the animal from being transported to Russia, she lamented.

*"Due to sanctions, we are unable to bring the male to Russia and therefore cannot form a breeding pair with Eva,"* the director said.

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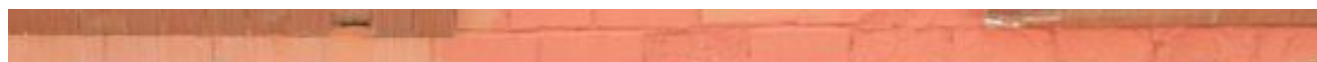
She explained that sourcing a mate within Russia was not feasible due to genetic compatibility concerns. Prilepina emphasized that the zoo had to look abroad to maintain healthy breeding lines, with the search extending across Asia and Europe.



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Pygmy hippos are classified as an endangered species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); fewer than 3,000 are estimated to live in the wild.

Eva arrived at the Yekaterinburg Zoo in 2013 from Edinburgh and is now 13 years old. Like all hippos, she is mostly active in the evening and at night. She enjoys swimming in her pool and playing with a ball, while during the day she prefers to rest in the water, often covering herself with a mat.



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Adult pygmy hippos typically stand 75–83 centimeters tall at the shoulder, measure between 150 and 177 centimeters in length, and weigh between 180 and 275 kilograms. Unlike their larger relatives, pygmy hippos are more solitary and less aquatic, spending much of their time hidden in forested areas.

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