

COUNTRY AND MARINE PARKS BOARD

Summary Report of the Marine Parks Committee

1. Purpose

1.1 This paper aims to inform Members of the major issues discussed at the Marine Parks Committee (MPC) meeting held on 19 November 2021.

2. Briefing on the Management, Monitoring, Enforcement and Visitor Services of Marine Parks/Reserve

2.1 The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is responsible for managing marine parks and marine reserve. In the meeting, the AFCD briefed Members on its duties, including monitoring the marine ecological resources, environment and activities, conducting enforcement work, facilities management and visitor services and organizing education and public awareness programme. The AFCD also shared with Members some of its current work such as the operation of the Hoi Ha Visitor Centre and enhancement at Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park, designation of new marine parks, implementation of new fisheries management strategy in marine parks and ecological monitoring.

2.2 Members in general recognized the effort made by the AFCD in marine parks and marine reserve. Regarding the research on marine ecology, Members suggested the AFCD conduct more focused studies to enhance conservation in the future. In view of an increased number of visitors, some Members were concerned about the challenges in law enforcement, and suggested strengthening visitor management and education to raise public awareness on the conservation of marine parks. As for the enhancement of recreational activities, the AFCD was suggested to explore new opportunities to facilitate the fisheries sector to switch to other sustainable operations. The AFCD noted the suggestions.

3. Report on Marine Mammal Stranding Response Programme

3.1 The Ocean Park Conservation Foundation, Hong Kong (OPCFHK) had been collaborating with the AFCD to respond to and investigate marine mammals stranding in Hong Kong waters since May 2006. The Marine Mammal Stranding Response Programme (“the Programme”), used to be reported and discussed in the Marine Mammals Conservation Working Group (MMCWG), was tabled in MPC for the first time following the dissolution of MMCWG in July 2021. As an introduction to MPC Members, the OPCFHK provided Members with an overview of the Programme and the stranding cases recorded in Hong Kong. In addition, a summary of the cetacean stranding cases handled from 1 January 2021 to 31 October 2021 was presented.

3.2 During the discussion session, OPCFHK answered Members’ questions concerning the Programme and the information about stranding. As the subject was new to MPC, Members suggested the AFCD and OPCFHK consolidate the information and data collected to facilitate discussion.

4. Presentation

4.1 This paper is prepared for Members’ information.

Country and Marine Parks Authority
February 2022