

Country and Marine Parks Board (CMPB)
Confirmed Minutes of the 79th Meeting

Date	: 1 November 2022 (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

Mr. LAW Wing-fai, Teddy

Professor QIU Jian-wen

Mr. SO Kwok-yin, Ken

Mr. YAU Yik-chung, Henry

Mr. LO Pui-lam

Dr. LEUNG Siu-fai, JP

Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Mr. LAI Kin-ming, Mickey

Deputy Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Members Attended via Zoom Video Conferencing

Ms. CHAN Kwai-fun, Brenda

Professor HE Shen-jing

Mr. CHEUNG Siu-keung, MH

Dr. CHEUNG Ting-on, Lewis

Dr. CHUI Pui-yi, Apple

Dr. LEE Nam-yuk, Amelia, MH

Mr. LEUNG Kin-wai, Ian

Mr. WONG Lap-kei, Alex

Ms. YIP Yan-yan

Mr. YU Hon-kwan, Randy, MH, JP

Ms. CHEUNG Mei-yee, Vivian, JP	Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2), Home Affairs Department
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Ms. CHAN Suet-ching, Angela	Assistant Director of Lands (Specialist 2), Lands Department
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Mr. LUK Chi-kwong	Assistant Director (Leisure Services) ³ , Leisure and Cultural Services Department
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Mr. LAI Chi-tung, JP	Assistant Director of Marine/Port Control, Marine Department
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Ms. CHAN Cheuk Ling, Kathy	Senior Town Planner/New Territories District Planning Division Headquarters 1, Planning Department
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Mr. WAN Chin-man, Davis	Senior Engineer/Planning Policy 1 (Acting), Water Supplies Department
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Secretary

Ms. CHEUNG Man-lee, Lily	Assistant Secretary (Boards) ¹ (Acting), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
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IN ATTENDANCE

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)

Dr. Jackie YIP	Assistant Director (Country and Marine Parks)
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Ms. CHAN Yu-nam	Senior Geopark Officer
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Ms. LI Wai-hung, Louise	Senior Marine Parks Officer
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Ms. NGAR Yuen-ngor	Senior Country Parks Officer (Management 2)
Mr. WONG Kwong-chiu, Alfred	Senior Country Parks Officer (Ranger Services 1)
Ms. TSANG Kit-man, Francis	Country Parks Ranger Services Officer (Education)
Mr. YEUNG Fai-fai	Country Parks Officer (Enhancement Projects 2)

ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES

Professor HUI Cheuk-kuen, Desmond

Dr. LAW Man-yee, Caroline

Mr. LEE Yee-keung, Charles

Ms. YU Pik-fan, Vriko

Mr. CHEUNG Wai-hung, Tony	Assistant Director (Nature Conservation) (Acting), Environmental Protection Department
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OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

84/22 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Mr. WAN Chin-man, Davis, Senior Engineer/Planning Policy 1 (Acting), Water Supplies Department who attended the meeting for the first time.

85/22 The Chairman informed members that, as an established practice, audio recording would be made during the meeting to facilitate the taking of minutes. It would be destroyed after the confirmation of the minutes.

86/22 The Chairman reminded members attending via Zoom to press the “raise hand” button on Zoom to raise questions and comments.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. Confirmation of Minutes of the 78th Meeting held on 7 June 2022

87/22 The minutes of the 78th meeting held on 7 June 2022 were confirmed without

amendment.

II. Matters Arising

Promotion of Hiking Etiquette in Country Parks (Para. 7/22 to 27/22)

88/22 With a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. TSANG Kit-man, Francis reported on the promotion of hiking etiquette in country parks, including the “Clean Country Park, You have a Share” campaign echoing the Government-wide Programme on Tackling Hygiene Black Spots. Highlights of the promotional activities organised to remind the public of the proper behaviours in the countryside were reported in the meeting. Mr. WONG Kwong-chiu, Alfred thanked the partner organisations for their support in the programmes.

89/22 In response to the enquiry from a member, Dr. Jackie YIP answered that the visitor centres for country parks and marine parks had been reopened. The Government had announced the reopening of the country park barbecue sites on 3 November 2022. As for campsites, they remained temporarily closed.

III. Preparation of Draft Map for the Proposed Robin’s Nest Country Park (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/8/2022)

90/22 With a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. YEUNG Fai-fai briefed members on the preparation of a draft map for the proposed Robin’s Nest Country Park (RNCP).

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

91/22 A member supported to proceed with the designation of the proposed RNCP as soon as possible. He remarked that some locations adjacent to the proposed area were rich in historical and ecological value and asked if the AFCD would consider other conservation measures for these areas. He also enquired if the boundary would be reviewed and expanded in the long run. Concerning the management plan, he asked if there would be any indicator to evaluate the effectiveness of the management measures on nature conservation, such as the effectiveness of the ecological corridor to preserve and protect ecological resources.

92/22 A member supported to proceed with the designation of the proposed RNCP as shown in the draft map as quickly as possible. He remarked that the proposed boundary

differed from the proposal submitted by the green groups in 2019 and suggested that the AFCD should maintain dialogue with the green groups and brief them on the conservation measures for the locations outside the proposed boundary. He asked the AFCD to introduce the visitor facilities at the Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine Cave in the coming meetings.

93/22 Another member supported the proposed boundary delineation. He advised the AFCD to maintain communication with stakeholders and review the feasibility of expanding the proposed RNCP in the long run.

94/22 Dr. Jackie YIP thanked members for their support and said it would be pragmatic to proceed with the current proposal to designate the proposed RNCP as soon as possible. For the areas outside the proposed boundary, the AFCD would consider different conservation approaches and maintain communication with stakeholders on relevant matters. The effectiveness of the management measures in conserving the ecological corridor would be evaluated scientifically.

95/22 Dr. LEUNG Siu-fai, JP supplemented that the AFCD had fully considered the advice and suggestions provided by members and the green groups in the past three years and had subsequently adjusted the proposed boundary. The proposal excluded village environs, permitted burial grounds and private lands, balancing the villagers' opinions and the conservation needs. As for the areas outside the proposed country park, he agreed that the boundary could be reviewed in the long run.

96/22 A member concurred that the proposal was realistic and remarked that continuous dialogue between the Government and the village stakeholders could benefit nature conservation on the whole.

97/22 A member agreed it was practical to designate the proposed RNCP with the current proposal. She also suggested the AFCD to collaborate with villagers on heritage and cultural conservation. She recommended the AFCD to collaborate with local organisations interested in local mining history, as well as the villagers, to conserve the lead mine cave. She also asked about the management measures of the lead mine cave during the gap period between the preparation phase and the actual designation.

98/22 A member agreed to the designation proposal. She remarked that the proposed RNCP and the Wutongshan of Shenzhen were interconnected. She enquired if the establishment of stakeholder relationship included the Shenzhen counterparts.

99/22 Dr. Jackie YIP thanked members for their comments and said that the AFCD would explore collaboration with relevant organisations to conserve the industrial heritage of Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine Cave. The AFCD had already been repairing some damaged trails to ensure hikers' safety and conserve the natural environment in view of the growing popularity of the proposed RNCP after the opening of the Frontier Closed Area. Public education about the proposed country park would continue. The AFCD also maintained a close relationship with the management authority of the Wutongshan Scenic Area and exchanged information about the management of the natural environment and visitors.

100/22 A member advised the AFCD to conduct visitor management studies of the proposed RNCP to collect visitor data which would serve as a reference and would benefit the management of all country parks.

101/22 The Chairman supported designating the proposed RNCP as early as possible. He complimented the AFCD on the traffic review to supplement the proposal. He suggested to roll out the public education campaign about hiking etiquette as soon as practicable, as the news of the designation proposal would attract an influx of hikers. He recommended building a new pedestrian walkway from Ha Tam Shui Hang via Shan Tsui Village Road to the proposed RNCP entrance and suggested that the AFCD identify appropriate locations to build public toilet facilities. He was glad to see that the AFCD had started maintaining the trails because the current condition of some trails was not ideal for hiking.

102/22 Dr. Jackie YIP said the preparation work before the designation involved collaborations with relevant departments and the AFCD would closely work with them.

103/22 Ms. NGAR Yuen-ngor supplemented that the AFCD had installed a few infra-red visitor counters at the major entrances of the proposed RNCP to collect visitor data since 2019. The data was useful in visitor management and planning for supporting facilities. As for the transition period after gazetting the draft map, any new development proposal inside the area had to be agreed by the AFCD. She acknowledged the suggestion of the Chairman to roll out public education campaigns as soon as practicable.

104/22 The Chairman summarised that all members supported publishing the draft map of the proposed RNCP. He asked the AFCD to introduce the details of Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine Cave revitalisation project in the coming Country Parks Committee.

IV. Preparation for the Revalidation of Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/9/2022)

105/22 With a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. CHAN Yu-nam briefed members on the ongoing preparation work for the revalidation of Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark (HKUGGp).

106/22 The Chairman asked about the validity period and the assessment criteria of the renewal of UNESCO Global Geopark (UGGp) status. He enquired whether there was any challenge so far which could hinder the renewal.

107/22 Ms. CHAN Yu-nam answered that each renewal of UGGp status would normally last for four years. The revalidation included submitting a self-evaluation by the geopark on four focus areas, namely education, geotourism, sustainable development and local engagement, as well as networking. Afterwards, the UGGp Secretariat would assign two evaluators to carry out a revalidation mission to the geopark. The AFCD had completed the self-evaluation for this revalidation cycle and identified no major challenge.

108/22 A member enquired if the AFCD would enhance the promotion of geopark to inbound travellers to Hong Kong through the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (HKETO) abroad.

109/22 Ms. CHAN Yu-nam answered that the promotion of HKUGGp to overseas travellers had been done through the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), for example through its Great Outdoors campaign. A selection of HKUGGp videos was currently featured on the Facebook of some HKETOs, and the AFCD would continue to explore appropriate HKETO channels for promotion.

110/22 A member enquired about the capacity of HKUGGp and how large number of visitors would be handled.

111/22 A member enquired about the cultural heritage conservation done in the villages. She enquired if there was any collaboration plan to synergise with the Countryside Conservation Office (CCO).

112/22 The Chairman appreciated the story rooms that presented history and geology interestingly and engagingly. He asked if any expert from the Government or other local organisations would be deployed as evaluators by the UGGp Secretariat in conducting revalidation missions for geoparks in other places.

113/22 Ms. CHAN Yu-nam replied that the AFCD had been promoting sustainable tourism and educating the public to protect the countryside. Tour routes such as Kat O Heritage Trail were carefully designed to divert visitors to suitable sites away from the village areas. To minimise visitor impacts on local communities, geopark guides promoted the guidelines for visiting geopark in kaitos, and the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong assisted in disseminating the messages to tour guides. Banners were also put up in prominent locations at the piers and village areas. Concerning the conservation of village culture, the AFCD kept close contact with the CCO. Although the focus of the HKUGGp was sustainable tourism, the AFCD was open to collaborating with external parties on projects to conserve village culture further. In addition, she said that the AFCD had planned to contribute to the Global Geoparks Network by assisting in the revalidation mission of other geoparks.

114/22 Dr. Jackie YIP supplemented that the AFCD had promoted 12 geosites with suggested routes. They could divert visitors to different parts of the Hong Kong Geopark with a view to avoiding over-crowding at a particular spot. Also, the transportation had been carefully planned, balancing the accessibility to and the capacity of some locations.

115/22 Dr. LEUNG Siu-fai, JP added that the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the promotion and networking programmes of the geopark. The AFCD had tried to maintain networking efforts through alternative means such as online events and webinars. The routine promotion work would be resumed following the subsiding of the COVID-19 pandemic. He highlighted that local participation and close collaboration with the villagers were the keys to the successful management of geopark and also country parks.

116/22 The Chairman was glad to see the preparation work done by the AFCD and appealed again for contributing local experts to participate the revalidation mission.

**V. Summary Report of Country Parks Committee
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/10/2022)**

117/22 Professor HE Shenjing, Chairperson of the Country Parks Committee (CPC), briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/10/2022, which provided a summary of the issues discussed at the CPC meeting held on 24 June 2022. Members noted the report.

**VI. Summary Report of Marine Parks Committee
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/11/2022)**

118/22 Professor Qiu Jian-wen, Chairperson of the Marine Parks Committee (MPC), briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/11/2022, which provided a summary of the issues discussed at the MPC meeting held on 9 September 2022.

119/22 A member enquired about the change in the number of Chinese White Dolphins in Hong Kong waters.

120/22 Dr. Jackie YIP said that the monitoring figures of Chinese White Dolphins were available on the AFCD website. A relatively low figure of 37 was recorded in Hong Kong waters in 2020, and the survey in recent years demonstrated a downward trend in the number of the species.

**VII. Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/12/2022)**

121/22 Dr. Jackie YIP reported on the Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report from 1 May to 30 September 2022 (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/12/2022). Visitor centres were operating as usual but education activities in country parks were suspended until late August 2022 when the volunteer activities resumed following the relaxation of

social-distancing measures. She also highlighted the increase in the facilities installed in marine parks as a result of the designation of the South Lantau Marine Park in late June 2022.

122/22 The Chairman asked if the AFCD had encountered any difficulty in managing the newly designated South Lantau Marine Park.

123/22 Dr. Jackie YIP replied that the management measures of the newly designated marine park were being implemented with good progress. The AFCD had enhanced awareness of marine parks through public education on social media and targeted promotion to stakeholders such as fishermen and recreational fishing groups. Processing of fishing permits was slightly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2022 but had proceeded smoothly after the subsiding of the pandemic. The enforcement team had been conducting patrols and monitoring activities in the area.

124/22 A member enquired about the further action taken for the 228 offences in country parks.

125/22 Mr. WONG Kwong-chiu, Alfred replied that the progress report recorded the number of enforcement cases in country parks in the report period. The AFCD will conduct investigation and institute prosecution if there was sufficient evidence.

126/22 A member enquired about the number of illegal camping enforced since the campsite closure. He also asked when the campsite would be reopened.

127/22 The Chairman asked if there was illegal mercy release activity in country parks.

128/22 Dr. Jackie YIP responded that there were over 1 900 cases of illegal camping in country parks since the closure of campsites. She acknowledged the public demand for country park campsites and stated that the campsites were closed as part of the Government's overall anti-epidemic strategy. The Government would closely monitor the latest development of the epidemic situation and review the social distancing measures, including the closure of campsites in country parks.

129/22 Mr. WONG Kwong-chiu, Alfred replied that there had been some mercy release activities in some country parks in past years. In tackling the issue, the AFCD had taken measures such as educating through the Department's publicity channels, hanging up banners, patrolling at known mercy release locations in country parks and conducting joint operations with the departments concerned such as the Water Supplies Department.

130/22 A member remarked that wild animals were illegally caught in country parks for sale in the market. He asked if the AFCD could brief members on the issue.

131/22 Dr. Jackie YIP replied that the issue involved illegal hunting as well as the possession and sale of protected species. Relevant teams of the AFCD had been investigating and taking follow-up actions against the suspected offences. The AFCD had been working with local researchers and NGOs on intelligence exchange, enhancing patrols in country parks and conducting special joint operations.

132/22 A member enquired about public transportation arrangements to marine parks, especially on public holidays.

133/22 Ms. LI Wai-hung, Louise responded that there were seven marine parks in Hong Kong. The marine parks in the western waters were relatively remote and had low public transportation accessibility. Those in the eastern waters could be accessed by public transportation. The public piers at Tung Ping Chau and Yan Chau Tong would undergo enhancement works by the Civil Engineering and Development Department to enhance capacity and safety. The AFCD had been conducting visitor surveys to collect data for possible sharing with stakeholders such as vessel operators for better planning of transportation provision and to the general public for planning their journeys.

VIII. Any Other Business

(a) Annual Board Visit 2022

134/22 Ms. CHEUNG Man-lee, Lily informed members that the annual board visit in 2022 would be held on 20 December 2022. The themes of this year would be the management measures and facilities of the new South Lantau Marine Park as well as the venue management, visitor services and trail maintenance of the Mui Wo Mountain Bike Practice Ground. She said that details of the visit would be disseminated to members by email after the meeting.

(b) Others

135/22 The Chairman asked if the AFCD's YouTube channel would collaborate with overseas channels such as the National Geographic, Discovery Channel and local organisations conserving local cultures to make videos to tell the good stories of Hong Kong.

136/22 Dr. Jackie YIP thanked the Chairman for the suggestion. She would consider it when planning for the promotion campaign.

137/22 Dr. LEUNG Siu-fai, JP said that HKUGGp had been featured in the Chinese National Geography. The AFCD would proactively collaborate with other channels to promote Hong Kong Geopark overseas and, in parallel, continue to promote its social media channels to raise awareness among the local population.

IX. Date of Next Meeting

138/22 The Chairman informed members that the Secretary would announce the next meeting date in due course.

139/22 The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

– End –