

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 83
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1.4
Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division (WHM)
Topic: Panda's - Adelaide Zoo
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Question Date: 26 May 2015
Question Type: Spoken

Senator McGrath asked:

Senator Birmingham: I can say that the Adelaide Zoo has ambitions, as yet unrealised ambitions, in relation to the breeding program with Wang Wang and Funi. My information is largely from media reports in Adelaide. I understand that they have received assistance from Chinese experts in that regard but the engagements between Wang Wang and Funi have as yet not realised a baby panda, sadly. We shall all hope.

Senator McGRATH: I shall wait for reports at further estimates.

Senator Birmingham: I am sure that now that fertility has been raised in Senate estimates it will provide greater impetus for the arrival of a said baby panda. I am not sure of the arrangements in terms of whether it returns to China. I do not imagine that it would be returned to the wild, which would be my guess. I know that the two adult pandas are here for a fixed term originally. And what would happen with any offspring as to whether it stayed in Australia or was repatriated when they were repatriated we might have to take on notice.

Answer:

Adelaide Zoo entered into an agreement with the China Wildlife Conservation Association, to provide two giant pandas 'Wang Wang' and 'Funi' to Adelaide Zoo for ten years, commencing with the arrival in Australia of the pandas on 28 November 2009.

As part of the agreement between Adelaide Zoo and the China Wildlife Conservation Association, all giant pandas as well as their offspring remain the property of China. Any offspring born in Australia are to be returned to China at an age agreed by both parties, usually at two years of age, but in any case no later than four years of age. The welfare needs of the animals would be taken into account in deciding when the transfer to China would occur.