

**Endangered Species Advisory Committee
Confirmed Minutes of Meeting**

Date : 7 April 2006 (Friday)
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Room 701, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Headquarters

Attendance

Chairman

Dr TAM Wing-kun, B.B.S., JP

Members

Mr CHIU Ching-cheung

Dr Craig Kirkpatrick

Mr LI Ying-sang, M.H., JP

Dr Alice LUI SO Yee-lai

Prof. SHAW Pang-chui

Dr Paul SHIN Kam-shing

Mr Thomas WONG Kwok-fun

Mr C.C. LAY	Assistant Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (Conservation)
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Mr KO Chi-lok	Acting Assistant Commissioner of Customs and Excise (Boundary and Ports)
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Miss Christina CHONG	Senior Administrative Officer (Conservation Division) 2, Environmental Protection Department
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Secretary

Ms Jenny WONG	Assistant Secretary (Boards)1, AFCD
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In Attendance

AFCD

Mr CHEUNG Chi-sun	Senior Endangered Species Protection Officer
Miss Pauline TONG	Endangered Species Protection Officer/Enforcement
Mr KWAN Sai-ping	Endangered Species Protection Officer/Licensing 1
Miss CHAN Yu-nam	Endangered Species Protection Officer/Licensing 2

Absent with Apologies

Prof. Kelvin CHAN Kam-chuen

Dr SUN Mei

Prof. TONG Yao

Mr WONG Hing-keung

Mrs Stella HUNG, JP Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Opening Remarks by the Chairman

01/06 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular, Mr KO Chi-lok, Acting Assistant Commissioner (Boundary and Ports) of Customs & Excise Department and Ms Jenny WONG, Secretary of the Committee, who attended the meeting for the first time.

Agenda Items

I. Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 8 September 2005

02/06 The minutes of the last meeting held on 8 September 2005 were confirmed without amendments.

II. Matters Arising from the Last Meeting

(a) Education and Publicity Programme 2004 – 2005 (Para. 59/05)

03/06 Regarding education and publicity programme in 2004-05, Miss CHAN Yu-nam reported that two activities including a traders seminar and an identification training course had been organized in late 2005 under the Hong Kong / Guangdong Joint Education and Publicity

Programme. Miss CHAN advised that more details about the publicity works would be given under agenda item IV.

(b) A Bill to Amend the Ordinance on Protection of Endangered Species (Para. 60/05)

04/06 Mr CHEUNG Chi-sun recapitulated that the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Bill (the Bill) was introduced to the Legislative Council on 27 April 2005. He advised that the Bills Committee, having conducted nine meetings, had proposed some amendments to the Bill. Details of the proposed amendments were set out in Committee Paper CP/ESAC/1/2006 which would be covered under agenda item III. Mr CHEUNG continued by informing Members that the Bill was passed by the Legislative Council on 1 March 2006 and the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (the Ordinance) was gazetted on 10 March 2006. The meeting further noted that AFCDC was now in the process of preparing the drafts of the exemption orders and the new Ordinance was expected to take effect in 2006.

**III. Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance
(Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/1/2006)**

05/06 Mr KWAN Sai-ping presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/1/2006 which updated Members about the process of the legislative amendment and the enactment of the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance. He informed the meeting that, after studying the Bill, the Bills Committee had proposed a number of amendments to the Bill as listed in the Committee Paper. The relevant clauses and provisions of the Bill were subsequently revised to address the concerns of the Bills Committee. The Bill was passed by the Legislative Council and the Ordinance was gazetted on 1 March 2006 and 10 March 2006 respectively. Mr KWAN further advised that the new Ordinance would be enacted on a date to be appointed by the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works by notice published in the gazette, which was tentatively scheduled for 2006. Members noted the contents of the document.

**IV. Education and Publicity Work in 2006
(Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/2/2006)**

06/06 Miss CHAN Yu-nam presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/2/2006. She informed Members of the proposed education and publicity work on endangered species protection in 2006. Among other things, the meeting noted that a series of publicity work including briefings, seminars, workshops, advertisement, publication, etc. would be conducted to tie in with the implementation of the new Ordinance. To further enhance the publicity effect to

traders, Miss CHAN said that AFCD would also seek opportunities to publish articles in newsletters issued by traders' associations. She appealed to Members who could offer support in this respect to contact her for arrangement.

07/06 Miss CHAN Yu-nam mentioned that the joint education and publicity programme between Hong Kong SAR and Guangdong Province would continue. Among other things, AFCD would discuss with the Guangdong authority to consider holding the traders seminar in Hong Kong this year.

08/06 A member commended AFCD's efforts in education and publicity activities which were very effective in promoting public awareness of protection of endangered species. As one of the adjudicators of the radio play competition held in Ngau Chi Wan Civic Centre in 2005, she said that the event was well received by participants including students, parents and teachers. Regarding the latest advertisement on public transport concerning implementation of the new Ordinance, she opined that the wordings were a bit too long and suggested that the design of the advertisement might be further fine-tuned to enhance its attractiveness. The member also encouraged AFCD to upkeep its publicity efforts.

09/06 A member noted that about 8,000 visitors had visited the Endangered Species Resource Centre (ESRC) in 2005. He asked whether the visitors were mainly students or the public. Miss CHAN Yu-nam answered that the visitors were mostly students from kindergarten, primary and secondary schools. She added that community centres were the major visiting groups during summer holiday.

10/06 A member enquired if publicity programmes for students would be sustained in 2006. Mr CHEUNG Chi-sun replied that AFCD's publicity works in 2006 would focus on promulgation of the new Ordinance in light of its anticipated enactment within the year. Mr C.C. LAY supplemented that the department would organize educational activities for students in the next school term commencing September 2006.

11/06 A member enquired, apart from briefings and seminars, whether pamphlets and enquiry hotline were available to facilitate traders in understanding the requirements under the new Ordinance. Mr CHEUNG Chi-sun responded that a new pamphlet highlighting the requirements would be produced to facilitate traders to acquaint with the new control. Apart from seeking assistance from traders' associations to distribute the pamphlets, AFCD would explore if other organizations such as power companies and banks could assist in the circulation by enclosing the pamphlets together with the electricity bills or bank statements for distribution to the public. Mr CHEUNG said that information on the new Ordinance had been provided on AFCD's website. Members of the public could also dial '1823' to reach the Government's hotline to make enquiries about the new Ordinance. If operators of '1823' were unable to give answers or information to the callers, the calls would be referred to AFCD for further handling. Besides, contact details of AFCD's subject officers were given in the circular letters issued to traders. As such, traders might directly contact the concerned subject officers for further enquiries, where necessary.

12/06 The member welcomed the idea of holding the traders seminar in Hong Kong. He said that the traders seminar had been held in Shenzhen in the past years. It would be encouraging if the seminar would be held in Hong Kong this year. Mr CHEUNG assured that AFCD would further discuss with the Guangdong authority to work out the detailed arrangements.

**V. Report on Workshops and Training
(Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/3/2006)**

13/06 Miss Pauline TONG presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/3/2006. Among other things, she informed the meeting that, in the last 6 months, AFCD had organized a CITES training course for officials of Laos and Macao SAR, and a Hong Kong Humphead Wrasse Workshop for government officials, traders and non-governmental organizations. In addition, AFCD's officers had attended a training workshop in Guangdong and a training attachment in Harbin, China. For the planned programmes in 2006, Members noted that a training course on implementation of CITES would be organized for Chinese officials in May 2006 and an International Humphead Wrasse Workshop would be held in June 2006.

14/06 A member expressed appreciation to AFCD for the leadership it placed in Humphead Wrasse works. He also commended that AFCD was a leader in organizing training programmes in relation to CITES works not just in Hong Kong and South China but also reaching out to the entire Asian region. Mr CHEUNG Chi-sun supplemented that AFCD played an active role in CITES works over the years. The efforts of Hong Kong SAR had been recognized by CITES Secretariat and other Management Authorities. By virtue of Hong Kong SAR's experience and good work in endangered species protection, he said that Hong Kong SAR had been representing China to be Chairman or Vice-chairman of a number of working groups under CITES, and was also invited to take part in different international workshops and training programmes.

15/06 A member enquired whether it would be difficult for traders to comply with the new regulations concerning Humphead Wrasse and would publicity be made to bring the public's attention that Humphead Wrasse had been newly included for control. Mr CHEUNG Chi-sun answered that challenges might be encountered upon implementation of control of this newly listed coral fish species. In this respect, workshop would be organized to allow concerned parties to exchange views and to work out a commonly acceptable mode of control. Given that the new regulation would take effect a few months later, continuous efforts would be made to enhance publicity and collaboration with concerned parties to facilitate smooth implementation of the new regulation.

16/06 The Chairman praised AFCD's efforts in workshops and training works. He hoped that the department would continue its efforts on this front to share Hong Kong SAR's experience with other countries and areas.

VI. Summary Progress Report of CITES Work (Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/4/2006)

17/06 Miss Pauline TONG presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/4/2006 which reported AFCD's work in relation to CITES during the period from 1 August 2005 to 31 January 2006. She highlighted a number of significant cases involving import and transit of endangered species without licences for Members' attention.

18/06 A member noticed that 344 grams of American Ginseng roots were donated to local schools for education purpose during the period. The member remarked the importance of giving the students the correct message that American Ginseng was in fact not a kind of endangered species. American Ginseng was listed as scheduled species because it was difficult to distinct wild ginseng from artificially propagated ginseng. A permit was thus required under CITES to prove that the ginseng concerned was artificially propagated. Mr CHEUNG advised that in releasing the specimen to schools, AFCD would provide the concerned schools with particulars of the specimen to be displayed together with the specimen. Students were also encouraged to visit the Endangered Species Resource Centre in order to gain a better understanding of endangered species and the specimen concerned.

19/06 A member opined that schools allocated with specimen were obligated to ensure that the specimen received was kept in good custody. The member also enquired if inspections would be made to these schools. Mr CHEUNG Chi-sun answered that AFCD scheduled to pay annual inspection to these schools. Nevertheless, as staff from inspection team had been deployed to assist processing of the increased applications of certificate and licence, inspections to schools could not be conducted as scheduled. Mr CHEUNG added that inspections to schools would be conducted in accordance with the schedule as far as resources permitted.

20/06 A member enquired if a reporting system between Mainland and Hong Kong SAR was in place to facilitate exchange of information on interception of endangered species in Mainland smuggled from Hong Kong SAR. Mr CHEUNG Chi-sun answered that an informal notification system between AFCD and Guangdong Province had been maintained. The department would liaise with the Mainland CITES Authority to formalize the notification system to further enhance information exchange.

VII. Serving the Community - Service Standards Committee 22nd Monitoring Report
(Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/5/2006)

21/06 Miss CHAN Yu-nam presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/5/2006. Members noted that the department had met all the performance targets which came under the jurisdiction of Endangered Species Advisory Committee during the period from 1 July 2005 to 31 December 2005 through internal redeployment.

VIII. Any Other Business

22/06 Members had no other business to discuss.

IX. Date of Next Meeting

23/06 The Chairman said that members would be informed of the date of next meeting in due course.

24/06 The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

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