

# CHINA PANDA DIPLOMACY TOWARDS INDONESIA IN 2017

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## ABSTRACT

*Giant Panda, cute animal, and tagging with attractive behavior is China's world superstar. Despite its cuteness, the existence of giant panda is threatened in which make the government of China taking some effort in saving the panda from extinct. Panda diplomacy is one of China effort in avoiding this species from extinction. The giant panda now sends abroad in the project of loan breeding. Obviously, not all country in this world is able to receive the panda loan breeding. This thesis tries to find how panda diplomacy plays a role in the development of China relations with Indonesia through multi-track diplomacy approach. The method that uses in this thesis is qualitative methods where the data is used secondary data. The result shows that both China and Indonesia need a partner in implementing the panda loan breeding project. Diplomacy panda also aims in richen up the intellectual research in terms of giant panda that live outside its original country.*

**Keywords:** *China, Panda Diplomacy, Indonesia, Multi-track Diplomacy.*

## INTRODUCTION

In this twenty-century, most of the countries are tending to leave the hard power in order to achieve their national interest. Not forget to mention that China is one of the new members which are into the soft-power in this century. The term of soft-power is leading to negotiation and diplomacy. Fauna and diplomacy have long been tagging and the practice of using animals as diplomatic tools have been practiced for several centuries. Several countries use the animal as ceremonial gifts or a symbol of an alliance. The use of an animal to create and maintain the good relations with the neighboring country is also used by China, or known as panda diplomacy. In the very beginning; Panda was given only to China's partner as a gift. Over time, the Panda Diplomacy means as a loan of Giant Panda to China's partner. This Panda Diplomacy made China has its own unique way to conduct diplomatic activity towards other countries. Practically, Panda Diplomacy experienced some changes. It depends on the political situation and when the bilateral relations conducted (Wirawan, 2017). To understand further about panda diplomacy, the author divided the timeline in to this following explanation.

Stage one during the Mao Zedong era (in the 1950s and 1970s) appeared as China gifting pandas to build a good friendship. Mao Zedong declared the People Republic of China in 1949, but at that time the panda was gifted exclusively to allied Socialist states. The practice starts from 1957 and 1959 when China sent panda as a state gift to the former Soviet Union. Yet during 1960s panda's diplomatic careers start. It followed by sent a pair of Panda to North Korea in 1965. In the meantime, Panda Diplomacy has a role to build the strategic Alliances. Particularly, during the United State (US) president - Richard Nixon - and Chinese president - Mao Zedong - met each other (Hinderson, 2017, p. 9). In 1972, China sent a pair of Panda both to the US and Japan.

Stage two took after Deng Xiaoping's rise to power in 1978 when gift turned into loans program in a short time particularly for zoo tour. However, it was condemned by the environmental NGOs, then in 1982, the panda gift was stopped because the panda becomes endangered. From 1957-1981 there are 23 of the panda in total that used as a gift.

In the developing stage three, starts from the 1990s until now. During this phase, the panda will be sending to receiving countries in term of cooperative research and loan. China Wildlife Conservation Association (CWCA) and China Zoological Association reached an agreement with the International Wildlife Conservation Agency to loan giant panda for cooperative research. Panda loans are associated with countries that provides China with profitable assets and technology and symbolize China's eagerness to build *guanxi* or deep

relations, profound trade connections characterized by loyalty, correspondence, trust to maintaining the bilateral relations involving the national treasure exchange and long-lasting (Kathleen Carmel Buckingham, Jonathan Neil William David, Paul Jespon, 2013). Panda's now going abroad for fees, which vary according to the country. Normally, the breeding loan's fee is US\$ 1.000.000 each year.

As China's iconic animal, Panda has a big role in how China builds its bilateral strategic alliances and maintaining the relations within other countries. Through the cuteness of the Panda, it's easy to takeover and wins the hearts of the people. Recognizing its ability for being the world's superstar, China keeps looking this valuable diplomacy until the recent day. In the other side, panda gives the country a softer image representing China. The old Panda Diplomacy has been practiced since the Tang Dynasty (624-705) where two pandas were given to the Japanese (Kathleen Carmel Buckingham, Jonathan Neil William David, Paul Jespon, 2013, p. 2). Furthermore the modern of Panda Diplomacy start in the late 1950s or in the Mao Zedong administration.

The pandas that been deployed by China government to another country served as the primary means of expressing inter-state sentiment. At the same time, not all countries can receive a panda, and the countries which do are a small and very specifically chosen group which adds to the question of what the purpose of panda diplomacy actually is (Hinderson, 2017). Diplomacy Panda is expanding and entering the realm of Southeast Asia. Indonesia is one of the Southeast Asia countries who got the panda loan from China.

China as one of the powerful actors in global integration becomes a part of any cooperation (Umagapi, 2017). China's bilateral relationship are guided by a principle that informs how Chinese leaders rank and value them. Chinese officials and scholars cite the following principle: "Major power relations are *critical (or key)*; relations with neighboring countries are *primary (or the priority)*; and relations with neighboring countries are the *foundation (or base)*" (*da guo shi guanjian, zhoubian shi shouyao, fazhanzhong guojia shi jichu*) (Medeiros, 2009). Reported from the official website of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Indonesia, the foreign trade and economic cooperation being the major core of China-Indonesia's bilateral in the very beginning. It proved by the Chinese embassy in Indonesia that stated in 1990 both bilateral trade volume has risen from 1.18 billion US\$ to 7.464 billion in 2001. By this huge number of trade's volume, China-Indonesia tightened their bilateral ties. Meanwhile, during 2017, Indonesia becomes the top 20, particularly number 16<sup>th</sup>, of China trading partners. In the meantime, China is the top number of Indonesia trading partner that spent 13.7% of total Indonesian export.

In 1991, both China South Airlines and Garuda airlines are opened direct flights. Meanwhile, in 1992, both countries have signed an agreement for information cooperation. Moreover, the student exchange in both countries starts in 1994. By the end of 2001, agriculture, energy, exploration of resources and infrastructure construction had become the major parts of their economic and trade cooperation. Due to high profits that both countries gained, the scope of bilateral not only talking about economic, trade relations and technological cooperation, but widens into other issues such as exchanges and cooperation in culture, scientific, and military fields. Cooperation between local governments or known as Para diplomacy came to be another example of how tight the bilateral of China-Indonesia. Beijing built up ties of friendship cities with Jakarta, East Java and Shanghai, Guangdong Province and North Sumatra, Fujian Province with Central Java, and Hunan Province with West Nusa Tenggara (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Indonesia, 2004).

Panda diplomacy sets a new stage in China-Indonesia ties. A female giant panda -Hu Chun- and male one -Cai Tao- who weighs 113 kilograms, arrived at Soekarno-Hatta airport in Jakarta on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 on loan for 10 years from China. This agreement was initiated between China and Indonesia in 2010.

Hu Chun and Cai Tao were delivered through Garuda airline, flight number GA 887 Chengdu-Jakarta. The Panda has been ready for the public in Taman Safari, a Zoo in Bogor. The Zoo has built 1,300 meters squared as its home (South China Morning Post, 2017). It was noted that Indonesia became the fourth official country in Southeast Asia and the 17<sup>th</sup> country in the world that get a breeding loan from Giant Pandas from China (Muzakki, 2017).

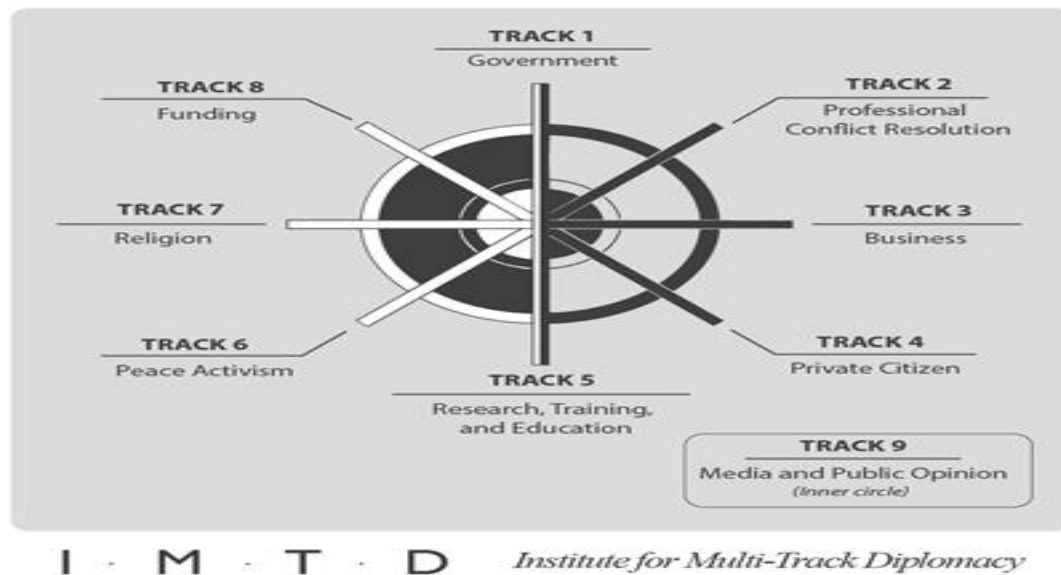
## **METHODS OF RESEARCH**

This research uses a qualitative research method which observes and analyzes the role of panda diplomacy in the development of China's relation with Indonesia. This research uses both primary and secondary sources. The data collecting method for this research is using library research method. This thesis is based on academic literature, official government reports, journal, credible news report, articles, and other electronic data that are relevant. Those valid Data could be accessed through libraries, the website from International media, the official website of the state embassy, and the official website of the government.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research attempts to analyze the role of panda diplomacy as a part of Chinese public diplomacy in the development of China's relations with Indonesia use multi-track diplomacy approach. Multi-track diplomacy is a system approach to peace-building (The Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, 2011). It's introduced by Dr. Louise Diamond and Ambassador McDonald in 1991. They said that multi-track diplomacy is an expansion of the "Track One, Track Two". Track one is diplomacy whereby the communication only conducted by the official government to vice versa. Meanwhile "Track Two" is diplomacy that conducts by the non-governmental actors. In its development, the multi-track diplomacy consists of **nine elements**. **The elements are government; professional conflict resolutions; business; private citizen; research, training and education; peace activism; religion; funding; and the mass media.** There's no such term of that government is less important than the non-governmental actor in the multi-track diplomacy, because the existence of the other elements are to stimulate the work of the government in conducting the diplomacy.

Figure 1.1 Multi-Track Diplomacy



Source: Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy

The writer will use the multi-track diplomacy to analyze this research. There are three tracks use by the researcher that consist of track one or the government, the world of official diplomacy, policymaking, and peace building as expressed through formal aspects of the governmental process. Track two or the track of the realm of professional non-governmental

action attempting to analyze, prevent, resolve, and manage international conflicts by non-state actors. Track five which includes three related worlds: research, as it connected to university program, think tanks, and specialist-interest research centers; training programs that seek to provide training practitioner skills such as negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution, and third-party facilitation; and education, including kindergarten through PhD programs that cover various aspects of global or cross-cultural studies, peace and world order studies, and conflict analysis, management and resolutions.

## **RESULT AND ANALYSES**

In understanding the practice of panda diplomacy, the researcher simply divided the practice into three stages. The first stage occurred in 1949-1972 during the Mao Zedong administration that coincided by the Declaration of China. During this period of the stage, the pandas are used in order to build the exclusive strategies of the Socialist State. Stage two took after Deng Xiaoping's rise to power in 1978 when gift turned into loans program in a short time particularly for zoo tour. Listed as a red list of threatened species by IUCN, this short loan program is being condemned in which made China stop the program in 1982. From 1957-1981 there were 23 pandas of the total living pandas that used as a gift. The last stages were in the 1990s until the current day. The giant pandas were sent abroad for cooperative research and loan breeding. The program was maintained by the State Forestry Administration of China in which the borrowing of the giant panda must be on the purpose of cultural exchange.

The survey on 2011-2014 that considered as the latest survey conducted by the IUCN stated that recently the estimated range-wide population of the giant panda reached the number of 1,864 populations. The numbers increased by 328 compared to the previous survey. Due to pandas' experience which labeled as endangered species, the IUCN updated the status of the Pandas from endangered into vulnerable in 2016. Through various helpers, China is able to save its treasure from extinct. As the efforts of the Government of China in preserving the giant panda through the loan breeding to other countries, the giant panda loan breeding also aims to symbolize the good bilateral relations of China towards the receiving country. Indonesia is one among the chosen receiving countries that able to host the exclusive animal of the giant panda from China.

**Figure 1.2 Giant Panda in Overseas as State Gift**

| No | Year | Country      | Number of Panda |
|----|------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | 1957 | Soviet Union | 1               |
| 2. | 1959 | Soviet Union | 1               |
| 3. | 1965 | North Korea  | 2               |
| 4. | 1972 | USA          | 2               |
|    |      | Japan        | 2               |
| 5. | 1973 | France       | 2               |
| 6. | 1974 | UK           | 2               |
|    |      | Germany      | 2               |
| 7. | 1975 | Mexico       | 2               |
| 8. | 1978 | Spain        | 2               |
| 9. | 1980 | Japan        | 1               |
|    |      | North Korea  | 3               |
| 10 | 1981 | Japan        | 1               |

The sending of pair giant pandas to Indonesia in 2017 is a part of the 60<sup>th</sup> years of China-Indonesia bilateral anniversary through the ups and downs relations. Acknowledging the long-term friendly relations between Indonesia and China as well as the friendship between both peoples, and to strengthen the cooperation and exchange between the two countries in the area of wildlife conservation especially the giant panda as endangered species, both China and Indonesia have reached an understanding that signed on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, in Guiyang China. The MoU signed under the agreement of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry Republic of Indonesia that represented by Mr. Tachrir Fathoni, as the Director-General for Conservation on Natural Resources and Ecosystem and the State Forestry Administration of the People’s Republic of China that represented by Mr. Chen Fengxue as the Vice Minister of State Forestry Administration of China.

The countries that borrow the giant panda must have the purpose of cultural exchange, the popularization of science or public education. It is written in Article 2 of the Management Regulation of Giant Panda Loan Exhibition in 2011 under the State Forestry Administration of China.

The loan of the giant panda is regulated by the State Forestry Administration of China in 2011 and the procedure of the loan is addressed in the following Article 8.

“The application for the exhibition of a giant panda shall be handled in accordance with the following procedures:

1. The loan shall apply to the State Forestry Administration.

2. After accepting the application according to law, the State Forestry Administration shall examine the application materials. Upon examination, the State Forestry Administration shall, within 20 working days, make a decision to grant an administrative license. If necessary, the State Forestry Administration may, within 30 days, organize experts to demonstrate or field inspect the borrower's borrowing activities, panda breeding, and management plans and facilities.
3. After the State Forestry Administration has made an administrative license decision, the competent forestry administrative department of the people's government at the provincial level in the place where the borrower is located shall, before and after the beginning of the loan exhibition, issue the giant panda to leave the lender in accordance with the administrative license documents of the State Forestry Administration. Transport documents of the borrower.”

Tagging with cute and fascinating visual identity, make the giant panda a perfect tool in establishing the diplomatic relations with other countries. Coined by Ami Vitale, a National Geographic photographer, filmmaker, and author of *Panda Love*, stated that giant panda evolved over millions of years to eat almost exclusively bamboo. Today, 99 percent of the living pandas' diet is bamboo. In a region where bad environmental conditions is common, the giant panda might prove to be the exception and is a testament to the perseverance and effort of Chinese scientists and conservationists. The only answer to preserving the existence by giant panda is by breeding, protecting its habitat, and releasing it back into the wildlife. The conservation community in the form of The World Conservation Union Policy (IUCN) had a clear mandate towards the captive-breeding practitioners in 1987 (Bowkett, 2009).



**Figure 1.3 Amount of Giant Pandas that were sent Overseas as Loan Breeding and Research**

| <b>No</b> | <b>Zoo</b>                             | <b>Country</b> | <b>Amount</b> | <b>Cub</b> |
|-----------|--|----------------|---------------|------------|
| 1         | Adelaide Zoo                           | Australia      | 2             |            |
| 2         | Adventure World                        | Japan          | 2             | 3          |
| 3         | Ahtari Zoo                             | Finland        | 2             |            |
| 4         | Calgary Zoo                            | Canada         | 2             | 2          |
| 5         | Chapultepec Zoo                        | Mexico         | 2             |            |
| 6         | Chiang Mai Zoo                         | Thailand       | 2             |            |
| 7         | Copenhagen Zoo                         | Denmark        | 2             |            |
| 8         | Everland Resort                        | South Korea    | 2             |            |
| 9         | Kobe Oji Zoo                           | Japan          | 1             |            |
| 10        | Memphis Zoo                            | USA            | 2             |            |
| 11        | OuwehandsDierenparkRhenen              | Netherlands    | 2             |            |
| 12        | Pairi Daiza                            | Belgium        | 2             | 1          |
| 13        | RZSS Edinburgh Zoo                     | UK             | 2             |            |
| 14        | San Diego Zoo                          | USA            | 2             |            |
| 15        | Smithsonian's National Zoological Park | USA            | 2             | 1          |
| 16        | Taman Safari Indonesia                 | Indonesia      | 2             |            |
| 17        | Tiergarten Schonbrunn                  | Austria        | 1             | 2          |
| 18        | Ueno Zoo                               | Japan          | 3             |            |
| 19        | WRS River                              | Singapore      | 2             |            |
| 20        | Zoo Atlanta                            | USA            | 2             | 2          |
| 21        | Zoo Berlin                             | Germany        | 2             |            |
| 22        | Zoo Madrid                             | Spain          | 2             | 1          |
| 23        | Zoo Negara Malaysia                    | Malaysia       | 2             |            |
| 24        | Zooparc De Beauval                     | France         | 2             | 1          |
|           |  | <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>47</b>     | <b>13</b>  |

Bilateral relations between China-Indonesia comprehensively well developed in 2013 (Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2015). Acknowledging the long-term friendly relations between Indonesia and China as well as the friendship between both peoples, and to strengthen the cooperation and exchange between the two countries in the area of wildlife conservation especially the giant panda as endangered species, both China and Indonesia have reached an understanding that signed on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, in Guiyang China. The MoU signed under the agreement of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry Republic of Indonesia that represented by Mr. Tachrir Fathoni, as the Director-General for Conservation on Natural Resources and Ecosystem and the State Forestry Administration of the People's

Republic of China that represented by Mr. Chen Fengxue as the Vice Minister of State Forestry Administration of China.

The implementation or cooperation mechanism on how China conducting panda diplomacy towards Indonesia is regulated in the Article 2 of the MoU on Cooperation of Promoting Giant Panda Conservation in 2016. There are several points, as follows:

1. The Parties, the Government of China and the Government of Indonesia, will supervise the implementation of the Project by China Wildlife Conservation Association and Taman Safari Indonesia, as the implementing institution of the project.
2. The Indonesian side will notify the Chinese side the status of the Project before the end of each year. In cases of special incidents such as death and serious disease of the giant pandas, Taman Safari Indonesia will immediately report to the Indonesian side, who will notify the Chinese side in due time.
3. The Chinese side will evaluate the Project if needed, and the Indonesian side will provide support and coordination when deemed necessary. The evaluation results will be shared with the Indonesian side.
4. The Parties will hold meetings at appropriate times. Communicating with each other on the implementation of the Project.
5. The Chinese side will invite and support the Indonesian side to travel to China to attend activities related to Giant Panda conservation and management.
6. The Parties may develop exchange and cooperation in the field of other species conservation based on the status of cooperation.
7. Each Party will each appoint a special liaison officer responsible for contacts and coordination of the exchanges and cooperation under this MoU. The Chinese liaison office is the Department of Wildlife Conservation and Nature Reserve Management of State Forestry Administration of the People's Republic of China. The Indonesian liaison office is the Directorate of Biodiversity Conservation, Directorate General of Ecosystem and Natural Resources Conservation, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia.

The research found that the role of panda diplomacy in the development of China's relations with Indonesia is to strengthen the cooperation and exchange between two countries in the area of wildlife conservation, especially the endangered species and new bilateral path in terms of cooperative research that is involving the non-governmental actors, namely China

Wildlife Conservation Association (CWCA) and Taman Safari Indonesia. Through the multi-track diplomacy approach, the researcher found that there are three tracks that exercised in the panda diplomacy conducted by China to Indonesia.

The track one is government as decision maker which in this case, the track one is represented by the State Forestry Administration of China and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia. Meanwhile, the second track is non-governmental organization. In the case of Chinese Panda Diplomacy towards Indonesia in 2017, the non-governmental organization is represented by the involvement of some groups of interest that run the role as the partners of the state in implementing the project. China decided to choose the China Wildlife Conservation Association (CWCA), which is a nonprofit national organization under the State Forestry Administration of China. On the other hand, Indonesia decided to choose the PT. Taman Safari Indonesia, the private conservation and zoo as a partner based on the Forestry Ministries Regulation No. P. 83/Menhut-II/2014. Taman Safari Indonesia is the destination where a pair of giant panda will be bred and captivated in Indonesia. The last track is track five which is research, training, and education. Inbreeding the giant panda outside its hometown, it needs some research so that the project of panda loan breeding can succeed. China Conservation and Research Centre for the Giant Panda (CCRCGP) assists the Taman Safari staffs in taking care of the giant panda from the departure time of the giant pandas and when the pandas are living in Indonesia. The research about the giant panda in Indonesia is never done before and by the arrival of Cai Tao and Hu Chun to Indonesia, hopefully, will enrich the intellectual property rights of panda in Indonesia.

The loan of the giant panda is regulated by the State Forestry Administration of China in 2011 and one of the procedures of the loan is addressed in Article 10<sup>th</sup> that stated “During the period of loan exhibition, the lender shall give guidance to the borrower on the breeding, management, prevention and control of the panda on loan exhibition, and shall carry out at least once health check on the panda borrowed from the exhibition every year.”

The article above indicates that China is responsible to give the guidance on the breeding, management, prevention and control of the panda on loan exhibition to the country that borrows the giant pandas. In the case of China Panda diplomacy towards Indonesia, the same regulation is written in Article 2 of the MoU between China-Indonesia on Cooperation of Promoting Giant Panda Conservation in 2016. Article 2 mentioned that “The Chinese side will invite and support the Indonesian side to travel to China to attend activities related to Giant Panda conservation and management.”

Related to the case of China Panda Diplomacy towards Indonesia, The China Conservation and Research Centre for Giant Panda (CCRCGP) enrolled as the trainer for the Taman Safari Indonesia staff in taking care of the giant pandas from the departure time of the pandas and when the pandas are living in Indonesia. Indonesia team consists of two veterinarians and eight panda keepers. Before the giant panda departs to Indonesia, these Panda keepers must be trained in the Wolong Panda Base in which part of CCRCGP more than a month. During the training program, these panda keepers were trained to feed the giant panda, controlling the food and the nutrition of the panda. One of Taman Safari Indonesia staffs who are enrolled as the panda keeper, Suwanto, explained that during the training program at Wolong Panda Base a giant Panda is able to eat 30 kg bamboo in a day. Besides bamboo, the giant panda eats apples, carrots, and cakes. The cake ingredients are corn flour, rice flour, soybean, calcium, and egg (Djumena, Kompas.com, 2017). The cake aims to boost panda nutrition due to its main diets is the only bamboo. The giant panda keepers own responsibility to make sure that the giant pandas eat four times a day. It is from 09.30, 11.30, 14.30 and 16.30. In one day, the giant pandas eat the cake four times and each cake is 200 gram. Meanwhile bamboo is always available in its house.

During the arrival of the giant pandas to Indonesia, Bangot Huaso Mulia, a veterinarian of Taman Safari Indonesia said that the pandas are accompanied by two veterinarians and Taman Safari Indonesia staffs and the representative from CCRCGP (Visual Interaktif Kompas, 2017). The veterinarian duty is to control blood, urine, and the giant panda's health every week to determine when the time for the panda mating or multiplying for captivity (Putera, 2017). The mating session of the giant panda is between February and May. The gestation period for the giant pandas lasts 85 to 185 days so that giant pandas can give birth between June and October each year (Antara, 2017). The life expectancy of a giant panda in the wild is 19 years, while the captive period lasts 20 to 30 years. The giant panda's research is not just meant to the breed giant panda, but also to help the giant panda live longer.

The panda loan breeding to Indonesia will widen up the research center related to the endangered animal especially about the giant panda that never been done before. Through this project, Indonesian people will know the panda ethologic and the treatment to protect the giant panda from extinct. The arrival of the pandas in Indonesia also aims to promote and to increase the awareness of the local people related to the endangered species and how to preserve its existence.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research finds that panda diplomacy which represents the China's public diplomacy conducted by China to Indonesia is not only for avoiding the giant panda from extinct but also succeed to grab the huge enthusiasm from Indonesian people. It proves in the chapter IV section A2 that in two consecutive years, each panda earns the same award every year. In 2018, Cai Tao and in 2019, Hu Chun was awarded the silver award in winning the most favorite giant panda abroad by the Giant Panda Global Awards whereas the winner is determined by the most votes from the society.

To some extent, the presence of these two giant pandas can also be seen as a strategy to strengthen China's interest in the policy of the Belt and Road Initiatives in Indonesia. The panda diplomacy carried out by China in Indonesia can be very positive especially to build positive perceptions in the society regarding Indonesian and Chinese relations. The enthusiasm of Indonesians towards the arrival of Cai Tao and Hu Chun can also be interpreted as the openness of Indonesia citizens to China in which melts anti-Chinese tensions a few years back. Besides building a good image for China, the arrival of a pair of two giant pandas also able to build trust in Chinese investor to invest in Indonesia, especially in the fields of infrastructure and e-commerce. Therefore, through this panda diplomacy, the perceptions of the Indonesian towards China are expected to improve and vice versa.

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