

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

Date : 1 February 2013 (Friday)  
Time : 2:30 p.m.  
Venue : Room 701, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)  
Headquarters

**Attendance**

Chairman

Dr Paul SHIN Kam-shing

Members

Ms CHAN Chiu-ling, Ophelia, BBS

Mr CHAN Wing-suen

Dr Kenneth LEUNG Mei-yee

Ms Erica LO Lai-shan

Ms WONG Siu-ling, Gabriella, MH

Ms YU Li-hua

Professor ZHAO Zhong-zhen

Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP                      Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Mr Y K CHAN    Assistant Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and  
Conservation (Conservation)

Ms Sian LI     Senior Administrative Officer (Nature Conservation)  
Environmental Protection Department

Secretary

Mr Patrick TSANG                                      Assistant Secretary (Boards)1, AFCD

**In Attendance**

AFCD

Mr Patrick LAI	Senior Endangered Species Protection Officer
Mr Alfred WONG	Endangered Species Protection Officer/Enforcement
Dr Azaria WONG	Endangered Species Protection Officer/Licensing 1
Ms Phoebe SZE	Endangered Species Protection Officer/Licensing 2

### **Absent with Apologies**

Dr CHIU Sein-tuck

Professor CHU Lee-man

Mr TSANG Kwok-keung

Mr YU Koon-hing, CDSM, CMSM Assistant Commissioner (Boundary and Ports),  
Customs & Excise Department

(A group photo was taken for ESAC members at the beginning of the meeting)

### **OPENING REMARKS**

1/13 The Chairman welcomed all members to the first meeting of the new term, in particular, five new members, Ms CHAN Chiu-ling, Ophelia, BBS; Mr CHAN Wing-suen; Ms WONG Siu-ling, Gabriella, MH; Ms YU Li-hua; and Professor ZHAO Zhong-zhen, who attended the meeting for the first time.

2/13 The Chairman introduced members and government representatives to each other. He also took the opportunity to thank five retired members, Mrs Justina LEUNG NGAI Mou-yin, JP; Professor Albert LEUNG Wing-nang; Ms Katherine MA Miu-wah; Mr TSANG Sau-yuen; as well as Mr Thomas WONG Cheung-chi for their contribution to the Committee.

3/13 The Chairman informed members that, as an established practice, to facilitate the taking of meeting minutes, sound recording would be made during the meeting. The audio records would be destroyed after the meeting minutes had been confirmed.

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **I. Declaration of Interests and Transparency Measures**

4/13 Mr Y K CHAN briefed members on the guidelines on declaration of interests and transparency measures.

5/13 Members noted the guidelines on declaration of interests and transparency measures.

### **II. Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 7 August 2012**

6/13 The minutes of the last meeting held on 7 August 2012 were confirmed without amendments.

### **III. Matters Arising from the Last Meeting**

#### **(a) Disposal of Forfeited Ivory (Para. 55/12 to 67/12)**

7/13 Mr Alfred WONG reported that the department had taken the advice of the Committee to strengthen the donation of specimens of endangered species to schools for education purposes. AFCD launched an “Endangered Species Specimen Donation Programme” and produced a leaflet for distribution to schools in December 2012. The Programme was well received by schools and, by end of January 2013 over 170 schools had indicated their interest to the department. Arrangement was being made for donation of specimens of endangered species to about 130 schools which already had suitable facilities with adequate security measures for storing or displaying the donated specimens. The department had also given advice to other schools for improving their facilities so as to meet the security standards of the department. He pointed out that though the donation would help reduce the quantity of stockpiled ivory, it might not be able to exhaust the stockpile since each school could only receive a small quantity of ivory.

8/13 Mr Y K CHAN supplemented that AFCD was committed to the safe custody of the forfeited ivory and had been exploring appropriate means of disposal in accordance with the CITES guidelines, including donation to interested organizations for conservation and

education purposes. He highlighted that disposal of ivory by way of incineration would not be explored further for the time being.

**IV. CITES 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16) – Proposals to Amend the Appendices and Annotations (Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/1/2013)**

9/13 Mr Patrick LAI presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/1/2013.

10/13 A member suggested that AFCD should explore the establishment of a database of DNA sequence with other Parties because a lot of species might not be found in Hong Kong. If DNA sequence of all species were stored in the gene bank, gene sequencing would be a very convenient and quick test for identification of species because current machine was a desktop device and could produce the results within one day. As a result, the Parties would work well together in law enforcement. He also proposed that AFCD should acquire equipment of DNA sequencing for law enforcement and research purposes.

11/13 Mr Patrick LAI responded that the gene database had already stored information of the 5 shark species under current proposal. He said that the department had given shark fins to local tertiary institutions and commercial laboratories for DNA test for identification of shark species. The preliminary conclusion was that local institutions and laboratories were able to identify shark species by DNA test; however, the turnaround time might be longer than 24 hours. He highlighted that the test must be rapid enough to screen out the suspected specimens for enforcement purposes.

12/13 Dr Azaria WONG supplemented that the turnaround time was about one week for a few samples, and it might take 2-3 weeks for a large sample size according to the previous study.

13/13 The member remarked that the test could be quickened by optimization process and it could also be performed for carcass components of turtles such as turtleback.

14/13 Mr Y K CHAN advised that the proponents were obliged to provide a practicable method to other parties for implementation of their proposals in accordance with the practice of

the CITES. In light of the above, the proponents of proposal 42-44, including USA, provided the identification method in which morphological features of shark fins were employed but not DNA test. He also pointed out that the adoption of a proposal hinged on the difficulty in law enforcement and identification among other considerations; hence, law enforcement and identification issues might be two major topics at the meeting.

15/13 A member replied to Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP's enquiry that the turtle species used in processing turtle jelly should refer to Pharmacopoeia of the People's Republic of China (中華人民共和國藥典) which had legal status. A member agreed to the member's views that expensive Chinese three-striped box turtle (金錢龜) had been replaced by Reeves' turtle (草龜) in processing turtle jelly.

**V. Summary Progress Report of CITES Work  
(Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/2/2013)**

16/13 Mr Alfred WONG and Ms Phoebe SZE presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/2/2013 on AFCD's work in relation to CITES implementation in Hong Kong from 1 July to 31 December 2012.

17/13 A member praised for AFCD's exhibition in the 2012 International Conference & Exhibition of the Modernization of Chinese Medicine and Health Products (ICMCM) and suggested AFCD to continue participating in the 2013 ICMCM again.

18/13 In response to Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP's suggestion of donation of confiscated specimens of endangered species to local tertiary institutions, a member replied that he would consult his colleagues on receiving and displaying donated specimens in a museum of School of Biological Sciences of University of Hong Kong (HKU). He would also discuss the donation with HKU students organizations. However, he was of the view that it would not be safe to display donated specimens at classrooms which did not have adequate security measures.

19/13 A member agreed to the member's view that it had difficulty in displaying donated specimens at classrooms. He said there were Dr. & Mrs. Hung Hin Shiu Museum of Chinese Medicine (香港浸會大學孔憲紹博士伉儷中醫藥博物館) and The Bank of China (Hong Kong) Chinese Medicines Centre (香港浸會大學中國銀行(香港)中藥標本中心) (BCCMC)

in Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), and AFCD could consider donation of specimens to the BCCMC. He also suggested that AFCD could consider a joint thematic exhibition with the BCCMC around August 2013, highlighting the use of endangered species in traditional Chinese medicines.

20/13 The Chairman suggested that AFCD could also contact other local tertiary institutions for donation of confiscated specimens, apart from HKU and HKBU. Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP welcomed his suggestion and remarked that AFCD would write to the Registrar of individual institution accordingly.

21/13 In response to a member's enquiry on donation of confiscated specimens to Mainland China, Mr Y K CHAN replied that upon the request of the Chinese CITES Authority, a list of confiscated endangered species specimens was given to them for potential use in training and scientific research in China. The Mainland authority said that they might not be able to receive forfeited ivory from Hong Kong due to significant quantity of stockpiled ivory on hand.

(Dr Kenneth LEUNG Mei-yea left the meeting at this juncture)

## **VI. Education and Publicity (Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/3/2013)**

22/13 Mr Patrick LAI presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/3/2013.

23/13 A member proposed that AFCD could contact uniformed organizations, including The Scout Association of Hong Kong (SCHK), to promote endangered species protection through badge-awarding courses.

24/13 In response to a member's enquiries, Mr Patrick LAI said that the import of live orchids from other countries, like Thailand, was regulated through a permit system under the CITES. Apart from the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586), plants with soil from other places, except any place in China outside Hong Kong, were also regulated by Plant (Importation and Pest Control) Ordinance (Cap. 207). He explained to the member that the publicity on licensing requirements on import of orchids was arranged in MTR East Rail and border control points because most of the prosecution cases

were taken against import of orchids from Mainland China. He supplemented that similar publicity activities were also conducted in Hong Kong International Airport.

25/13 Mr Patrick LAI responded to a member's enquiry that the import and export of Dendrobium (石斛), being one of the genera of orchid, was regulated through a permit system under the CITES.

26/13 A member suggested that AFCD could cooperate with the travel industry to teach import and export regulation of endangered species in the compulsory course "Knowledge on Hong Kong" under Continuing Professional Development Scheme for Tourist Guides (the CPD Scheme) (導遊持續專業進修計劃), to organize training classes on endangered species protection for tourist guides, and to promote publicity events on endangered species to tourist guides.

27/13 Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP welcomed her suggestion. He advised that AFCD would follow up with the industry to incorporate import and export regulation of plants and animals of Hong Kong, including endangered species, into the compulsory course of the CPD Scheme.

28/13 Mr Patrick LAI supplemented that AFCD subject officers would follow up with the travel industry and the SCHK by providing a package on import and export regulation of plants and animals of Hong Kong, including endangered species.

## **VII. Serving the Community – Service Standards Committee 35th Monitoring Report (Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/4/2013)**

29/13 Dr Azaria WONG presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/4/2013 on AFCD's performance for the quarter ended June 2012 and that ended September 2012. Members had no comment on the Paper.

## **VIII. Any Other Business**

30/13 The Chairman suggested that members visit the newly renovated Endangered Species Resource Centre after the meeting.

[Post meeting note: Members visited the Endangered Species Resource Centre after the meeting and were impressed with the facilities and specimens there.]

31/13      There was no any other business to be discussed.

**IX.      Date of Next Meeting**

32/13      The Chairman said that members would be informed of the date of next meeting in due course.

33/13      The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

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