

**From:** <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 January 2021 13:41  
**To:** <Redacted @gov.scot>; <Redacted @rzss.org.uk> ; <Redacted @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** E-intros

Hi <Redacted @gov.scot> and <Redacted @gov.scot>

Thank you very much for meeting with myself and <Redacted @rzss.org.uk> earlier this week. I said I would send a summary.

<Redacted>

Hopefully this is helpful wider context regarding giant pandas. As we discussed, Edinburgh Zoo's pandas potentially having to return to China at the end of 2021 is a concern <Redacted>. We very much want to extend the agreement and understand the pandas remaining in Scotland is also of interest to a wide range of stakeholders.

We are talking with the UK Government as well as the Scottish Government Office in China – and of course our partners at the Chinese Wildlife Conservation Association. You mentioned that the Cabinet Secretary may be able to raise this with counterparts in the UK Government, which would be very helpful. We of course would be very pleased to meet with the Cabinet Secretary on this matter.

Attached is a report by Scottish Enterprise regarding the potential tourism economic impact of giant pandas, undertaken at the start of this project. We are not aware of any assessment which has been conducted since, though our exit surveys have consistently shown the pandas to be the favourite animal among our visitors.

Please let us know if any further information would be helpful and any next steps you would advise.

Best wishes

<Redacted>

RZSS Director of Engagement  
0131 <Redacted>

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**From:** <Redacted @gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 08 January 2021 15:00  
**To:** <Redacted @asva.co.uk>; <Redacted @rzss.org.uk> ;  
**Cc:** <Redacted @rzss.org.uk> ; <Redacted @transport.gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: E-intros

<Redacted @gov.scot>; <Redacted @rzss.org.uk> ; <Redacted @gov.scot>

Many thanks again, <Redacted>

<Redacted RZSS staff> – happy to speak when convenient for you.

Best.

<Redacted SG staff>

Head of Tourism Strategy and Delivery | 0131 244 <Redacted>

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From: <Redacted @gov.scot>  
Sent: 19 March 2021 07:31  
To: <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>; Redacted @fco.gov.uk>; <Redacted @scotlandoffice.gov.uk>; <Redacted @scotlandoffice.gov.uk>; <Redacted @fcdo.gov.uk>; ,Redacted @gov.scot>; <Redacted @gov.scot>; <Redacted @gov.scot>; <Redacted @fco.gov.uk>; <Redacted @fco.gov.uk>; <Redacted @gov.scot>  
Cc: <Redacted @ukgovscotland.gov.uk>; <Redacted @ukgovscotland.gov.uk>; <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>; <Redacted @fcowebmail.fco.gov.uk>; <Redacted @fco.gov.uk>  
Subject: RE: Edinburgh Zoo - Pandas - Initial Discussion

Colleagues,

I wanted to share a slight update to our minute from the meeting back in February. I have attempted to reflect the clarifications and corrections offered by <Redact>. As ever, please do let me know if there remains anything to be corrected in this draft.

While we agreed there wasn't a need for a further meeting in the short term, if there were updates on Actions from our last, please do feel free to share this via email. I'll reconvene the group after Easter.

Very best wishes,

<Redacted SG staff>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China

British Embassy | 11 Guanghai Lu | Beijing 100600 China

<Redacted>

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From: <Redacted @gov.scot>  
Sent: 22 February 2021 13:38  
To: <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>; Redacted @fco.gov.uk>; <Redacted @scotlandoffice.gov.uk>; <Redacted @scotlandoffice.gov.uk>; <Redacted @fcdo.gov.uk>; <Redacted @gov.scot>; <Redacted @gov.scot>; <Redacted @gov.scot>; <Redacted @fco.gov.uk>; <Redacted @fco.gov.uk>; <Redacted @gov.scot>  
Cc: <Redacted @ukgovscotland.gov.uk>; <Redacted @ukgovscotland.gov.uk>; <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>; <Redacted @fcowebmail.fco.gov.uk>; <Redacted @fco.gov.uk>

Subject: Edinburgh Zoo - Pandas - Initial Discussion

Colleagues,

Many thanks for your time last Wednesday – I hope you found the discussion as insightful, and useful, as I did.

As promised, please see the note of the meeting – please shout if I have misrepresented anything.

<Redacted>

Very happy to stay in touch on this, and please do come back on actions or further commentary in the coming weeks.

Best wishes,

<Redacted SG staff>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China

British Embassy | 11 Guanghai Lu | Beijing 100600 China

<Redacted>

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Attendees

Edinburgh Zoo: <2 Redacted staff names>

FCDO: <2 Redacted staff names>

Scotland Office: <2 Redacted staff names>

Scottish Government: Edinburgh - <2 Redacted staff names>

Beijing - <2 Redacted staff names>

Update from the Zoo

<Redacted>, CEO of RZSS, gave an overview about current position, preferred future outcome and understanding of next steps.

<Redacted>, CEO of RZSS said panda loans have to be signed off at a high level in the Chinese/UK governments, and the contract terms vary from country to country/zoo to zoo.

Under the current contract, RZSS makes a payment <Redacted> to the CWCA (China Wildlife Conservation Association) for panda conservation in China. It's not a lease payment – it is a payment to the panda protection fund.

While there is a requirement set out in the contract for the Chinese side to provide updates on how this money is spent, and general reports have been issued, the contribution provided by RZSS cannot specifically be tracked and is not attributed to specific works, projects or outcomes; the funds from all zoos are pooled.

<Redacted>

Tiantian (Female Panda) is coming to the end of her reproductive life and Yang Guang (Male Panda) is not fertile following treatment for testicular cancer.

<Redacted>

Throughout the period of the contract term, Edinburgh zoo has undertaken a significant amount of research, the value of which has not been fully recognised in either the contract, nor in the evaluation of the project. If this were to be taken into account, the Zoo would hope that Chinese partners could trade that off against the payment to the panda protection fund.

Asks from the Zoo

- Find out how much importance government sees the stay of pandas is and <Redacted>
- Lobby Chinese government to secure the extension <Redacted>

General Discussion

<Redacted SG staff> said two years ago the American Embassy brought together Embassies of countries who have pandas. It was explained then that all agreements are different. Something hasn't happened before doesn't mean it wouldn't be agreed to in future negotiations. <Redacted SG staff> will discuss with <Redacted FCO staff> to engage countries who have pandas to find out what we can on contract renegotiations and extensions.

<Redacted FCO staff> agreed that other likely governments (e.g. US, West European) have varied deals and that it is very difficult to get official lines on positions or contract terms.

<Redacted FCO staff> talked about bilateral relationship - easy/difficult, the best time for discussion, political impact from London side.

In terms of other supporting opportunities, <Redacted Scotland Office staff> suggested to look at if there are any other projects associated with the zoo, like Chevening. <redacted>. <Redacted FCO staff> noted that the commercial value of the research, which hasn't been taken into account, should be taken into account.

<Redacted>, CEO of RZSS will continue to develop relationship with zoos around the world.

<Redacted SG staff> said the current SG Ministers are keen to support the zoo in any way possible, <redacted>

<Redacted Scotland Office staff> said the Scotland Office have relationship with Chinese Embassy in London. Happy to help Zoo set up the link.

### Actions

1. Engagement of Embassies – <Redacted> and <Redacted> to consider what is possible in Beijing, All to consider how and when to engage with Chinese Consul General in Edinburgh and Embassy in London;
2. All to consider opportunities to engage in COPs and how to play in Panda Project;
3. <Redacted>.
4. RZSS to share a note on the background, <redacted>, as well as the next report to be submitted to CWCA
5. All Departments to search back through records to see if there are relevant papers from the original contract negotiations.

### Next Steps and Timing

- Paying next contribution is <redacted>.
- China wants the RZSS to visit China to negotiate extension in early summer.
- <Redacted>. In the meantime, all will keep email contact over next couple of months or so.
- <Redacted>.
- Another call will be arranged after April.

AOB

<Redacted>

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From: <Redacted>, CEO of RZSS  
Sent: 13 January 2021 17:35  
To: <Redacted @gov.scot>

Subject: Re: Panda Agreement

Hi <redacted>

Please excuse my brevity.

The agreement was signed in January 2011 but the effective end is December 2021.

Any new extension should be agreed by June 2021

Cheers

<redacted>

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From: <Redacted @gov.scot>  
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 1:45:32 PM  
To: <Redacted>, CEO of RZSS  
Subject: Panda Agreement

Hi <redacted>,

You'll have seen my email to the wider group - hope it reflects what you had expected.

Can I just check, When does the current agreement come to an end? I see from the agreement you sent that it was signed in the January, and I had seen something else saying that the pandas would be returned in December if no extension is agreed... just want to be sure I have the right timing.

Best,

<redacted>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China

British Embassy

11 Guanghua Lu | Beijing 100600 China

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From: <redacted> CEO, RZSS  
Sent: 16 November 2020 09:46  
To: <Redacted @gov.scot>  
Subject: FW: Panda agreement

Here you go <redacted>

<redacted>  
| Chief Executive Officer | RZSS | 0131 <redacted>

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From: <Redacted @gov.scot>  
Sent: 16 November 2020 06:35  
To: <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
Subject: RE: Catch Up

Hi <redacted>,

Had a good call with <redacted> on Friday. He said he would try to send me on the 'contract' for the pandas, but I don't think it came through – we didn't have each other's email addresses...

Could you connect us, please?  
Thanks,

<Redacted>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China  
British Embassy | 11 Guanghai Lu | Beijing 100600 China

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From: <redacted @gov.scot>  
Sent: 10 November 2020 16:05  
To: <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
Subject: Re: Catch Up

Ideal <Redacted>, many thanks.

<Redacted>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China  
British Embassy  
11 Guanghai Lu | Beijing 100600 China

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From: <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2020 4:02:19 PM  
To: <redacted @gov.scot>  
Subject: RE: Catch Up

Hi <Redacted>

Friday would be great. <Redacted>'s direct dial is 0131 <Redacted>.

Kind regards

<Redacted>

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From: <redacted @gov.scot>  
Sent: 09 November 2020 04:00  
To: <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
Subject: RE: Catch Up

Hi <Redacted>,

Would be great to catch up with <Redacted> this week if he has time? Could Friday at 9 am suit?

Best,  
<Redacted>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China  
British Embassy | 11 Guanghai Lu | Beijing 100600 China  
<Redacted>

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From: <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
Sent: 29 October 2020 20:25  
To: <redacted @gov.scot>  
Subject: RE: Catch Up

Hi <Redacted>

Thanks for your message, <Redacted> is out of the office quite a bit next week but I was wondering if you would have any availability w/c 9 November.

Kind regards

<Redacted>

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From: <redacted @gov.scot>  
Sent: 28 October 2020 08:03  
To: <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
Subject: Catch Up

Hi <Redacted>,

I had been meaning to be back in touch with <Redacted> following our call last month, but I don't think I have direct contact details for him.

Would you mind checking if he would have time for a quick call this week or next?

Best wishes,

<Redacted>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China

British Embassy

11 Guanghua Lu | Beijing 100600 China

<Redacted>

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From: <Redacted @gov.scot>;  
Sent: 22 February 2021 05:38  
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Cc: <Redacted @ukgovscotland.gov.uk>; <Redacted @ukgovscotland.gov.uk>; <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>; <Redacted @fcowebmail.fco.gov.uk>; <Redacted @fco.gov.uk>  
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Colleagues,

Many thanks for your time last Wednesday – I hope you found the discussion as insightful, and useful, as I did.

As promised, please see the note of the meeting – please shout if I have misrepresented anything.

Very happy to stay in touch on this, and please do come back on actions or further commentary in the coming weeks.

Best wishes,

<Redacted>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China

British Embassy | 11 Guanghai Lu | Beijing 100600 China

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From: <Redacted @gov.scot>  
Sent: 08 January 2021 08:06  
To: <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
Subject: Re: Panda agreement

Hi <Redacted>,

Our media monitoring hasn't picked up much - and anything I have seen has been a pretty straight lift of the BBC article.

[Britain considers sending giant pandas back to China due to the financial pressure caused by the COVID-19 epidemic](#)

英媒：迫于经济压力 英国考虑将大熊猫送回中国

According to the news of BBC, due to the financial pressure caused by the COVID-19 epidemic, the Edinburgh Zoo may have to send the only pair of giant pandas in Britain back to China. It is reported that the giant pandas "Sweet" and "Sunshine" in Britain were leased to the Edinburgh Zoo in December 2011 for a 10-year contract, which is the only two giant pandas in the UK.

04/01,[www.sina.com](http://www.sina.com),News

<Redacted>.

Any other ideas also welcome.

I'll keep an eye out on the media and let you know if I see anything more.

Best

<Redacted>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China  
British Embassy  
11 Guanghua Lu | Beijing 100600 China

<Redacted>

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**From:** <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 8, 2021 3:14:35 PM  
**To:** <Redacted @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Re: Panda agreement

Thanks <Redacted>.

I just wondered has there been much media coverage in China about our pandas. Our partners CWCA have suggested they have received some hostile press demanding they bring the pandas home early.

Thanks

<Redacted>

Sent from my iPhone

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On 8 Jan 2021, at 03:09, <Redacted @gov.scot> wrote:

<Redacted>,

Many thanks again for keeping me in the loop – I know of <Redacted>, so will keep trying to join dots...

Looking forward to our call next week.

<Redacted>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China  
British Embassy | 11 Guanghai Lu | Beijing 100600 China  
<Redacted>

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**From:** <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>

**Sent:** 06 January 2021 21:29

**To:** <Redacted @gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Panda agreement

Hi <Redacted>

We had a call with <Redacted> this morning. They also mentioned about getting a working group together. I mentioned your name and you had suggested this also. So just passing on the contact we spoke with <Redacted>

Cheers

<Redacted>

<Redacted> | Chief Executive Officer | RZSS | 0131 <Redacted>

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**From:** <Redacted @gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 05 January 2021 12:56  
**To:** <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Panda agreement

Hi <Redacted>,

Thanks for the quick response - not your job to chase, that's my role... so I'll try to get a more proactive response this week.

I'll revert when I hear more, but good to pencil in a call next week. How is Monday or Tuesday am looking for you?

Thanks again,  
<Redacted>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China  
British Embassy  
11 Guanghua Lu | Beijing 100600 China  
<Redacted>

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**From:** <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 5, 2021 4:49:39 PM  
**To:** <Redacted @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Panda agreement

Thanks <Redacted>  
I have heard nothing more from the <Redacted>. To be honest, I have not chased them either as I was going to wait until the potential joint call you had mentioned. I will drop them a line today and perhaps it would be good if we had a call early next week ?

<Redacted>  
| Chief Executive Officer | RZSS | 0131 <Redacted>

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**From:** <Redacted @gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 05 January 2021 03:09  
**To:** <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Panda agreement

<Redacted>,

Very good to hear from you - and a very happy new year to you too. All the very best for 2021.

I had planned to drop you a note in any case, and then was definitely going to follow up on the bbc article yesterday. So, as I say, good to hear from you. It is certainly worth using this interest to the Zoo's advantage and keeping the situation in the public eye.

Have you heard anything more from colleagues in the <Redacted>? I have again chased to see what their next plan is - and to ensure that the zoo is at the heart of any discussions they are having with Chinese partners.

Let me follow up on that again and I'll come back to you. Perhaps we can arrange a call towards the end of this or into next week?

Best wishes,

<Redacted>

Counsellor - Head of the Scottish Government Office in China

British Embassy

11 Guanghua Lu | Beijing 100600 China

<Redacted>

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**From:** <Redacted @rzss.org.uk>

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 5, 2021 12:50:54 AM

**To:** <Redacted @gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Panda agreement

Dear <Redacted>

Happy New Year to you.

You maybe seeing some exciting media reports about the Edinburgh Zoo pandas. This is just as a result of journalists realising that this is the last year of the existing agreement but we are certainly trying to use this to our advantage.

<Redacted>.

Kind regards

<Redacted>

| Chief Executive Officer | RZSS | 0131 <Redacted>