

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 22 April 2022.

2. Reporting of Hoi Ha Festival 2021

2.1 The Hoi Ha Festival was one of the recommended proposals under the Consultancy Study to Develop a Recreation and Education Enhancement Plan for Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park (HHWMP). A series of workshops and activities were held on seven days during weekends/holidays in December 2021 and January 2022. Two event days, 8 and 9 January 2022, were cancelled due to the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic. The promotion strategy and the activities were reported in the meeting. According to the visitor survey conducted after each activity, the feedback was positive, with ratings for the activities ranging from 4.5 to 4.9 points out of 5.

2.2 Members considered the festival effective in promoting marine conservation awareness to participants. A member suggested the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) consider expanding the collaborating stakeholders to fishermen who were experienced and knowledgeable about the fishery industry and marine resources. Their involvement could be helpful in future activities.

3. Introduction of management measures in the new South Lantau Marine Park

3.1 The AFCD briefed members on the management measures of the new South Lantau Marine Park (SLMP). Meanwhile, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and its consultant sought members' comments on the proposed artificial reef (AR) deployment and fish restocking programme in SLMP according to the Environmental Permit for the Integrated Waste Management Facilities Phase 1 project.

3.2 The AFCD updated members on the status of the ongoing statutory procedures for the designation of the SLMP and anticipated the SLMP to be designated on 30 June 2022. The AFCD introduced a series of management and enforcement measures, the permit system, monitoring and scientific research as well as education and promotion plan to be implemented in the proposed SLMP. Members generally supported the proposed management strategies. Regarding enforcement measures, some members stressed the importance of combating illegal fishing and suggested enhancing enforcement in the proposed SLMP. A member suggested the AFCD simplify the permit application procedures. The AFCD noted their suggestions and further elaborated on the enforcement and surveillance strategies and the streamlining of permit application procedures.

3.3 As for the ARs deployment and the fish restocking programme to be conducted by the EPD after the designation of SLMP, the consultant presented the updated design of the ARs and the fish restocking programme for members' comments. Members, in general, supported the proposal and regarded the proposal would enhance fisheries resources and marine biodiversity in the proposed SLMP. Some members highlighted the necessity of long-term monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness. Some members made suggestions on expanding the fish restocking species, increasing the fish fry quantity and the fish tagging method for monitoring purposes. The EPD noted the suggestions and would consider them accordingly. As regards the design of the ARs, members supported the updated design. They made a few enquiries about the navigation clearance and the likely impact of embedding the AR structure below the seabed level. The enquires were explained and clarified by the consultant. A study report on the fisheries enhancement measures with recommendations would be submitted to the AFCD and shared with stakeholders in due course.

4. Promoting marine conservation and watersports safety in HHWMP

4.1 In addition to the Hoi Ha Festival, the Consultancy Study to Develop a Recreation and Education Enhancement Plan for HHWMP recommended the AFCD to promote marine conservation and watersports safety in the area. The AFCD co-organised two seminars on marine ecology in HHWMP as well as diving and canoeing safety with Hong Kong Underwater Association and Hong Kong Canoe Union in 2021. Participants highly rated the seminars. In addition, a pilot safety support service was introduced in HHWMP in 2021. The AFCD would consider extending the safety

support service and jointly organise new canoe eco-activities at HHWMP with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department.

4.2 Members recognised the AFCD's effort. Some members were concerned over the possible impact to the coral communities caused by canoeists. The AFCD explained the coral protection strategies in detail.

5. Presentation

5.1 This paper is prepared for members' information.

Country and Marine Parks Authority

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