

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Draft Report on the Public Engagement on Promotion of Sustainable Consumption of Biological Resources

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the latest position of the public engagement (“PE”) exercise on promotion of sustainable consumption of biological resources, and seeks Members’ views on the Council for Sustainable Development (“SDC”)’s draft report at [Annex A](#).

Background

2. At the SDC meeting on 30 June 2016, Members discussed the draft PE Document and the plan on launching the public involvement stage of the PE exercise (SDC Paper No. 02/16). Taking into account Members’ comments, the draft PE Document was revised and subsequently released at a press conference held on 26 July 2016. In the light of Members’ suggestion to allow a longer period for the public to express their views, the public involvement period was extended to 15 November 2016.

Public Involvement Stage

3. During the public involvement period, 64 engagement events, including regional forums, as well as briefings for stakeholders, advisory and statutory bodies, District Councils, residents’ organizations and other interested groups were held. Through these events, we reached out to more than 3 000 members of the public and stakeholders. In addition, a number of promotion and publicity activities, including Announcement in the Public Interest on television and radio, advertisements in newspapers, on-line and mobile platforms were

launched and roving exhibitions at various locations across Hong Kong were organized to arouse public interest and invite feedback on the issues raised in the PE Document. For details about the PE process, please refer to Chapter 2 of the draft SDC report at [Annex A](#).

Feedback Received

4. During the public involvement period, a total of 3 592 Views Collection Forms (“VCFs”) and 27 written submissions from individuals and companies/organizations were received. In addition, comments were received through other channels, including engagement events, internet and social media, printed media and radio programmes.

5. After conducting a detailed analysis of the views collected, the independent analysis and reporting agency (“IRA”) has prepared a report and presented its findings to the Strategy Subcommittee and the Support Group at their joint meeting on 28 March 2017. The major findings are set out below :

- (a) Public awareness of sustainable consumption of biological resources is low. Less than half of the individual respondents to the VCF gave a rating of 4 or 5 (out of a total of 5 – 5 being very aware, 1 being not aware at all) for their awareness of the impact of over-exploitation of biological resources. Only half of organization/company representatives who responded to the VCF indicated that their organization/company had a policy or established practice for purchasing sustainable products;
- (b) the major factors that hinder individual consumers and companies/organizations from purchasing sustainable products are, in order of importance, price, availability, quality of sustainable products and knowledge about which products are truly sustainable;

- (c) the most useful tools in facilitating the choice of sustainable products are, in order of usefulness, eco-labels on products, more information on sustainable products, and consumer guides;
- (d) the drivers that can encourage organizations/companies to purchase more sustainable products are, in order of importance, greater community awareness, information platforms on sustainable products and suppliers, award schemes, and charter schemes;
- (e) the five most important actions that the Government/public sector could take the lead in promoting sustainable consumption of biological resources are: to provide more information on sustainable products; to launch publicity initiatives; to provide funding for non-profit organizations to promote sustainable consumption of biological resources; to extend the list of sustainable products to be purchased; and to review and update the purchasing standards;
- (f) the five most important actions that the private sector could take the lead in promoting sustainable consumption of biological resources are: to step up marketing efforts in promoting sustainable consumption; to extend the list of sustainable products to be purchased; to review and promote sustainable menus for banquets; to review and update the purchasing standards; and to provide staff of companies/organizations with training about sustainable consumption of biological resources; and
- (g) on education and publicity: school programmes, relevant information through electronic platform (e.g. website), and advertisement are considered the most important.

IRA's report is at **Annex B**.

Proposed Recommendations

6. In the light of the feedback received, the Programme Director has prepared a draft report on the PE which puts forward 20 recommendations in four main areas: fostering a culture of sustainable consumption of biological resources; facilitating smart choices for consumers; promoting best practices among businesses; and Government taking the lead. The Strategy Subcommittee and the Support Group discussed the draft report at the joint meeting on 28 March 2017. Members' views and suggestions put forward at the meeting are summarized as follows:

- (a) a long term strategy to induce behavioural change towards more sustainable consumption of biological resources should be devised;
- (b) the need to promote values of sustainable consumption of biological resources amongst teachers should be highlighted;
- (c) concrete example(s) on how schools could promote sustainable consumption of biological resources through daily activities, for example, through incorporating eco-labelled food items into the lunch menu should be mentioned;
- (d) in addition to the promotion of sustainable development of fisheries, the sustainable development of agriculture should be explored;
- (e) the Government should more proactively promote green procurement, with clear targets and timeline; and
- (f) a territory-wide study on behavioural changes in respect of sustainable consumption of biological resources in Hong Kong should be conducted.

7. Taking into account the views expressed at the joint meeting on 28 March 2017, the Programme Director has prepared a revised draft report at Annex A. The 20 recommendations that have incorporated Members' comments are set out in the Executive Summary of the draft report.

Advice Sought

8. Members are invited to consider the draft SDC report at Annex A. Subject to Members' views, the draft report will be finalised for submission to the Government and then released together with the IRA report at Annex B.

Council Secretariat
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