

Endangered Species Advisory Committee
Confirmed Minutes of Meeting

Date : 10 July 2014 (Thursday)
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Room 701, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Headquarters

Attendance

Chairman

Dr SHIN, Paul Kam Shing

Members

Mr CHAN Wing-suen

Dr CHIU Sein-tuck

Ms Erica LO Lai-shan

Mr TSANG Kwok-keung

Professor ZHAO Zhong-zhen, MH

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

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 Alfred WONG Senior Endangered Species Protection Officer (Acting)

I. Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 23 January 2014

59/14 The minutes of the last meeting held on 23 January 2014 were confirmed without amendments.

II. Matters Arising from the Last Meeting

(a) Amendments to CITES Appendices adopted at the 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16) (Para. 4/14)

60/14 Mr Alfred WONG reported that legislative amendments to the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (the Ordinance) to give effect to the changes adopted at CoP16 had been published in Gazette in late June 2014 and tabled at the Legislative Council in early July. The amendments would come into effect in late November 2014.

(b) Placement of Pets of Endangered Species with Hong Kong Society of Herpetology Foundation (HKHERP) (Para. 6/14 to 27/14)

61/14 Mr Alfred WONG reported that the Department met HKHERP in February 2014 to discuss measures to improve the monitoring of the adopted animals. HKHERP agreed to members' suggestions and subsequently added supplementary terms and conditions in its Adoption Consent Form, namely, (1) applicant must report the updated condition along with recent photo of the animal to HKHERP each 6 months in the first 3 successive years of adoption. (applies only to the CITES II endangered species) [領養人必須由領養開始連續三年並每半年向本會匯報該領養動物的近況並提供最近的照片。(只適用於CITES II瀕危物種)], and (2) in the event of the death of the animal, applicant must report to HKHERP with reasonable photos within 1 week. (applies only to the CITES II endangered species) [若該領養動物不幸死亡，必須於一星期內向本會匯報，並提供合理相片以作證明。(只適用於CITES II瀕危物種)]. Besides, HKHERP had increased the annual membership fee from HK\$100 to HK\$200.

62/14 The Chairman suggested that AFCD should review the effectiveness of the placement scheme one or two years after commencement of the scheme. Mr Alfred WONG responded that the scheme had commenced since April 2014 and the animals donated to HKHERP would be regularly reported to the Committee in the Summary Progress Report with a view to monitoring the scheme.

(c) Review of Disposal of Forfeited Ivory (Para. 28/14 to 48/14)

63/14 Mr Alfred WONG reported that the Destruction of Confiscated Ivory Launching Ceremony was held on 15 May 2014 in which about one tonne of forfeited ivory was destroyed. AFCD thanked the Chairman for officiating the ceremony and members for their presence at the ceremony to make the event a success. Having noted that the media and green groups were concerned about the security of the disposal process of forfeited ivory, AFCD invited ICAC to review the disposal process and give suggestions for any improvement. ICAC has given preliminary feedback upon review and advised AFCD to proceed with another round of incineration. ICAC officers would observe the process so as to give more concrete advice. Tentatively, another round of incineration has been scheduled to be held in late July 2014. AFCD would invite members to monitor the incineration process. In future, AFCD would report the quantity of forfeited ivory disposed of by incineration in the reporting period.

(Dr CHIU Sein-tuck attended the meeting at this juncture.)

(d) Education and Publicity (Para. 50/14 to 52/14)

64/14 Ms Phoebe SZE reported that the publicity and educational events held during 1 January and 31 May 2014.

65/14 Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP remarked that consuls in Hong Kong, including Consul General of the United States of America to Hong Kong and Macau, and representative of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC in the HKSAR, attended the Destruction of Confiscated Ivory Launching Ceremony. AFCD's disposal of forfeited ivory by incineration was highly commended by international media and supported by international community.

66/14 A member mentioned that he shared the photos of the launching ceremony with his friends and almost all supported the disposal of forfeited ivory by incineration. This showed that the disposal of forfeited ivory by incineration was well received by the general public.

67/14 Mr Y K CHAN echoed that the public generally supported the disposal of forfeited ivory by incineration. However some people still had reservation to dispose of the ivory by destruction, perhaps they did not comprehend that it was impossible to use the ivory stockpile for purposes contrary to the CITES guidelines. AFCD would endeavour to make this point

clear to the general public when questioned. Besides, members would be invited to monitor the disposal process of forfeited ivory during each round of incineration in the future to ensure the disposal process was transparent.

68/14 Mr Alfred WONG supplemented that, having taken into account ICAC's preliminary suggestions, AFCD had plan to invite individual members to carry out audit on the forfeited ivory to be incinerated at the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre at Tsing Yi. The member(s) would examine the ivory and verify against the inventory. Members were welcome to monitor the whole operation that lasted for about half-day but they might leave after conducting the required audit. The Chairman earnestly appealed members to join the future incineration if invited as far as possible.

69/14 In response to a member's suggestion that additional publicity and educational events about destruction of forfeited ivory should be organized, Ms Phoebe SZE responded that roving exhibitions, with the themes on conservation of elephant and destruction of forfeited ivory, would be arranged at 17 public libraries for 17 months starting from 1 August 2014.

III. Reports on the 27th Animals Committee to CITES and the FAO/ CITES Asian Regional Consultative Workshop on Sharks (Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/6/2014)

70/14 Dr Azaria WONG presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/6/2014.

71/14 In response to a member's enquiries, Mr Alfred WONG replied that the import of the fins of those shark species listed in CITES Appendix II were subject to the production of a valid CITES export permit and inspection by authorized officers (including dried fins or canned fins) in Hong Kong. The export or re-export of the fins of the Appendix II shark species required a licence issued in advance by the Department. The Department would also conduct education and publicity programmes targeted at the trade and general public to promulgate the new regulations which would come into effect in late November 2014. In the event that the trade had enquiries about licensing control of the newly listed shark species, the trade could contact the endangered species licensing team of AFCD. Relevant guidelines on licensing control were already available at the AFCD website.

**IV. Summary Progress Report of CITES Work
(Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/7/2014)**

72/14 Mr Alfred WONG presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/7/2014 on AFCD's work in relation to CITES implementation in Hong Kong from 1 January to 31 May 2014. Members noted the Report.

V. Serving the Community – Service Standards Committee 38th Monitoring Report (Committee Paper: CP/ESAC/8/2014)

73/14 Dr Azaria WONG presented Committee Paper CP/ESAC/8/2014 on AFCD's performance for the quarter ended December 2013 and that ended March 2014. Members had no comment on the Paper.

VIII. Any Other Business

(a) Business Raised by The Chairman

74/14 The Chairman informed members that in March 2014 a non-government organization sent an email to the AFCD and copied to him on several Committee matters, including the posting of meeting minutes, transparency measures and composition of members.

75/14 The Chairman suggested that, since it was the last Committee meeting of the current term, the suggestions might better be discussed by the Committee in the new term. Nonetheless, members might still wish to offer their initial views.

76/14 Regarding the posting of meeting minutes, the Secretary said that the Committee in general met every 6 months. Being a regular item, the unconfirmed minutes of the last meeting were confirmed with any proposed amendment(s) raised at every meeting. The confirmed minutes would be uploaded onto the AFCD website after seeking endorsement from the Chairman.

77/14 Mr Y K CHAN pointed out that on enhancing transparency of the Committee, there had been discussion on opening the Committee's meetings to the public at a meeting in 2005. Having considered that the release of confirmed minutes had served the purpose of revealing

the Committee's views to the public, the meeting at that time decided that the Committee would maintain close meetings.

78/14 On composition of the Committee, Mr Y K CHAN informed members that the Committee was established under the Ordinance to advise the DAFC upon any question which he might refer to it in connection with the administration of the Ordinance. Past experience showed that a wide variety of subjects were discussed within the purview of the Ordinance and the CITES. Given that the Committee was to offer practical advice on various areas of work related to the administration of the Ordinance, the Committee was composed of members with various background including academics, relevant trades and NGOs.

79/14 Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP supplemented that the composition of the Committee was outside the ambit of the Committee's Terms of Reference. The Committee was an advisory committee without administrative or enforcement power. As members were appointed by the Secretary for the Environment in personal capacity, they were expected to express their views freely and impartially. As regards the composition of the Committee, due consideration would be given to expertise of the members and balancing voices on conservation and the impacts on relevant trade.

80/14 As members had no comments, the Chairman concluded that the suggestions should be discussed by the membership of next term.

(b) Any Other Business

81/14 There was no any other business to be discussed.

(c) Vote of Thanks by DAFC

82/14 Since this was the last meeting of the current term which would end on 30 September 2014, Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP, Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, thanked the chairman and members for their enthusiastic support to the work of the Committee. The Chairman also expressed his gratitude to members for their contribution to the Committee and to AFCD subject officers for their support to the Committee.

IX. Date of Next Meeting

83/14 The Chairman said that members would be informed of the date of next meeting in due course.

84/14 The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

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