

Country and Marine Parks Board (CMPB)
Confirmed Minutes of the 76th Meeting

Date	: 28 September 2021 (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

Professor LING Kar-kan, SBS

Members

Ms CHAN Kwai-fun, Brenda

Dr CHEUNG Ting-on Lewis

Professor HE Shen-jing

Mr LAW Wing-fai, Teddy

Mr LEE Yee-keung, Charles

Mr LEUNG Kin-wai, Ian

Mr LO Pui-lam

Professor QIU Jian-wen

Mr SO Kwok-yin, Ken

Mr WONG Lap-kei, Alex

Mr YAU Yik-chung, Henry

Ms YIP Yan-yan

Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP

Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Mr LAI Kin-ming, Mickey

Deputy Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Ms Thebe NG	Assistant Director (Nature Conservation)(Acting), Environmental Protection Department
Ms CHAN Suet-ching, Angela	Assistant Director of Lands (Specialist 2), Lands 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

Secretary

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

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Dr Jackie YIP	Assistant Director (Country and Marine Parks)(Acting)
Ms Y N NGAR	Senior Country Parks Officer (Management 2)
Mr Alfred WONG	Senior Country Parks Officer (Ranger Services 1)
Ms Louise LI	Senior Marine Parks Officer
Mr Alan CHAN	Senior Marine Parks Officer (Special Duties)
Ms Y N CHAN	Senior Geopark Officer (Acting)
Mr Charlie SHUE	Country Parks Officer (North)

Home Affairs Department

Ms CHUI Wai-ye, Brenda	Chief Executive Officer (2)1
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Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mr CHEUNG Wing-keung, Wicky Chief Leisure Manager (Management)

Water Supplies Department

Mr FU Sau-bong Senior Engineer/ Planning Policy 1

ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES

Mr CHEUNG Siu-keung, MH

Dr CHUI Pui-yi, Apple

Professor HUI Cheuk-kuen Desmond

Dr LAW Man-yee, Caroline

Dr LEE Nam-yuk, Amelia, MH

Mr YU Hon-kwan, MH, JP

Ms YU Pik-fan, Vriko

Ms Eugenia CHUNG, JP Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2), Home Affairs
Department

Mr LUK Chi-kwong Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services
(Leisure Services)³, Leisure and Cultural Services
Department

Mr MA Hon-wing, Wilson Assistant Director of Water Supplies (Development),
Water Supplies Department

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

93/21 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

94/21 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.

95/21 The Chairman informed members that as a prevention measure 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.

OPENING REMARKS BY THE COUNTRY AND MARINE PARKS AUTHORITY

96/21 Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP, the Country and Marine Parks Authority (the Authority), gave an opening remark and welcomed members to CMPB. He also thanked eight retired members, namely Mr CHAN Ka-kui, SBS, JP, Ms CHAN Po-kam, Beatrice, Ms KIU Kin-yan, Judy, Dr LAU Tai-wai, David, Professor LEUNG Mei-yee, Kenneth, JP, Professor NG Sai-leung, Dr TANG Chin-cheung, and Ms WONG Pik-yan, Nicole, for their contributions to the Board in the past years.

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS BY THE CHAIRMAN

97/21 The Chairman introduced himself and all attending members and government representatives.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. Confirmation of Minutes of the 75th Meeting held on 7 May 2021

98/21 The minutes of the 75th meeting held on 7 May 2021 were confirmed without amendments.

II. Guidelines on Declarations of Interests

99/21 The Chairman drew members' attention to the "Guidelines on Declaration of Interests" and advised them to disclose any direct personal or pecuniary interest in any matter under consideration by the Board prior to the discussion of the item. Declaration of interests could be made verbally during a Board meeting or in writing to the Chairman or the Secretary before the meeting.

III. Formation of Committees of the Board and Election of Committee Chairmen

100/21 The Chairman informed members that there were two committees under CMPB, namely Country Parks Committee (CPC) and Marine Parks Committee (MPC). He referred members to the membership list of the two committees tabled at the meeting.

101/21 The Chairman advised that as an established practice, the Chairmen of the two committees would be elected by and from among members of the respective committees. The Chairman called for nominations for the chairmanship of the two committees one by one and presided over the election process. The election results were as follows:-

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chairman</u>
Country Parks Committee	Professor HE Shen-jing
Marine Parks Committee	Professor QIU Jian-wen

102/21 The membership list of CPC and MPC are at Annex I and Annex II respectively.

IV. Matters Arising

(a) Curriculum-based Outdoor Learning Programmes in Country Parks (Para. 58/21)

103/21 Mr Alfred WONG reported that AFCD commissioned the Education University of Hong Kong in October 2020 to conduct a consultancy study to design new curriculum-based outdoor learning programmes in country parks and develop the associated learning and teaching (L&T) resources for primary and secondary schools. Two L&T packages for senior primary students and two for senior secondary students were developed. In view of the half-day face-to-face class arrangement in primary schools, it was decided to postpone the introduction of the two L&T packages for senior primary students. Those for senior secondary schools would be rolled out in this academic year as scheduled.

V. Briefing on the Management of Country Parks and Marine Parks

104/21 With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Dr Jackie YIP briefed members on the responsibilities of the Authority, and then she gave members an overview of the functions, management and latest development of country parks, special areas, marine parks, marine reserve and geopark in Hong Kong.

105/21 The Chairman appreciated AFCD's efforts in the "Same Roots, Same Origins" Project. He enquired if AFCD had any plans to publish publications compiling the stories collected for the project. He also enquired the latest situation of illegal motorcycling activities at Kai Kung Leng, Lam Tsuen Country Park. Concerning the management of country parks, the Chairman advised that visitor surveys should be conducted to understand the service needs of visitors and improve the current management plans.

106/21 A member (Mr SO Kwok-yin, Ken) asked about the status of the proposed Robin's Nest Country Park (RNCP). Besides, he raised the issue of illegal feeding of wild animals in country parks. He saw signs of trail damages by wild pigs in Aberdeen Country Park recently. He asked how AFCD would tackle the problem.

107/21 Dr Jackie YIP responded that for the "Same Roots, Same Origins" Project on Ap Chau and Kat O, the gathered information were presented to the public through exhibitions at the respective Story Rooms and publications. AFCD would continue to explore opportunities to expand the project to other geopark communities and was prepared to publish more publications under the project. She noted the Chairman's suggestion of conducting visitor surveys, and she said that AFCD was conducting a consultancy study on visitor management on Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park, which involved interviews of stakeholders. The Department would draw on this experience and improve the management of country parks as necessary. In response to the question about the status of the proposed RNCP, Dr YIP said that preparation work was being carried out for the designation of the proposed country park. As regards the issues related to wild animals, she indicated that AFCD adopted a multipronged approach to address the nuisance caused by wild pigs to the public. The current measures included capture and contraceptive treatment of wild pigs, enforcement at feeding black spots, and promotion of "no feeding of wild animals" through public education programmes. The Department would continue to monitor the population of the species and strengthen the public education about "no feeding of wild animals".

(Ms YIP Yan-yan attended the meeting at this juncture.)

108/21 In response to the question about the latest situation of illegal motorcycling activities at Kai Kung Leng, Mr Alfred WONG said that such illegal activities had reduced noticeably. After the installation of surveillance cameras, illegal motorcycling was detected on

only one occasion so far. Nevertheless, AFCD would maintain close liaison with the Hong Kong Police Force in combating illegal motorcycling activities at Kai Kung Leng.

109/21 Regarding the Kat O Heritage Trail, a member (Ms CHAN Kwai-fun, Brenda) enquired in what forms the oral history would be presented to the public. Ms Y N CHAN responded that there were 27 interpretation panels along the Kat O Heritage Trail, each displayed a graphic accompanied by an introductory text. To learn more about the culture and history of Kat O, visitors could scan the QR code on the panel to listen to stories told by the villagers.

110/21 Another member (Professor HE Shen-jing) commended on the “Same Roots, Same Origins” Project and supported the expansion of it. She asked if the \$500 million set aside by the Government for carrying out enhancement works on facilities in country parks could be used to conduct more projects of this kind. Dr Jackie YIP said that as a UNESCO Global Geopark, Hong Kong Geopark stressed sustainable development and involvement of local communities. AFCD would continue to explore opportunities of collaboration with the local communities within the geopark. She clarified that the \$500 million funding support was set aside for the enhancement of country park facilities. Apart from the ongoing improvement of toilet facilities, AFCD was currently making initial planning for the implementation of various enhancement projects, such as providing glamping sites and open museums of wartime relics.

111/21 A member (Mr LAW Wing-fai, Teddy) asked if AFCD would monitor the number of users of hiking trails. Dr Jackie YIP responded that AFCD recorded the number of visitors to country parks, but not to individual hiking trails. She explained that it was difficult to count the number of hiking trail users because there were too many routes and the resources required for the monitoring was enormous. However, AFCD would collect such data in certain circumstances, such as for measuring the visitor flow in some popular places and evaluating the user conflicts between hikers and mountain bikers.

112/21 In response to a member’s (Mr YAU Yik-chung, Henry) comment on mobile phone coverage in country parks, Mr Alfred WONG indicated that the Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) had conducted a survey before about the coverage of mobile phone networks along hiking trails and found that most part of the hiking trails managed by AFCD were covered by mobile networks of at least one service provider. Recognising the needs of

hikers, AFCD would relay the views of hikers on mobile coverage to relevant parties where opportunity arose.

113/21 A member (Professor QIU Jian-wen) enquired how AFCD successfully persuaded the affected fishermen to support the new fisheries management strategy in marine parks. In response, Mr Alan CHAN said that under the new fisheries management strategy in marine parks, commercial fishing in four specified marine parks, namely Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park, Yan Chau Tong Marine Park and Tung Ping Chau Marine Park in the eastern waters and Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park in the western waters, would be banned starting from 1 April 2022. Fishermen affected by the commercial fishing ban in the four specified marine parks would be granted ex-gratia allowance (EGA). When calculating the EGA, AFCD had made reference to the formula for calculating EGA payable to fishermen affected by marine works projects resulting in a permanent loss of fishing grounds. Moreover, during the consultation with affected fishermen and other relevant fishermen representatives and organisations, AFCD had made great efforts in explaining the main objective of the new policy, which was to enhance management of marine parks and to facilitate the sustainable development of the local fisheries industry.

114/21 The Chairman also supported the expansion of the “Same Roots, Same Origins” Project and suggested that AFCD could cooperate more with the academia in this regard.

VI. Enhancement of Hiking Trails for Promoting Green Tourism (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/10/2021)

115/21 Ms Y N NGAR gave an opening remark to introduce the background of the Working Paper. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Charlie SHUE briefed members on the progress of the enhancement of hiking trails project in country parks for promoting green tourism in collaboration with the Tourism Commission (Working Paper WP/CMPB/10/2021).

116/21 A member (Mr LEE Yee-keung, Charles) was glad to see that hiking trails with war relics and cultural elements of Hong Kong were included in the Phase II project. He pointed out that some of the old pillboxes on the Luk Keng War Relics Trail were located on steep slopes. He advised AFCD to give attention to the safety of hikers when designing the route. Besides, he said that the entrance/ exit of some of the hiking trails were far away from bus and minibus stops. He suggested that information on the distance between the entrance/ exit of hiking trails

and the nearest bus and minibus stops should be provided to hikers, so that they would be able to make better preparation.

117/21 Regarding the trail from Pak Tam Chung to Tai Tun (Sai Kung West Country Park), a member (Mr LAW Wing-fai, Teddy) commented that the downhill section of the trail from Tai Tun was a bit dangerous as it was steep. He also commented that the trail had limited capacity. Therefore, he invited AFCD to explore ways to address the issue. As regards Lantau Trail Section 3 (Lantau South Country Park) and Tai To Yan (Lam Tsuen Country Park), he considered that enhancement of these two popular hiking trails might not be necessary. Resources should be used in repairing damaged trails and controlling soil erosion in some other trails instead. He also advised that construction of viewing platforms and large structures that had potential visual impact should be avoided as far as possible.

118/21 Concurring with other members on the importance of safety, a member (Ms YIP Yan-yan) advised that AFCD should ensure the trails in the Phase II project were safe and the war relics were in good structural condition. She noted that the interpretation panels with QR codes were installed on the trails in the Phase I project. She suggested that QR codes on the panels should direct visitors to a dedicated website that contained detailed information of the trail concerned, including its history. She also suggested that apart from text, relevant information should also be provided through audio clips. Regarding the Luk Keng War Relics Trail (Pat Sin Leng Country Park), she suggested extending the route to Lin Ma Hang Macintosh Forts.

119/21 Another member (Mr LO Pui-lam) said that the enhanced hiking trails would inevitably attract more visitors. He was concerned that the increased visitors might exceed the carrying capacity of the hiking trails and accelerate the trail degradation. He invited AFCD to find a solution to this potential problem and strike a balance carefully.

120/21 A member (Mr SO Kwok-yin, Ken) remarked that there should be many potential scenic viewpoints along the hiking trails. He suggested that AFCD should try to identify suitable places for creating scenic viewpoints and make them accessible through vegetation management such as trimming of overgrown trees. It would enhance the whole hiking route and reduce the gathering of crowd at the viewing platforms.

121/21 Concerning the carrying capacity of the hiking trails and viewing platforms, a member (Professor HE Shen-jing) suggested that AFCD could explore the possibility of installing real-time monitoring equipment on site. The data could be made available on AFCD's website, so that people could know if the hiking trails or viewing platforms they planned to visit were too crowded at the moment.

122/21 A member (Mr LEUNG Kin-wai, Ian) suggested that AFCD should collect visitors' feedback on the enhanced hiking trails in the Phase I project and take their comments into consideration when planning for future enhancement of hiking trails. Besides, he suggested that the QR codes on the interpretation panels should also direct visitors to information about the ecological characteristics of the trails, and pictures and videos of the flora and fauna they might encounter along the trail. The panels should also show photos of the scenic spots in beautiful weather conditions.

123/21 The Chairman asked AFCD to take note of member's suggestions.

124/21 Dr Jackie YIP thanked members for their comments and suggestions. She indicated that visitors' feedback on the enhanced hiking trails in the Phase I project had been collected through various channels and taken into account in planning the Phase II project. She agreed with members that safety of visitors were of crucial importance and that facilities should blend in well with the surrounding natural environment. She said that AFCD would pay attention to the safety issues, visitor management and potential visual impact of viewing platforms during the detailed planning stage. Moreover, she said that some trails in the Phase II project were quite long and/or difficult, such as the trail from Pak Tam Chung to Tai Tun (Sai Kung West Country Park). The Department would indicate clearly the difficulty level of these trails through publicity.

125/21 Concerning safety, Ms Y N NGAR indicated that the ten hiking trails in the Phase II project were hiking trails with tourism appeal potential within country parks. Some of the routes were still being explored and they would be carefully planned in order to lead people to the green attractions and war relics in a safe manner. Relevant experts would also be consulted to ensure the pillboxes (機槍堡) to be shown to the public were structurally sound. Regarding the problem of soil erosion on popular hiking trails, she said that AFCD would repair the degraded trail sections to prevent them from widening. Moreover, she clarified that one of the enhancement works was the improvement or addition of viewing points for appreciating

beautiful landscapes. Most viewing points were fairly simple, with railing or hard platform base constructed only when necessary.

126/21 The Chairman emphasised the importance of conservation of the war relics under the project. He also advised that the Dongjiang Column of the Guangdong People's Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Force played a significant role in the history of the War of Resistance Against Japan in Hong Kong. The enhancement projects concerned could cover war relics related to the Dongjiang Column. He suggested that AFCD could contact Professor LAU Chi-pang, JP of Lingnan University to acquire information about the relevant history and relics. Besides, he quoted the example of the late Professor Congzhou CHEN and said that many cultural elites had left footprints in the history of Hong Kong's country parks. He suggested that comprehensive researches on this area should be conducted to enable people to learn about the stories.

VII. Summary Report of Marine Parks Committee (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/11/2021)

127/21 As Professor LEUNG Mei-yee, Kenneth, JP, Chairman of the Marine Parks Committee for the term 2019 - 2021, had retired from the Committee, the Chairman invited Dr Jackie YIP to present the Summary Report of MPC on behalf of Professor LEUNG. Dr Jackie YIP briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/11/2021, which provided members with a summary of the issues discussed at the MPC meeting held on 15 July 2021. Members noted the Report.

VIII. Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/12/2021)

128/21 Dr Jackie YIP briefed members on the Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report for the period from 1 April to 31 July 2021 (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/12/2021). She said that summer was the low season for visitors. Besides, 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. Volunteer services were also suspended during the reporting period. Moreover, she informed members that in response to a member's suggestion in the last meeting, the visitor number of Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve and nearby areas was included in the report.

129/21 The Chairman asked why the Lions Nature Education Centre had a much higher

number of visitors than other visitor centres and if this successful model could be replicated in the management of other visitor centres. Besides, he asked if visitor facilities should be provided near Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve, as the statistics showed that quite many people visited the place while understanding that it was not intended to be a place for visitors. Dr YIP responded that Lions Nature Education Centre was well-known and could be easily accessible by transport. In addition, the centre was large and had a big outdoor space. These might be the reasons why it had a much higher number of visitors. She said that AFCD would refer to this successful model when developing the country park visitor hub at Pak Tam Chung. Regarding Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve, she explained that the area was protected for the purpose of conservation, scientific studies and education, and hence visits to the place should not be encouraged. AFCD would continue to monitor the visitor number and consider measures to address the issue in cooperation with the Swire Institute of Marine Science of The University of Hong Kong, which was located nearby, as necessary.

IX. Any Other Business

(a) Annual Field Visit 2021

130/21 Ms Y N NGAR briefed members on the proposed country parks and features to be visited in the Annual Board Visit 2021.

[Post-meeting note: The tentative date for the Board visit is 9 Dec 2021.]

131/21 Members did not raise any other business for discussion.

X. Date of Next Meeting

132/21 The Chairman informed members that the Secretary would inform them of the date of the next meeting in due course.

133/21 The meeting adjourned at 16:55 p.m.

– End –