

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**Digest of the 34th Meeting
held on 30 June 2016 at 2:30 p.m.
in Conference Room, 33/F, Revenue Tower,
Wan Chai, Hong Kong**

Present :

Prof the Hon Arthur Li	(Chairman)
Dr Bunny Chan	
Ir Alkin Kwong	
Ms Lilian Law	
Mrs Sandra Mak	
Dr Ng Cho-nam	
Mr Daryl Ng	
Prof Nora Tam	
Mr Cliff Tang	
Mr Eric Yeung	
Ms Christine Loh	<i>Acting Secretary for the Environment</i>
Mr Chan Chi-ming	<i>Deputy Secretary for Development (Works)2</i>
Ms Andy Lui	<i>Assistant Director (Special Tasks), Home Affairs Department</i>
Mr Martin Tsoi	<i>Assistant Director (Estate Management)1, Housing Department</i>
Mrs Philomena Leung	<i>Principal Assistant Secretary for the (Secretary) Environment (Sustainable Development)</i>

In Attendance:

Government Representatives

Ms Anissa Wong	<i>Permanent Secretary for the Environment</i>
Ms Michelle Au	<i>Political Assistant to Secretary for the Environment</i>
Ms Neve Leung	<i>Assistant Secretary for the Environment (Sustainable Development)2</i>
Mr Tony WU	<i>Senior Town Planner (Sustainable Development)</i>

Dr Tom TAM	<i>Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Sustainable Development)</i>
Mr Eric WONG	<i>Senior Executive Officer (Sustainable Development)1</i>
Mr Jacky SZETO	<i>Executive Officer (Sustainable Development)2</i>

For Agenda Item 3

Support Group on Promotion of Sustainable Use of Biological Resources

Prof Jonathan Wong	<i>Convenor</i>
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Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Dr So Ping-man	<i>Deputy Director</i>
Mr Simon Chan	<i>Assistant Director (Conservation)</i>

Environmental Protection Department

Mr Elvis Au	<i>Assistant Director (Nature Conservation & Infrastructure Planning)</i>
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Programme Director – Kadoorie Institute of The University of Hong Kong

Dr Winnie Law	<i>Assistant Director</i>
Dr Billy Hau	<i>Honorary Assistant Professor</i>
Ms Joyce Chow	<i>Project Manager</i>
Mr Darwin Leung	<i>Senior Project Officer</i>

Independent Analysis and Reporting Agency – Social Sciences Research
Centre, HKU

Professor John Bacon-Shone	<i>Director</i>
Ms Linda Cho	<i>Centre Manager</i>

Public Relations Agency – Hill and Knowlton Asia Limited

Ms Tracy Cheung	<i>Director</i>
Mr Jeff Tam	<i>Senior Consultant</i>

Absent with apologies:

Prof John Chai

Dr Ian Chan
Ms Betty Ho
Ms Angelina Kwan
Mr Kwok Lit-tung
Mrs Stella Lau
Mr Lau Kwok-fan
Prof Leung Wing-mo
Prof Bernard Lim
Dr Thomas Yau

Agenda Item 1 – Confirmation of minutes of the last meeting

Members were informed that the minutes of the last meeting held on 7 August 2015 had been circulated on 7 September 2015. As the secretariat had not received any proposed amendments, the minutes were therefore taken as confirmed.

Agenda Item 2 – Report of the Work of the Education and Publicity Sub-committee *(SDC Paper No. 01/16)*

2. Members were briefed on the work progress of the Education and Publicity Sub-committee (“EPSC”) as set out in SDC Paper No. 01/16. The following were noted:

- (a) The 12th round of the Sustainable Development Fund (“SDF”) was launched on 30 November 2015. By the closing date of 29 February 2016, 59 submissions were received applying for total funding of about \$73 million. The applications were being vetted. For those applications involving grants of \$500,000 or above, advice of the Council for Sustainable Development (“SDC”) would be sought. The final results were expected to be announced by late August 2016;
- (b) The School Award Programme (“SAP”) was held on a biennial basis. The current (2014-2016) round was launched in May 2014. A total of 52 schools had participated. All schools had completed the relevant activities/projects and satisfied the requirements for receiving the awards. An award presentation ceremony would be held on 16 July 2016 at the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine in Wong Chuk Hang. Members were invited to attend the ceremony. The Secretariat had issued invitations to schools to join the next

(2016-2018) round of SAP. To sustain the momentum of SDC's current public engagement ("PE") exercise, the next round of SAP would run under the theme of "Sustainable Consumption of Biological Resources";

- (c) Under the School Outreach Programme, a total of 57 schools had enrolled for 53 dramas, 23 talks and 11 workshops in the 2015-16 school year. In the next (2016-17) round, a new drama under the theme of "Sustainable Consumption of Biological Resources" would be commissioned and new stakeholder partners with expertise in this topic would be invited to conduct the talks and workshops;
- (d) The Sustainable Development Promotion Award for Students of Higher Education Institutions ("SDPA") was a new initiative designed for undergraduate students which aimed to encourage their planning and implementation of projects which could apply the sustainable development concept in their daily lives and spread the message to the community. It was launched on 1 April 2016 and opened for submissions till 30 June 2016. An adjudication panel would be formed under EPSC to assess the submissions. The best five proposals would each be given the "Proposal Award" with a cash award of \$3,000 and a certificate. All recipients of the "Proposal Award" would be expected to proceed to implement their proposals. Those who satisfactorily completed their projects would be granted the "Implementation Award" with another cash award of \$7,000 and certificate. The team which performed the best would also be granted the "Outstanding Project Award" with another cash award of \$10,000 and certificate. The final results of the SDPA were expected to be available in early 2017; and
- (e) As at mid-June 2016, there were 386 SD Ambassadors from 25 schools. The Ambassadors would be invited to assist in organising the upcoming SAP award presentation ceremony and participate in the activities to be held in connection with the PE on "Sustainable Consumption of Biological Resources".

3. A member enquired about the number of schools which participated in the last round of SAP. The meeting noted that the number was similar to the current round and that EPSC would endeavour to increase the number of participating schools with the help of the SD Ambassadors.

[Post-meeting note : 44 schools participated in the last (2012-2014) round of SAP.]

Agenda Item 3 – Public Engagement on Promotion of Sustainable Consumption of Biological Resources
(SDC Paper No. 02/16)

4. Members were briefed on progress of the PE exercise as set out in SDC Paper No. 02/16. The following was highlighted:

- (a) The Support Group on Promotion of Sustainable Use of Biological Resources (“SG”) had held two meetings in November 2015 and January 2016 and the views put forward at the two meetings provided the basis for planning out the PE;
- (b) Subsequently, SG organised five focus group meetings in February and March 2016, with 76 stakeholders from 62 organisations participating. The views collected provided solid reference for drafting the PE document;
- (c) Having considered the views of the focus groups and the advice of SG, the Programme Director (“PD”) had prepared a draft PE document to facilitate public discussion. A joint meeting of the Strategy Sub-committee (“SSC”) and SG was held on 3 June 2016 to discuss the draft PE document and preparation work for the public involvement stage. During the meeting, members provided valuable advice on the content of the PE document, publicity of the PE exercise as well as ways to encourage public involvement; and
- (d) In the light of the suggestions raised, PD had further revised the PE document and the work plan of the public involvement stage. Relevant details were now set out in SDC Paper No. 02/16.

5. Members were briefed on the PE document, and the following was highlighted:

- (a) The PE aimed to raise public awareness on the importance of biological resources and to identify opportunities and tools that could enable the realisation of sustainable consumption of biological resources in the community. The draft PE document was prepared with reference to desktop research as well as views collected from SG meetings and the five focus group meetings, and further improved in the light of advice put forward at the joint meeting of SSC and SG on 3 June 2016;
- (b) The PE focused on three main aspects, namely facilitating smart choices for consumers, promoting best practices among businesses

and the public sector, and education and publicity. To encourage public discussion, the PE document had quoted a number of local and overseas examples on best practices, tools and measures adopted by both public and private sectors;

- (c) Upon finalisation of the PE document, the public involvement stage would be launched during which a series of publicity activities and engagement events would be held to educate and engage the public; and
- (d) A press conference would be held to officially release the PE document and kick off the public involvement stage. The views collected during the public involvement period would form the basis for formulating recommendations to the Government, which hopefully would be accepted and thereafter implemented by the Government.

6. Members had the following views and suggestions on the PE exercise:

- (a) In order to reach out to the wider public, the engagement events should be carried out at district levels as well. The Secretariat/PD could liaise with the Home Affairs Department on this;
- (b) It was important to cascade the message down to individual households and towards this end, PD could tap on the network of environmental ambassadors in individual housing estates and enlist the help of the property management sector;
- (c) Stakeholders from the catering and hospitality industry should also be engaged and be encouraged to provide sustainability-conscious menus;
- (d) The colourful and lively layout of the draft PE document was very attractive, but as youngsters were not responsible for household purchases, their responses might not be too useful for analysis on consumption practices;
- (e) While the PE document was educational and interesting, those who were already knowledgeable with the subject might find it too simple. On the other hand, the grassroots might find the views collection form (“VCF”) not too meaningful as they would unlikely have much knowledge about the subject including the eco-labels;

- (f) As the subject was very broad, there would be a need to highlight specific areas to facilitate more effective discussion;
- (g) As the public might not be familiar with the subject, specific issues could be raised to facilitate more effective discussion during the public involvement stage;
- (h) General awareness of sustainable consumption in the society was not high and bringing out the issues involved and stimulating discussion on them would be a challenging task. Consideration needed to be given to the strategies on how to publicise the message;
- (i) The key to induce behavioural change was the determination to make the first move and it is hoped that the PE exercise could successfully raise public awareness which was a prerequisite to moving towards more sustainable consumption;
- (j) As quite a number of restaurants in Hong Kong were already supplying food from sustainable sources, if the PE exercise could make more people become aware of the different practices of the different restaurants, this could provide recognition to those restaurants which had taken steps to offer sustainable food as well as pressurise and motivate others to do so. Momentum could then be built up;
- (k) Since all the regional forums would only be held after mid September, it might be preferable to extend the public involvement stage so the public could have more time to consider and provide their comments after the regional forums;
- (l) The society would likely focus on the Legislative Council election in the coming two months and this overlapped with a large part of the public involvement period and hence this might result in the PE not receiving as much public attention as it should; and
- (m) A QR code is suggested to provide a link to the online version of the VCF.

7. Members also had the following enquiries:

- (a) Since the PE document was very informative and could be used as teaching materials for schools even after the public involvement period, a member enquired whether the responses collected after

that period would be considered; and

- (b) A member enquired whether Hong Kong had any information platform which listed out the companies which provided sustainable products.

8. The meeting noted the following responses:

- (a) The PE exercise was an important step to raise public awareness. Apart from organising five regional forums, the engagement plan also included promotion through television and radio Announcement of Public Interest. Roving exhibitions would also be organised. In addition, there would be briefings for different stakeholders, including residents' and community groups as well as students. The PE exercise would aim both to educate the public as well as to collect views on where the current gaps were and how best to fill these gaps. This could then provide a basis for the Government and other relevant stakeholders to take forward appropriate action. Members were invited to participate in the engagement events as well as to help disseminate information about the engagement events to their contacts;
- (b) Unlike conventional consultation exercises, SDC's PE adopted a bottom-up and stakeholder-led approach. During the process, SDC would engage the general public, including those who were unfamiliar with the subject, to participate in the discussion. Towards this end, the PE document had to be drafted in language which the general public could easily understand. Furthermore, the current PE exercise also aimed to enhance public knowledge on sustainable consumption, which would be conducive to future work in preparing the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. Some people might not be able to recognise the eco-labels listed in the VCF but their attention would be drawn to the existence of these labels in the process of completing the VCF and this could in turn serve an education purpose;
- (c) Biodiversity and sustainable consumption were concepts that might not be readily understood by the general public. It would therefore be preferable to start off with some education work before proceeding with more detailed discussion and inviting the public to fill in the VCF. In this regard, there was merit to carry out various publicity activities first before organising the regional forums, which could facilitate the public to have more informed discussion;

- (d) Briefings would be arranged for Supporting Organisations, including community groups. Further ways would also be explored to engage the general public at district levels;
- (e) Apart from the five regional forums targeting at the general public, there would be other engagement events targeting at specific sectors. SG would explore with the Secretariat on other channels to engage the public as well as the feasibility to extend the public involvement period;
- (f) The PE exercise was also an education process. While the PE document only quoted some products as examples, it aimed to bring out the broader message of the need for sustainable consumption of different kinds of biological resources;
- (g) During discussion at the focus group meetings, stakeholders, including representatives from green groups and the academic sector, agreed that it was important to extend knowledge and understanding of the subject to the wider community. They were of the view that education should start with providing the community with some basic knowledge and concepts. The design of the PE document was drafted with this in mind;
- (h) In drafting the PE document, careful consideration had been given to the scope of the document, in terms of the coverage of biological resources and possible measures. The VCF now included specific questions about paper, seafood, cotton and palm oil as well as questions on how to promote sustainable consumption;
- (i) The VCF would collect some information on consumers' understanding and habits and would then seek their views on possible measures to facilitate a behavioural change towards more sustainable consumption;
- (j) Brief demographic data would be collected in the VCF to facilitate analysis on the views of different age groups. Demographic data could enable Independent Analysis and Reporting Agency ("IRA") to analyse whether the views collected were consistent across different age groups, gender and education background;
- (k) Hong Kong did not have any information platform which listed out the companies which provided sustainable products and whether Hong Kong should introduce such a platform to facilitate consumers' smart choice was one of the questions in the VCF;

- (l) IRA would further discuss with PD and the Secretariat on refinement of the wordings in the VCF.;
- (m) In respect of the duration of the public involvement period, it was agreed to further discuss with the Secretariat on the feasibility of extending it;
(Post-meeting note: The duration of the public involvement stage has been extended from the originally proposed three months to three and a half months, i.e. until 15 November 2016.)
- (n) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department had participated in the drafting of the PE document and its input had already been incorporated in the document; and
- (o) The public were welcome to convey their views to the Council at any time. However, only VCFs received before the end of the public involvement period would be incorporated in IRA's data analysis.

9. The meeting noted that the press conference on releasing the PE document had been tentatively scheduled for 26 July 2016 and Members were invited to help publicise the PE after that.

Agenda Item 4 – Any other business

10. A Member raised his concern over the use of artificial turf containing toxic chemicals in some schools in Hong Kong, which was harmful to the health of students. He suggested that relevant Government departments should look into the problem. The Administration noted and thanked the Member for his comment.

Agenda Item 5 – Date of the next meeting

11. The Secretary would confirm the date of the next meeting nearer the time.

Secretariat
Council for the Sustainable Development