

Country and Marine Parks Board (CMPB)
Confirmed Minutes of the 64th Meeting

Date : 15 August 2017 (Tuesday) File Ref.: AF CPA 01/1/0
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Room 701, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Headquarters

PRESENT

Chairman

Mr TANG King-shing, GBS, PDSM

Members

Mr Jan CHAN

Mr CHAN Ka-kui, SBS, JP

Ms CHAN Po-kam, Beatrice

Professor CHIU Lai-har, Rebecca, MH, JP

Mr CHOW Kwok-keung

Dr HAU Chi-hang

Mr LAM Chung-lun, Billy, GBS, JP

Dr LAU Tai-wai, David

Professor LEUNG Mei-yee, Kenneth

Ms MA Miu-wah, Katherine

Dr MAN Chi-sum, JP

Mr MO Ka-hung, Joseph

Dr NG Cho-nam, SBS, JP

Ms SO Ka-man

Ms WONG Pik-yan, Nicole

Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Dr SO Ping-man, JP	Deputy Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Mr AU Wai-kwong, Elvis, JP	Assistant Director (Nature Conservation & Infrastructure Planning), Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Ms Eugenia CHUNG, JP	Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2), Home Affairs Department
Mr Alan LO	Assistant Director of Lands (Specialist 2), Lands Department

Secretary

Miss Phyllis CHAN	Assistant Secretary (Boards)1, AFCD
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IN ATTENDANCE

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Mr Patrick LAI	Assistant Director (Country and Marine Parks)
Mr Alan CHAN	Senior Marine Parks Officer
Mr Franco NG	Senior Country Parks Officer (South-east)
Ms Y N NGAR	Senior Country Parks Officer (North-west)
Mr Alfred WONG	Senior Country Parks Officer (Ranger Services)
Ms Pauline TONG	Country Parks Officer (Special Duties)

Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)

Mr FUNG Wai-kuen, Samuel	Senior Leisure Manager (Contracts) 2
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Marine Department (MD)

CHUNG, JP, Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2) and Mr Alan LO, Assistant Director of Lands (Specialist 2), who were attending the meeting for the first time.

95/17 The Chairman informed members that, as an established practice and to facilitate the taking of minutes, sound recording would be made during the meeting. The audio records would be destroyed after the minutes were confirmed.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 11 April 2017

96/17 The minutes of the last meeting held on 11 April 2017 were confirmed without amendments.

II. Matters Arising from the Last Meeting

(a) Draft Replacement Maps of Plover Cove Country Park and Lantau South Country Park (Para. 46/17 to 48/17)

97/17 Ms Pauline TONG of AFCD reported that the Chief Executive had, in accordance with Section 14 of the Country Parks Ordinance (CPO), designated the areas shown on the approved replacement maps of Plover Cove Country Park (PCCP) and Lantau South Country Park (LSCP) to be country parks. The designation order was gazetted on 7 July 2017 and subsequently tabled at the Legislative Council for negative vetting. It was expected that the designation order would be effective on 1 December 2017 and the whole designation procedure would be completed by end of 2017 as scheduled.

(b) Preparation of Draft Map of the Proposed Southwest Lantau Marine Park (Para. 55/17 to 63/17)

98/17 Mr Alan CHAN of AFCD reported that CMPB had given general support to the draft map of the proposed Southwest Lantau Marine Park (SWLMP) in the last meeting. In accordance with the Marine Parks Ordinance (MPO), a Gazette Notice was published on 23 June 2017 to notify the public that the draft map of SWLMP and the related explanatory statement were available for public inspection. For a period of 60 days from the date of notice publication (i.e. from 23 June to 21 August 2017), copies of the draft map were available for public inspection and any person aggrieved by the draft map might submit a written statement of objection. As at the meeting date, the Country and Marine Parks Authority (the Authority) received two written objections to the draft map of SWLMP. The Authority would, within 90

days from the date of notice publication, submit to the Board Secretary his written representations concerning the objections received during the 60 days period. Upon receipt of the objections and the Authority's representations, the Board Secretary would fix a time and place for the hearing of the objections by the Board and give 14 clear days' notice thereof to the objectors. The objectors might attend the objection hearing, and might be heard in person or by their authorised representative. Members would be informed of the details of the objection hearing in due course.

(c) Country Parks 40th Anniversary Celebration Programme (Para. 64/17 to 71/17)

99/17 Mr Alfred WONG of AFCD briefed members on the events that had taken place from April to August 2017 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of country parks (CP40). The celebration programme was kick-started in April with the "Hiking and Planting Day" held in Kam Shan Country Park, one of the first batch of country parks in Hong Kong. Another "Hiking and Planting Day" was held in Tai Lam Country Park in the same month. In April and May, nine tree planting activities were organised in collaboration with partner non-government organisations under the Plantation Enrichment Project. Starting from May, there were a series of guided tours, named "Excursion with Experts", led by experts of AFCD and partner organisations to explore with the participants the biodiversity, geology, war relics and cultural heritage of country parks. Since June, the "Country Parks 40th Anniversary" Roving Exhibitions were organised in shopping malls and Government Offices to promote the functions of country parks in nature conservation, countryside recreation and outdoor education, and Nature's Secret Talks were held to introduce to the public the history and interesting stories of country parks.

100/17 Mr WONG said that the "Country Parks 40th Anniversary" Roving Exhibitions, Nature's Secret Talks and Excursion with Experts would continue to be held from September to December 2017. He remarked that the Department had taken a member's suggestion of organising country park visits for people with disabilities and would collaborate with the Hong Kong Blind Union, the Hong Kong Society for the Deaf and the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation to organise guided tours for disabled persons in September and October. Other events to be held from September to December included "Joy" Us Hiking, Tree Climbing Championship cum "Trees Are Good" Fun Day, Go Green Family Camping, Trail Maintenance Workshop and Tai Tong Fun Carnival.

(Professor LEUNG Mei-ye, Kenneth and Ms MA Miu-wah, Katherine attended the meeting at this juncture.)

III. Country Parks Public Education Programme: Take your Litter Home (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/7/2017)

101/17 Mr Alfred WONG briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/7/2017 which was about the progress and the future work plan of the Country Parks Public Education Programme “Take Your Litter Home” (the Programme).

102/17 A member enquired if more littering was observed after the removal of litter containers and recycle bins in Phase II of the Programme. Mr WONG responded that Phase II of the Programme had reduced the number of litter containers and recycle bins along hiking trails by about 50%. According to the observation of the Department, hygiene conditions of the hiking trails were well maintained, which reflected that with the continuous education and publicity efforts, the message of “Take your Litter Home” had successfully reached the general public. The patrolling staff of the Department would continue to monitor the situation and take law enforcement action as necessary. In response to the Chairman’s enquiry, he said that the figures of the amount of litter collected included the litter collected in the remaining litter containers and recycle bins as well as along the trails.

103/17 A member said that according to his observation, regular hikers were generally environmentally conscious and accustomed to taking away their waste. Comparatively, inexperienced hikers tended to produce more litter and dispose of them in the litter containers near the entrances / exits of country parks. With regard to this observation, he stressed the importance of continuous education and publicity. Besides, the member pointed out that events and competitions organised in country parks could generate a massive amount of waste, hence the organisers should be required to collect and remove the waste generated upon completion of the events and competitions. In addition, he hoped that AFCD would explore measures to manage the waste disposed in barbecue sites, particularly food waste and barbecue forks. In response, Mr WONG indicated that event organisers were required to submit a waste management plan for the overall reduction, collection and disposal of waste when applying for a permit for organising events in country parks. Also, during the course of events, country park staff would monitor the cleanliness of the sites and remind the event organisers to collect and remove the waste generated upon completion of the events. Besides, he said that barbecue fork collection points were provided in barbecue sites to encourage the recycling and reuse of barbecue forks. The Department would collaborate with an environmental organisation to explore publicity measures to promote public participation in waste reduction and recycling in

barbeque sites.

104/17 A member expressed support to the Programme and agreed with the future plan to remove all the remaining litter containers and recycle bins along hiking trails in country parks. Regarding the slight decrease in the amount of litter collected at MacLehose Trail Section 6 and the slight increase of that at Pineapple Dam Nature Trail, the member had reservation about the relationship between these phenomenon and the macaques in Shing Mun and Kam Shan Country Parks. He said that these phenomenon showed that there was insignificant/ no reduction in the amount of litter despite the removal of litter containers and recycle bins along the two trails, hence more work targeting at the two trails should be done in the next phase of the Programme, for example strengthening patrol in the areas concerned and enhancing the relevant education and publicity. Mr WONG responded that AFCD would continue to monitor the situations in Shing Mun and Kam Shan Country Parks.

105/17 Furthermore, the above member commented that since barbecue sites were the major source of litter in country parks, it was essential to reduce the amount of litter in barbecue sites in order to achieve a more significant reduction in the amount of litter in country parks. He appreciated AFCD's initiative to collaborate with an environmental organisation to address the litter problem in barbecue sites and suggested that they could consider providing charcoal collection points and implementing food recycling programme. Mr WONG said that according to their observations in barbecue sites, with the enhanced public awareness on waste reduction, people would place the unused charcoal next to litter containers or recycle bins instead of throwing them away so that others who needed charcoal could take them. He added that the Department had delivered to the public some green tips of countryside activities with a view to promoting environmentally friendly habits. For example, people were encouraged to bring their own bottle and dining utensils, buy less packaged food and avoid wasting food, and separate wastes for recycling or disposal. The Department would work with an environmental organisation to explore publicity measures to encourage waste reduction and recycling in barbecue sites.

106/17 A member emphasised the importance of keeping on the education and publicity of the "Take Your Litter Home" concept and the need to look at the problem of people disposing of litter near the entrances / exits of country parks instead of actually taking them away. The Chairman shared similar view and said that some people might perceive that "Take Your Litter Home" was not to leave any litter in country parks but it was acceptable to dispose of litter near the entrances / exits. He suggested AFCD to deliver the message of waste reduction to the

public. Besides, the Chairman considered that the achievements of Phases I and II of the Programme were remarkable and he supported AFCD to carry on the relevant education and publicity in order to inculcate the green idea of “Take Your Litter Home” into the public and change individuals’ habit in the long run.

107/17 A member echoed that the Programme had noteworthy results. She suggested emphasising such encouraging results of the Programme in future publicity to acknowledge hikers’ contributions and appeal to their further support.

108/17 Another member pointed out that although the promotion of taking individuals’ litter home had reduced the amount of litter found along hiking trails, the overall amount of litter collected was not reduced significantly. Mr Patrick LAI of AFCD said that the habit of taking individuals’ litter home had the direct benefit of lowering the impact of litter on wildlife and the natural environment, and step by step, such habit would motivate people to reduce the generation of waste. He elaborated that once people had developed the habit of taking their own litter home after visiting country parks, they would eventually consider methods to lessen the amount of litter they would have to carry home in future visits, such as bringing their own water bottles and avoiding disposable products. Consequently, there would be a waste reduction in the long run. He said that the Department was aware that any behaviour change took time and hence would upkeep the relevant education and publicity. Moreover, he explained that the Programme currently targeted at removing the litter containers and recycle bins along the hiking trails in country parks, while litter containers and recycle bins would continue to be provided in the recreational sites. To avoid refuse accumulation and maintain the cleanliness of country parks, the Department would evaluate the need to clear the litter containers in these areas more frequently. Also, litter bins with an animal-proof design would be installed to prevent wild animals from searching the bins for food.

109/17 Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP added that it was the aim of the Programme to first encourage the public to develop a good habit of taking their own litter away from country parks and the ultimate goal was to support the taking of litter home for waste separation and waste reduction.

110/17 A member mentioned the slogan of “In case of fire, don’t forget: Mobile phone, Towel, Door keys” and suggested that AFCD could make similar propaganda to encourage people to bring their own water bottle, towel and food container when visiting country parks

and thereby raising public awareness of waste reduction.

111/17 Concluding the discussion, the Chairman said that despite the fact that the Programme was launched not long ago, its outcomes were impressive. The success of the Programme would rely on the persistent efforts of AFCD and the continuous support of hikers.

(Mr MO Ka-hung, Joseph and Ms Pauline TONG left the meeting at this juncture.)

IV. Summary Report of Country Parks Committee (CPC) (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/8/2017)

112/17 Professor CHIU Lai-ha, Rebecca, MH, JP, Chairperson of the CPC, briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/8/2017, which served to provide members with a summary of the issues discussed at the CPC meeting held on 9 June 2017. She reported that CPC members requested to discuss in this CMPB meeting the Hong Kong Housing Society's (HKHS) feasibility study on the potential of sites on periphery of country parks for developing public housing and elderly homes (the Study).

113/17 The Chairman acknowledged the request of CPC and invited AFCD to give members a brief introduction of the Study to facilitate the discussion.

114/17 Mr Patrick LAI said that as revealed from various sources, HKHS would carry out the Study at its own cost. He believed that HKHS was currently making preparations for the Study and would report to the Government and consult relevant bodies at suitable time. Yet, they had not contacted the Department thus far and the Department did not have any updated information relating to the Study at the moment.

115/17 Mr CHAN Ka-kui, SBS, JP and Professor CHIU Lai-ha, Rebecca, MH, JP declared that they were members of the HKHS.

116/17 A member opined that HKHS would conduct the Study not on its own initiative, but on the invitation of the Government. It revealed that it was the Government's initiative to carry out the Study in the first place. Besides, he pointed out that excising an area from country parks was a very new concept, because there had only been Government's proposals to designate new

country parks or expand country park areas but not excising an area from them. Although he was given to know from some Government Officials that even if it happened, the overall country park areas would only increase because any loss of country park areas would be compensated, he wanted to clarify whether both increasing and decreasing adjustments were applicable to country park areas. Furthermore, he deemed that it was necessary for HKHS to know that any proposals of housing development in country parks had to obtain the support of CMPB and go through various statutory procedures and requirements. In this regard, he suggested inviting HKHS to attend the Board meeting so that members could know more about the Study and also explain to HKHS the role of CMPB in matters relating to country parks.

117/17 A member was of the view that the setting of objectives and methods of the Study would have a considerable influence on the study results, and CMPB as an important stakeholder group in the issue should take a proactive role and start an early dialogue with HKHS before the Study commenced. Therefore, he agreed that HKHS should be invited to attend the Board meeting.

118/17 Another member shared the view that CMPB as an advisory body on matters relating to country parks should be concerned about the Study. Besides, learning from news reports that the Study would cover two sites located on the periphery of country parks, he enquired if AFCD had any information about the locations and sizes of the two sites and whether they included any habitats of rare and precious plant species.

119/17 A member remarked that the Study to be carried out by HKHS on the invitation of the Government was a general feasibility study but not a pre-development study (i.e. a study for an actual development proposal). She deemed that it was reasonable to meet with HKHS at this stage if members considered it necessary to discuss with them on the setting of the objectives, scope and methods of the Study; however, such meeting should not be treated as a forum of stakeholder consultation as if there was any concrete development proposal.

120/17 In response to the above discussion, Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP said that since AFCD had no information about the exact locations of the two sites at the moment, they were unable to inform members of the sizes of the sites and whether they covered any habitats of rare and precious plant species. Should the Study area be confirmed and more information was released, AFCD would share with members the relevant information of the sites possessed by the Department. Regarding the suggestion of inviting HKHS to attend the Board meeting, he said

that subject to the direction of the Chairman, the secretary would write on behalf of the Board to make such an invitation.

121/17 Regarding members' enquiries about the statutory procedures and requirements of developing country park areas for housing purposes, Mr Patrick LAI explained that different statutory procedures and requirements might be applicable depending on the location, scale and nature of the project. Apart from the statutory procedures and requirements of CPO, it might also be required to go through the statutory Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process depending on the scale of the development. In brief, the project proponent would need to submit their proposal together with an EIA report (where applicable) to CMPB for consideration. If an amendment of country park boundary was required to cater for the development, the Authority would have to seek the direction of the Chief Executive in Council (CE in C) to prepare a draft map to reflect the amendment and consult CMPB on the preparation of the draft map. The draft map would have to be made available for public inspection and any objection received would have to be heard by CMPB before the draft map was submitted to the CE in C for consideration. He emphasised that if the Government decided to take forward any housing development project in country parks, it would have to observe the relevant statutory procedures and conduct consultations as required.

122/17 Mr AU Wai-kwong, Elvis, JP of EPD supplemented that the Study in question was a preliminary study. HKHS would submit a report to the Government upon completion of the Study and the Government would further consider the study results and other relevant issues before deciding the way forward. He also stressed that the Government would observe the relevant statutory procedures.

123/17 A member would like to confirm that only the Government, but nobody else, could initiate amendments to the boundaries of country parks. Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP replied in the affirmative and elaborated that according to CPO, only with the direction of the CE in C would the Authority prepare draft maps for amendments.

124/17 Regarding a member's enquiry about the applicability of the Town Planning Ordinance (TPO) in this issue, Mr Patrick LAI explained that TPO would not be applicable if the site for housing development was completely within country parks. However, it would be applicable if part of the site was covered by a statutory town plan.

125/17 In response to a member's enquiry about the handling of objections to a draft map that proposed to amend the boundary of a country park, Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP said that relevant parties, including the Authority and CMPB, would have to observe the provisions stipulated in Section 11 of CPO in handling the objections. After that, the Authority would submit the draft map together with a schedule of objections and representations made under Section 11 to the CE in C who would make a decision in accordance with Section 13 of CPO.

126/17 A member remarked that without the support of CMPB, proposals to amend the boundaries of country parks would not be able to proceed. Hence, CMPB played a very important role in this matter. He also reiterated the need to communicate with HKHS to clarify the Study.

127/17 A member was of the opinion that it would be a primary change of the Government policy towards country parks should there be any proposal to develop existing country park areas for housing purposes. Apart from the consultation with CMPB as a part of the statutory requirements, an extensive consultation and discussion with the society to build a consensus on this issue would be necessary.

128/17 After the discussion, the Chairman advised that the secretary would write to HKHS to express CMPB's concern about the Study and to invite them to attend the Board meeting for briefing members about the Study.

[Post-meeting note: An invitation letter was sent to HKHS on 23 October 2017.]

**V. Summary Report of Marine Parks Committee (MPC)
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/9/2017)**

129/17 Professor LEUNG Mei-yee, Kenneth, Chairman of the MPC, briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/9/2017, which provided members with a summary of the issues discussed at the MPC meeting held on 11 July 2017. Members noted the Report.

**VI. Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/10/2017)**

130/17 Mr Patrick LAI briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/10/2017 which was the Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report for the period from 1 March 2017 to 30 June 2017. Members noted the Report.

VII. Any Other Business

(a) Any Other Business

131/17 A member mentioned that the Development Bureau had drawn up a Pier Improvement Programme (the Programme) to facilitate public access to remote areas and established a Committee on Piers (the Committee) to take forward the Programme in coordination with relevant bureaux and departments, including AFCD. He suggested AFCD to seize the opportunity given by the Programme to improve the accessibility of country parks and the world-famous Geopark. Mr Patrick LAI responded that AFCD would participate in the Committee work and provide views and suggestions on the potential pier items that could improve the accessibility of country parks and the Geopark. Apart from improvement of piers, the Department would also look at the provision of kaito ferry services to these places. Concerning the suggestion of improving the accessibility of Geopark, the Chairman considered that AFCD should balance the convenience to visitors and the protection of natural landscape and geoheritage.

132/17 Another member indicated that the East Dam of the High Island Reservoir was a popular geo-site in Hong Kong. As the existing shuttle-bus service was still very limited, many people took taxis to the East Dam, posing risks to people walking along the Man Yee Road. He suggested AFCD to explore the possibility of constructing a pier in either the East Dam or the West Dam to alleviate the road traffic in that area. The Chairman was of the view that addition of transport options might not reduce the risks of traffic accidents involving taxis in the East Dam and ferry transport would probably not be the desired option of visitors during winter. He advised AFCD to scrutinise the ancillary transport facilities in the East Dam and to coordinate with relevant departments to address the concern of potential traffic accidents involving taxis.

133/17 A member remarked that the Hong Kong Geopark was listed as a global geopark. It was a precious green asset and made Hong Kong a very unique metropolis in the world. He suggested formulating a strategic plan with reference to the experience of the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site with a view to better managing and conserving the Geopark. He elaborated that the Hong Kong Wetland Park was set up next to the Ramsar Site to satisfy the public interest in wetlands and to serve educational purposes. At the same time, it also acted as

a buffer against human disturbance and impact to the Ramsar Site. The management of Geopark could adopt the same approach and demarcate zones for public appreciation and restrict public entry to zones with high geological significance.

(Dr MAN Chi-sum, JP left the meeting at this juncture.)

134/17 Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP indicated that AFCD had constantly worked on the improvement of accessibility of country parks and the Geopark. Concerning the improvement of the accessibility of the East Dam, he explained that there were two main limitations. First of all, Man Yee Road was subject to traffic control because it was only designed for maintenance purpose by WSD. Secondly, expansion of the road would inevitably involve felling of trees in the Sai Kung East Country Park where the road was situated. He said that AFCD would look for feasible measures to improve the situation, such as increasing the frequency of shuttle-bus services.

135/17 A member who had served the Board for six years by the end of this term shared his views and expectation on Hong Kong's country parks. He said that many national parks in the world had developed co-operative relationships with the local villages which in turn fostered the development of local economies. On the contrary, country park management in Hong Kong mainly focused on the protection of flora and fauna and lacked cooperation with the neighbouring villages. He hoped that without compromising the objective of nature conservation, there would be advancement of the relationship between country parks and local villages by engaging the latter more in the process of country park management in line with the international trend. Furthermore, regarding a recent research which suggested that the Plover Cove Reservoir should be reclaimed and turned into a new town because it had no ecological value, the member deemed that building houses in reservoirs would seriously affect the natural ecology and landscape of the country parks in the vicinity. Hence, he advocated that Hong Kong's country parks should include all the surrounding reservoirs for better protection of the integrity of the natural ecology and landscape.

136/17 A member agreed that establishing links with the indigenous inhabitants and creating with them a common interest in country parks would facilitate a smooth running of country parks. Besides, he suggested organising more activities to encourage more people to visit and enjoy these natural treasures. By doing so, he believed that more people would uphold the protection of country parks in Hong Kong.

137/17 Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP thanked for members' views. He took Sai Wan and Lai Chi Wo as examples and said that in the past few years, AFCD had made endeavours to communicate and cooperate with the villages within and adjacent to country parks with a view to fostering the integration of country parks and villages and pursuing a development scheme compatible with nature conservation.

(b) Vote of Thanks

138/17 Since this was the last regular meeting of the current term which would end on 31 August 2017, Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP thanked the Chairman and members for their enthusiastic support to the work of the Board. He particularly thanked Professor CHIU Lai-har, Rebecca, MH, JP, Mr CHOW Kwok-keung, Dr HAU Chi-hang, Ms KWAN Sau-wan and Dr NG Cho-nam, SBS, JP for serving the Board for six years by the end of the current term. The Chairman also expressed his gratitude to members for their valuable contribution to the Board.

VIII. Date of Next Meeting

139/17 The Chairman informed members that the secretary would inform them of the date of the next meeting in due course.

140/17 The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

– End –