

**Country and Marine Parks Board (CMPB)**  
**Confirmed Minutes of the 75<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

---

Date : 7 May 2021 (Friday)

File Ref.: AF CPA 01/1/0

Time : 9:30 a.m.

Venue : Room 701, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)  
Headquarters

---

**PRESENT**

**Chairman**

Professor LING Kar-kan, SBS

**Members**

Mr CHEUNG Siu-keung, MH

Dr CHEUNG Ting-on Lewis

Dr CHUI Pui-yi, Apple

Professor HE Shen-jing

Professor HUI Cheuk-kuen Desmond

Dr LAU Tai-wai, David

Dr LEE Nam-yuk, Amelia, MH

Mr LEE Yee-keung, Charles

Professor LEUNG Mei-yee, Kenneth, JP

Professor NG Sai-leung

Mr SO Kwok-yin, Ken

Dr TANG Chin-cheung

Ms WONG Pik-yan, Nicole

Ms YIP Yan-yan

Mr YU Hon-kwan, MH, JP

Ms YU Pik-fan, Vriko

Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Mr LAI Kin-ming, Mickey	Deputy Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (Acting)
Ms Bella MUI	Assistant Director (Nature Conservation), Environmental Protection Department
Ms Eugenia CHUNG, JP	Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2), Home Affairs Department
Ms CHAN Suet-ching, Angela	Assistant Director of Lands (Specialist 2), Lands Department
Mr LUK Chi-kwong	Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Leisure Services) <sup>3</sup> , Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr LAI Chi-tung, JP	Assistant Director of Marine (Port Control), Marine Department
Mr YIP Chi-kwai, Tom	Assistant Director of Planning (New Territories), Planning Department
Mr MA Hon-wing, Wilson	Assistant Director of Water Supplies (Development) (Acting), Water Supplies Department

Secretary

Ms Phyllis CHAN	Assistant Secretary (Boards) <sup>1</sup> , AFCD
-----------------	--

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Dr Jackie YIP	Assistant Director (Country and Marine Parks) (Acting)
Mr Alfred WONG	Senior Country Parks Officer (Ranger Services 1)
Ms Louise LI	Senior Marine Parks Officer

Ms Y N CHAN

Senior Geopark Officer (Acting)

Mr Alvin NG

Geopark Officer (Education)

### **ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES**

Mr CHAN Ka-kui, SBS, JP

Ms CHAN Po-kam, Beatrice

Ms KIU Kin-yan, Judy

Mr LEUNG Kin-wai, Ian

### **OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN**

53/21     The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the following persons who were attending the meeting for the first time:-

- Ms YU Pik-fan, Vriko;
- Mr LUK Chi-kwong, Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Leisure Services)3;
- Ms Y N CHAN, Senior Geopark Officer (Acting) of AFCD; and
- Mr Alvin NG, Geopark Officer (Education) of AFCD

54/21     The Chairman informed the meeting that Ms YU Pik-fan, Vriko and Mr LEUNG Kin-wai, Ian, who were recruited through the Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth, were appointed as CMPB members with effect from 19 March 2021.

55/21 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.

56/21 The Chairman informed members that in view of the latest situation of COVID-19, the meeting was open to the media only so as to reduce social contact and the risk of community transmission. Besides, a special seating arrangement was made in this meeting to maintain suitable distance among attendees.

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **I. Confirmation of Minutes of the 74<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 26 February 2021**

57/21 The minutes of the 74<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 26 February 2021 were confirmed with the following amendments.

#### **1. After Paragraph 50/21:**

Add [Post-meeting note: LCSD advised that the department had also planted ornamental native plant species in urban parks such as Sweet Gum and Chinese New Year Flower at the Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Garden. Recently, LCSD further planted more Sweet Gum at Yuen Long Park with the aim to provide one more location for the appreciation of red leaves so as to relieve the pressure in the Tai Lam Country Park. LCSD would continue exploring the possibility to plant out ornamental native plant species in the existing venues and new projects as far as practicable. ]

### **II. Matters Arising**

#### **(a) Curriculum-based Outdoor Learning Programmes in Country Parks (Para. 27/21 to 45/21)**

58/21 Mr Alfred WONG thanked members for their comments in the last CMPB meeting on the curriculum-based outdoor learning programmes. He reported that after the last meeting, four draft learning and teaching (L&T) packages were received from the project team from The Education University of Hong Kong. AFCD was currently reviewing the L&T packages and would consult the Education Bureau afterwards. After that, demonstration of the L&T packages would be organised for schools to offer comment.

### **III. Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Programme** **(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/6/2021)**

59/21 With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Y N CHAN briefed members on the programme to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark (hereinafter referred to as “the HK Geopark”) (Working Paper WP/CMPB/6/2021).

(Mr YU Hon-kwan, MH, JP attended the meeting at this juncture.)

60/21 In response to the Chairman’s enquiry, Ms Y N CHAN said that except the community seminar, all celebration events were open to the public. Besides, invitations to the events would be sent to CMPB members through the Secretariat.

61/21 A member commented that unlike country parks and marine parks, there was no existing ordinance in Hong Kong to recognise the values of the HK Geopark and protect such area of geological importance in Hong Kong. He enquired if there were any mechanisms to recognise its values and protect the valuable geological resources. Dr Jackie YIP responded that most of the areas of the HK Geopark fell within the boundaries of the existing country parks, and hence were protected under the Country Parks Ordinance (CPO). For example, certain activities were prohibited or restricted by the CPO to protect the ecology and environment. In addition, environmental impacts of designated development projects were controlled under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance, which facilitated the preservation of valuable geological and geomorphological resources. She said that AFCD would continue to carry out publicity activities with a view to raising public awareness of the values of the HK Geopark.

62/21 The Chairman concurred with the above member on the need to protect the valuable geological resources in Hong Kong. He suggested that since there were still some areas of the HK Geopark which fell outside the protected areas, AFCD should consider the necessity of having an ordinance dedicated to the protection of the HK Geopark or an ordinance that would cover all the country and marine parks, special areas and the HK Geopark, for comprehensive protection.

63/21 Referring to the Recommended Geopark Guide (R2G) system mentioned in the Working Paper, a member suggested that AFCD should explore the possibility of raising the professional standards and recognition of Geopark Guides in the travel industry by placing them under the regulation of the Travel Industry Authority. He believed that it would further increase public confidence in the Geopark Guides.

64/21 Another member advised that contingency plan should be made to set out the arrangements of the events in case of a surge of COVID-19 infections. Besides, AFCD should assess the capacity of the transport system in Sai Kung, especially around the East Dam, to cope with the increase of visitors during the period of the celebration programme, and enhance the public transport services as necessary. The Chairman agreed with the member on the transport issue in Sai Kung and advised AFCD to work on it in cooperation with the Transport Department and other relevant government departments.

65/21 A member suggested that sustainable development of the HK Geopark required a delicate balance between conservation and public accessibility. According to his experience in Tai O, while improvement of public accessibility would bring about economic benefits to the local community, large number of visitors would cause disturbances and environmental damages to a certain extent. It was difficult to strike a balance between the two. Besides, the member supported the idea of engaging more young people in the heritage conservation in the HK Geopark and was willing to share his experience with AFCD.

66/21 A member pointed out that the problem of littering in country parks was aggravated as many people turned to the countryside for hiking and recreation since the outbreak of COVID-19. She suggested that AFCD could take the opportunities arising from the celebration programme of HK Geopark to enhance public awareness of environmental protection, for example, raising such topic during the events or organising a volunteer litter picking event.

67/21 Regarding the Po Pin Chau viewing platform design competition, a member advised that the viewing platform should blend in with the natural environment. Besides, she suggested that for the design of the small interpretation panels on the Kat O Heritage Trail, AFCD could refer to her written submission concerning the “Promotion of Ancient Trails in Country Parks” in the 71<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Country Parks Committee for some ideas. Her written submission included some examples of signage in Japan that were in harmony with the surrounding environment.

68/21 Another member mentioned about the recent news reports on the progress of the development of an offshore wind farm in the south-eastern waters of Hong Kong by CLP Power Hong Kong Limited. Although the number of wind turbines to be built near Ninepin Group was reduced in the latest proposal, he remained deeply concerned about the irreversible landscape and visual impacts on the HK Geopark. Concurring with a member's comment earlier about the importance of protecting areas of geological importance, he considered that the society was more familiar with country parks than the HK Geopark and public awareness of geological and landscape conservation was inadequate at present.

69/21 A member remarked that the HK Geopark made significant contribution towards cultural conservation and village revitalisation. She particularly appreciated AFCD's efforts in researching the history and stories of Ap Chau and Kat O and establishing the Story Rooms of the two places in collaboration with the local villagers. The member said that she was involved in a project with the Environmental Protection Department relating to countryside revitalisation, and she believed that it would be beneficial if there were opportunities for sharing of experiences between professionals and government departments involved in this kind of work.

70/21 The Chairman suggested that AFCD could explore opportunities of cooperating with the Countryside Conservation Office and the Home Affairs Department to expand the range and scale of the events of the celebration programme. Besides, he suggested publishing an in-depth feature article in the *National Geographic* (Magazine) and *Chinese National Geography* (Magazine) to promote the HK Geopark to the world.

71/21 A member pointed out that the HK Geopark included villages inhabited by fishermen and their habitual fishing grounds. He was concerned that introducing a new law dedicated to the protection of the HK Geopark would directly affect the livelihood of fishermen. He advised AFCD to carefully consider the possible consequences and strike a balance between conservation and protection of the livelihood and lifestyles of fishermen.

72/21 Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP thanked the Chairman and members for their comments. He said that the Government had no plan to introduce any new laws with regard to the HK Geopark at present. The HK Geopark had a clearly defined boundary which was declared in the Global Geoparks Network. In addition, ecologically and geologically important areas in the HK

Geopark were within the boundaries of the existing country parks, special areas and marine parks, and hence under the protection of the CPO and Marine Parks Ordinance. AFCD would review if there were important areas that were outside the protected areas and consider the need to provide for protection through legislative process. Concerning the transport to the East Dam, High Island Reservoir, Dr LEUNG said that there was green minibus service between Pak Tam Chung and the East Dam on Sunday and public holiday afternoons. AFCD would continue to monitor the situation and assess the need to enhance the service. In addition, the planning study commissioned by AFCD on setting up a visitor hub at Pak Tam Chung would look at the enhancement of ancillary facilities, including transport facilities. Regarding countryside conservation, he said that AFCD had been cooperating closely with the Countryside Conservation Office, since its establishment, on issues related to countryside conservation. AFCD also engaged in frequent dialogues with the local communities to enhance the mutual understanding and trust, which was important for the conservation of local cultural heritage. As regards the promotion of the celebration programme, he said that the possibility of featuring on the *National Geographic* (Magazine) and *Chinese National Geography* (Magazine) would be explored.

#### **IV. Summary Report of Country Parks Committee (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/7/2021)**

73/21 Professor NG Sai-leung, Chairman of Country Parks Committee (CPC), briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/7/2021, which provided members with a summary of the issues discussed at the CPC meeting held on 4 March 2021. Members noted the Report.

#### **V. Summary Report of Marine Parks Committee (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/8/2021)**

74/21 Professor LEUNG Mei-yee, Kenneth, JP, Chairman of the Marine Parks Committee (MPC), briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/8/2021, which provided members with a summary of the issues discussed at the MPC meeting held on 1 April 2021. Members noted the Report.

#### **VI. Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/9/2021)**

75/21 Dr Jackie YIP briefed members on the Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report for the period from 1 January to 31 March 2021 (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/9/2021). She informed members that in light of the COVID-19 epidemic situation



in Hong Kong, barbecue sites and campsites remained closed during the above-mentioned reporting period. The number of visitors to country parks and the amount of litter collected during the three months period were both slightly lower than that in the same period in 2020. While the country park school and public education programmes remained suspended, country park visitor centres were reopened on 18 February 2021. Moreover, regarding the increase in the number of enforcement actions taken during the reporting period, she explained that AFCD had stepped up patrol and law enforcement, especially against illegal camping during the closure of campsites and prohibited group gathering.

76/21 A member expressed concern over the problem of littering and illegal camping in country parks. He understood that AFCD had already stepped up litter cleaning efforts in country parks and some environmental groups had also volunteered to help cleaning up the trails. However, litter was still seen in country parks and it seemed impossible to clear all the litter up. He enquired if AFCD had any strategy to handle this issue. Regarding illegal camping, the member believed that some people might not be aware that camping was only allowed in the designated campsites in country parks. To address the problem, he suggested AFCD to strengthen relevant publicity.

77/21 The Chairman agreed with the above member. He believed that the high number of country park visitors and high demand for recreation facilities would continue for a long period of time as COVID-19 might not disappear very soon. He considered that strengthening education and increasing the penalty were the direct ways to solve the problem of littering. He also suggested AFCD to explore the possibility of mobilising volunteers to help clean up the country parks more frequently. Besides, the Chairman hoped that AFCD could expedite the process of enhancing the public toilet facilities in country parks in order to cope with the increasing number of visitors.

78/21 In response, Dr YIP said that AFCD endeavoured to maintain a clean environment in country parks. The Department would closely monitor the situation and step up cleaning efforts as necessary. In addition, in view of the high number of visitors to country parks, including people who might not have visited frequently in the past, AFCD was planning to introduce an education programme on hiking etiquette in the second half of 2021, with a view to promoting the message of “Take Your Litter Home” and good outdoor habits. Moreover, she said that AFCD would step up enforcement efforts against illegal camping. Depending on the epidemic development in Hong Kong, reopening of campsites would be considered.

79/21 Pointing out that many people were willing to participate in environmental protection, a member suggested providing clean-up tools, such as tongs, gloves and reusable plastic rubbish bags, at the entrances of hiking trails for hikers who wished to help pick up litters during their hike to borrow. He also suggested inviting ambassadors to promote the message of “Take Your Litter Home” to hikers.

80/21 The Chairman remarked that according to his observation, most of the litter seen in hiking trails was tissues and face masks. He suggested that the publicity materials should focus on these types of litter, for example, promoting the use of handkerchief in replacement of tissue and reminding hikers to prevent their face masks from blowing off. The Chairman also expressed concern over the ecological impacts of clam digging activities in Shui Hau during summer.

81/21 Concurring with the Chairman, a member considered that the publicity materials should provide specific advice to hikers. He suggested three pieces of advice to be included in the publicity materials, and they were “avoid bringing unnecessary items”, “avoid using single-use items” and “carry a bag for taking litter home”. Moreover, the member pointed out that apart from litter, news reports also raised great concern over the degradation of hiking trails. In his opinion, the rapid degradation of hiking trails in Hong Kong might be related to the increasing outdoor activities, especially hiking, of the young population. He suggested that AFCD needed to review the allocation of resources in country parks and devote more resources to the improvement and maintenance of hiking trails.

82/21 A member asked for the visitor statistics of Cape D’Aguilar Marine Reserve during the reporting period, which was not covered in the Working Paper. Ms Louise LI explained that Cape D’Aguilar Marine Reserve, which had a sea area of only about 20 hectares, was set up for the purpose of conservation, scientific studies and education. In order to protect the important habitats, recreational activities were prohibited in the Marine Reserve. To avoid confusion as to the purpose of the Marine Reserve, the visitor statistics of the Marine Reserve was not included in the Working Paper.

83/21 The above member considered that the visitor statistics of the Marine Reserve and nearby areas were important information for the formulation of an effective management strategy. He suggested AFCD to provide such data to CMPB members for information. Dr YIP agreed to the suggestion.

84/21 Referring to Part A - 1.2 of the Working Paper, a member noted that although the number of fire incidents occurred within or threatening country park during the reporting period was higher than the same period last year, the total area and the number of trees being affected were noticeably lower. He suggested that AFCD should compare the figures of the reporting period with the figures of the same period of previous years to assess if there was any improvement in fire protection. If it showed signs of improvement, AFCD should continue to adopt the existing fire prevention measures.

85/21 Referring to Part A - 2.4 of the Working Paper, another member asked why no primary school student participated in the school visit programme organised by AFCD during the reporting period. Mr Alfred WONG responded that a number of applications for the school visit programme were received from primary schools. However, the scheduled visits were cancelled by the schools, mostly due to their special class arrangements. He added that in view of COVID-19, AFCD introduced an online programme for school students as an alternative.

## **VII. Any Other Business**

### **(a) Any Other Business**

86/21 At the invitation of the Chairman, Dr Jackie YIP informed members that in view of the fact that many important habitats of marine mammals in Hong Kong were within the boundaries of marine parks, it was proposed that the function of the Marine Mammal Conservation Working Group (MMCWG), which was to advise the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation on matters related to the conservation of marine mammals in Hong Kong, be taken up by MPC starting from the next term, and the MMCWG would be dissolved by then. This restructuring would put the relevant matters in one body for more focused discussion, which would be beneficial to the future management of marine parks.

87/21 In response to a member's comments, Dr YIP said that MMCWG members would be duly informed of the proposed restructuring. Besides, appointment of specialist in the relevant fields to CMPB or MPC would be considered so that expert advice on the conservation of marine mammals could be received.

88/21 Moreover, Dr YIP informed members that after the soft opening on 10 May 2021, the Hoi Ha Visitor Centre would be officially opened on 8 June 2021 on the World Oceans Day.

She invited members to join the opening ceremony of the Visitor Centre on 8 June, and the invitation would be sent to members through the Secretariat.

89/21 A member commended AFCD for acting quickly in response to his report of declining trees and spread of Mikania in the forest of Victoria Peak. He noted that AFCD had removed Mikania and planted native trees at the affected site to prevent the spread of the exotic species and replace the declining trees. AFCD would continue to monitor the situation. He said that climate change might alter the growth rate of invasive species and the lifespan of trees. Therefore, he advised that such potential changes should be taken into consideration in the management of country parks. Moreover, the member urged AFCD to continue to combat illegal feeding of wild animals at Kam Shan Country Park.

(b) Vote of Thanks

90/21 Since this was the last regular meeting of the current term, Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP thanked the Chairman and members for their enthusiastic support to the work of the Board. The Chairman also expressed gratitude to members for their valuable contribution to the Board.

**VIII. Date of Next Meeting**

91/21 The Chairman informed members that the next meeting was tentatively scheduled for 28 September 2021 (Tuesday) at 2:30 p.m.

92/21 The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

– End –