

Country and Marine Parks Board (CMPB)
Confirmed Minutes of the 61st Meeting

Date : 26 August 2016 (Friday) File Ref.: AF CPA 01/1/0
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Room 701, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Headquarters

ATTENDANCE

Chairman

Mr TANG King-shing, GBS, PDSM

Members

Mr CHAN Ka-kui, BBS, JP

Ms CHAN Po-kam, Beatrice

Mr CHOW Kwok-keung

Dr HAU Chi-hang

Honourable HO Chun-yin, Steven, BBS

Mr LAM Chung-lun, Billy, GBS, JP

Mr LEE Chung-ming, Eric

Professor LEUNG Mei-yee, Kenneth

Ms MA Miu-wah, Katherine

Dr MAN Chi-sum, JP

Mr MO Ka-hung, Joseph

Ms SO Ka Man

Ms WONG Pik-yan, Nicole

Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Dr SO Ping-man	Deputy Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Mr AU Wai-kwong, Elvis, JP	Assistant Director (Nature Conservation & Infrastructure Planning), Environmental Protection Department
Mr LAI Chi-tung	Assistant Director of Marine (Port Control), Marine Department
Miss Charmaine WONG, JP	Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2), Home Affairs Department
Ms Trevina KUNG	Assistant Director (Estate Management), Lands Department (Acting)
Ms WOO Kit-ching, Jacinta	Assistant Director of Planning / New Territories, Planning Department

Secretary

Mr Timothy CHAN	Assistant Secretary (Boards)1, AFCD
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IN ATTENDANCE

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Mr Patrick LAI	Assistant Director (Country and Marine Parks) (Acting)
Mr Alan CHAN	Senior Marine Parks Officer
Mr Franco NG	Senior Country Parks Officer (South-east)
Ms Y N NGAR	Senior Country Parks Officer (North-west)
Mr Alfred WONG	Senior Country Parks Officer/Ranger Services (Acting)
Ms Pauline TONG	Country Parks Officer (Special Duties)
Dr Maria YOUNG	Country Parks Officer (Lantau)

Water Supplies Department (WSD)

Mr LAM Kwan	Senior Engineer/Planning Policy
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For Agenda Item III only

Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)

Mr LAM Wai-chuen, Eddie Senior Engineer 7 (HK Island Div 1)

Mr HO Tsz-him, Kenny Engineer 7 (HK Island Div 1)

ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES

Mr Jan CHAN

Professor CHIU Lai-har, Rebecca, JP

Ms Suzanne M. GENDRON

Ms KIU Kin-yan, Judy

Ms KWAN Sau-wan

Dr LAU Tai-wai, David

Dr NG Cho-nam, SBS, JP

Mr Donald CHOY Assistant Director (Leisure Services)³, LCSD

Mr CHAU Sai-wai Chief Engineer /Development, WSD

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

72/16 The Chairman welcomed everyone attending the meeting, in particular Mr LAM Kwan, Senior Engineer / Development, WSD, who was attending the meeting for the first time.

73/16 The Chairman informed members that, as an established practice and to facilitate the taking of minutes, sound recording would be made during the meeting. The audio records would be destroyed after the minutes were confirmed.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 22 March 2016

74/16 The minutes of the last meeting held on 22 March 2016 were confirmed with the following amendment:

In para. 36/16, the sentence “Dr MAK Yiu-ming of AFCD gave a power presentation with regard to Working Paper WP/CMPB/3/2016.” should be replaced by “Dr MAK Yiu-ming of AFCD gave a PowerPoint presentation with regard to Working Paper WP/CMPB/3/2016.”

II. Matters Arising

(a) Preparation of Draft Replacement Maps of Plover Cove Country Park and Lantau South Country Park (Para. 30/16 to 31/16)

75/16 Ms Pauline TONG reported that the draft replacement maps and their explanatory statements of the proposals to incorporate the enclaves of Fan Kei Tok, Sai Lau Kong and the site near Nam Shan into the respective country parks were discussed at the last meeting. Members generally showed their support and endorsed the draft replacement maps and the explanatory statements. According to the Country Parks Ordinance, the next step was to make available the draft replacement maps and the explanatory statements for public inspection. Having consulted departments concerned, including the Department of Justice, the documents were being prepared. It was expected that the draft replacement maps and the explanatory statements could be made available for public inspection in September this year.

76/16 A member indicated that as it was a controversial issue to incorporate an enclave into its respective country park, he would like to know if there were any objections from local residents, and if any, the rationale of their objections. Ms YN NGAR of AFCD replied that local residents and other stakeholders, including members of the concerned Rural Committees and District Councils had been consulted. The views collected from them had also been reported to CMPB’s members at the previous meetings. In general, local residents and other stakeholders had no strong views to the proposals.

(b) Preliminary Boundaries and Management Plans of the Proposed Southwest Lantau and Soko Islands Marine Parks (Para. 4/16 and 32/16 to 49/16)

77/16 Mr Alan CHAN reported that having discussed the preliminary boundaries and

management plans of the proposed Southwest Lantau and Soko Islands Marine Parks in details at the last meeting, members gave general support to the proposals. According to Section 7 (1) of the Marine Parks Ordinance (Cap. 476), the Country and Marine Parks Authority would, at the direction of the Chief Executive in Council, prepare draft maps for the proposed Southwest Lantau and Soko Islands Marine Parks. In this regard, subject to the endorsement of the Chief Executive in Council, draft maps of the two proposed marine parks would be prepared and submitted at the coming CMPB's meeting to consult members in accordance with Section 7 (4) of the Ordinance.

78/16 A member enquired whether fishermen's views on the proposed marine parks had been clearly stated at the previous meetings. He also wanted to know if there would be any plan to review the Marine Parks Ordinance in due course. He indicated that he learned from a recent meeting with fishermen that while fishermen had no objection to the designation of marine parks, they considered the Marine Parks Ordinance outdated. He took the proposed Southwest Lantau Marine Park as an example to illustrate that while the operation of fishermen's vessels, which were not equipped with powerful engines, would not cause significant impacts on cetaceans, fishermen would however suffer from stricter fishing controls due to the marine park fishing permit system after the designation. He considered it necessary for the government to ensure the sustainable development of fisheries industry in Hong Kong and strike a balance between marine conservation and development of the local fisheries industry so that the designation of marine parks would not trigger any undesirable reactions from fishermen.

79/16 Mr Alan CHAN replied that consultation exercises for the above proposed marine parks started in July last year. During the consultation exercises, more than eight fishermen organisations and the Capture Fisheries Sub-committee had been consulted. It was noted that fishermen concerned mainly over the management and enforcement actions of the proposed marine parks and the arrangements for issuing marine parks fishing permits. To address such concerns, AFCD had already adopted enhancement measures to allow the succession and restricted transfer of marine parks fishing permits.

80/16 The member further pointed out that since the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap 171) came into operation in 2012, both the number of fishing vessels and their engine power were capped. In such circumstance, fishermen were of the view that the Marine Parks Ordinance, which was enacted in the 90s, became outdated for regulating their operations. Given the strict controls on the transfer and succession of fishing permits, fishermen worried that the number of marine park fishing permits would be further reduced. He also indicated that

although the control on the transfer and succession of marine parks fishing permits had been relaxed recently, there was only one successful transfer case since the relaxation. He requested for the number of marine park fishing permits issued at the beginning and the most up-to-date figures for comparison. In response, Mr Alan CHAN indicated that the marine park fishing permit system was first introduced in 1996 and had been enhanced recently in 2015. Since the launch of the enhanced permit system in 2015, AFCD had processed 19 applications for succession and one application for transfer. AFCD issued around 1000 fishing permits at the beginning and there were about 400 valid fishing permits at present. The member then commented that given the decreasing number of marine park fishing permits, fishermen worried that the number of fishermen allowed to operate in marine parks would decrease significantly in the coming decades. Furthermore, the designation of new marine parks would further reduce the fishing area in Hong Kong waters. The situation would be worrisome because the area covered by marine parks would be increased from 2000 hectares to 5000 hectares.

81/16 In response to the above member's comments, Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP indicated that though succession and transfer of marine park fishing permits were not allowed in the past, the policy concerned had been relaxed since mid-2015. After the relaxation, fishermen could inherit the marine park fishing permits from their immediate family members. In such circumstance, he believed that the designation of new marine parks would not have significant impacts on the development of fisheries industry in Hong Kong. To ease fishermen's worry about the designation of new marine parks in the western waters of Hong Kong, the Environment Bureau and AFCD would explore the feasibility of further enhancing the fishing control mechanism and consult the fisheries industry and other organisations concerned on any new proposals with a view to striking a balance between marine conservation and fishermen's livelihood.

82/16 The member welcomed AFCD to keep close communication with fishermen. He pointed out that as the size of marine parks was small in the past, the designation of marine parks had smaller impacts on fishermen's livelihood. However, since the government took the designation of marine parks as mitigation measures for large-scale construction works in Hong Kong waters, fishermen had suffered further reduction of their fishing grounds. He reiterated that the problem did not arise when the Marine Parks Ordinance was first enacted. As the situation changed with time, the recent development made fishermen worried to a greater extent. He hoped that AFCD could closely liaise with fishermen and strike a balance between marine conservation and the development of fisheries industry in Hong Kong.

(Mr Chan Ka-kui, BBS, JP and Mr LEE Chung-ming, Eric attended the meeting at this juncture.)

III. Improvement and Expansion of Mountain Bike Trail Networks in South Lantau (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/7/2016)

83/16 The Chairman reminded members to declare if there were any potential conflicts of interest in the matters to be discussed under this agenda item. Mr LAM Chung-lun, Billy, GBS, JP declared that he was a member of the Lantau Development Advisory Committee.

84/16 Dr Maria YOUNG of AFCD briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/7/2016. Dr YOUNG provided members with information about the background and the scope of works of the proposal submitted by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) on the improvement and expansion of mountain bike trail (MBT) networks in South Lantau. She also highlighted some considerations on the future management of the MBTs, which would be handed over to AFCD for management and maintenance after the completion of all construction works.

85/16 In response to a member's enquiry, Dr YOUNG said that as advised by CEDD, the information kiosks which would be set up at the entrances of the MBTs would provide information about the MBT networks and connection routes of the trails. The member then suggested making use of these information kiosks to provide information about country parks to visitors as well.

86/16 Another member enquired about the distribution of emergency helplines within the MBT networks. She also enquired if there would be any signposts indicating the difficulty level of different sections of the MBTs. Dr YOUNG responded that CEDD would implement the proposed works in two phases. Phase I comprised improvement works at the existing MBTs to enhance the safety and riding quality, minimise users' conflict and control erosion. While CEDD had no plan to install additional emergency helplines in the MBTs under Phase I works, there was an existing emergency helpline at the trailhead of the MBT at Chi Ma Wan.

Users of the MBTs could also make use of the existing mobile network for emergency purposes. She also confirmed that CEDD would set up signposts to indicate the difficulty level of different sections of the MBTs at suitable locations.

87/16 The Chairman then invited and welcomed Mr LAM Wai-chuen, Eddie, Senior Engineer 7 (HK Island Div 1) and Mr HO Tsz-him, Engineer 7 (HK Island Div 1) of CEDD to attend the meeting.

88/16 With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Eddie LAM briefed members on the progress of improvement and expansion to MBT networks in South Lantau and their design features.

89/16 A member enquired if CEDD had kept in touch with the Hong Kong Cycling Association during the planning stage of the MBTs. He would like to know if the proposed MBTs would be built to meet the requirements for organising world-class competitions. Mr Eddie LAM replied that while there were no local standards to build these MBTs in Hong Kong, CEDD made reference to those of developed countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States to design the MBTs. He also assured members that CEDD would closely liaise with the Hong Kong Cycling Association and Hong Kong Mountain Bike Association throughout the planning and construction stages to ensure the MBTs could be in line with their expectations and requirements as far as practicable.

90/16 A member enquired if the section of the MBTs from Pui O to Kau Ling Chung would also be open to other country park users. He also pointed out that since the project was exempted from the requirements of conducting an environmental impact assessment, he worried that the future traffic flow would exceed the traffic capacity of the area. Given the absence of parking facility, he wondered if it was feasible to organise any large-scale competitions at the proposed training ground near Lai Chi Yuen Tsuen. Further to the member's enquiries, the Chairman would also like to know the transport arrangements for accessing the proposed training ground. In response, Mr Eddie LAM said that both mountain bikers and hikers would be welcomed to use the section from Pui O to Kau Ling Chung. As for the accessibility of the training ground near Lai Chi Yuen Tsuen, there were currently two ways to get there, namely taking ferry to Mui Wo or accessing to the western part of the training ground near Lai Chi Yuen Tsuen by vehicular transport. The former route would involve riding up a new MBT connecting Mui Wo Ferry Pier Road and the latter route required only a short

bike ride before reaching the northern and western entrances of the training ground respectively. As closed road permits would be required for driving vehicles to the area, he believed that the future traffic flow would be under control. In addition, users of the proposed training ground would be encouraged to make use of public transport.

91/16 Another member pointed out that there were a number of locations, including South Lantau, Tai Lam and High Junk Peak, where hiking trails and MBTs overlapped. Given the potential danger of the shared-use trails, some hikers avoided these trails at all. He suggested that hiking trails and MBTs should be separated as far as possible. In response, Mr Patrick Lai pointed out that unlike the MBTs established in the early days which were mostly shared-use, AFCD built dedicated new MBTs in recent years as far as practicable. Although the section between Pui O and Kau Ling Chung was a shared-use trail, it was a catchwater maintenance road and therefore wide enough to accommodate both bikers and hikers. As regards the section of MBTs at Chi Ma Wan, having considered the actual situation of the trails, AFCD was studying the feasibility of diverting some hiking routes or opening up a new alternate trail as necessary so that hikers would not need to share the trails with mountain bikers. He assured members that AFCD would closely monitor the situation and ensure the safety of bikers and other country park users.

92/16 A member expressed that as the undulating design of MBTs was incompatible with the design features of hiking trails, he agreed with the above member's view that it was not desirable to have MBTs and hiking trails overlapped. He also indicated that without any ancillary facilities, the MBTs should not be regarded as a facility for organising any international or large-scale competitions. He was of the view that while the proposal itself would not have any negative impacts on the environment, further construction works for meeting the requirements of organising large-scale competitions would inevitably have adverse environmental impacts. Mr Patrick Lai replied that when the proposal was discussed at the meetings of the Finance Committee and the Panel on Development of Legislative Council, the main focus was accessibility of the MBTs. While CEDD made reference to the standards of International Mountain Bicycling Association on the designs of the MBTs, these designs were not to meet requirements for organising international competitions. He said that AFCD would be actively involved in the design of the MBTs and the enhancement of the MBTs' accessibility.

93/16 A member anticipated that cycling associations in Hong Kong would likely make use of the expanded MBT networks for competitions. He suggested CEDD keep in touch with

these associations to understand their expectations on the MBTs. He also pointed out that as some sections of the MBTs in the training ground were also designed for beginners, it might be difficult to rescue in case of emergency if they could not be accessed by vehicles. He also wanted to know if advance booking for the facility would be required. In response, Mr Patrick LAI said that as the site was originally a borrow area, it should be accessible by vehicles for emergency purpose. AFCD would work with CEDD to enhance the accessibility of the proposed training ground. He also indicated that making reference to the practice of bike parks in other countries, advance booking for individual users would not be required. However, as the training ground was located inside a country park, applications for organising activities or competitions would be required. AFCD would deploy more manpower to monitor the operation of the training ground at the commencement of operation of the training ground and conduct periodic reviews on the management and maintenance of the training ground in future.

94/16 A member would like to know if CEDD had estimated the number of users of the MBTs after the proposed improvement and expansion. He was of the view that CEDD should also take accessibility, safety of both hikers and mountain bikers and rescue arrangements in case of emergency into consideration. He urged CEDD to cover these aspects in their studies in Phase II with a view to finding out effective ways to tackle these issues. Another member also expressed his concern over users' safety, especially beginners who rented bikes from vendors nearby. A member stressed the importance of having suitable ancillary facilities and adopting a holistic approach when designing the MBTs. A member indicated that considerations should also be given to the safety of spectators if competitions would be allowed at the training ground.

95/16 Another member welcomed the proposal. He was of the view that the proposed location of the training ground was suitable in terms of its level of accessibility. He indicated that a very convenient location would attract too many visitors and make the training ground difficult to manage. He considered that while it was the responsibility of the government to provide a venue with basic safety facilities, users were also responsible for managing their own safety. As he was given to understand from the presentation of CEDD's representatives that the proposed training ground was designed as a bike park instead of a venue for organising large-scale competitions, he considered that the selected location could provide a venue with acceptable accessibility on the one hand and avoid causing too many adverse impacts on the environment on the other.

96/16 As members made no further enquires about the paper and the presentation, the Chairman thanked the representatives of CEDD for attending the meeting and answering members' enquiries. After the departure of CEDD's representatives, the Chairman, anticipating that the proposed new MBTs and training ground would likely to be very popular, urged AFCD to have a comprehensive planning on the management, safety and contingency arrangements of the sites concerned in advance to ensure effective coordination among relevant government departments such as Fire Services Department in case of emergency. He also wanted to know if there would be any additional budget for meeting the manpower requirements. In response, Mr Patrick LAI said that AFCD would have new recurrent funding for management and maintenance of the MBTs and the training ground.

97/16 Another member pointed out that it was essential for the government to carry out education and publicity activities in advance and adopt effective measures to minimise occurrence of any accidents after the opening of the training ground. He believed that after users had a better understanding of the different difficulty levels of the training ground, the risk of having serious accidents there would be lowered.

98/16 After the above discussion, the Chairman asked AFCD to take the above members' views into consideration in taking forward the proposed project with CEDD.

IV. Country Parks Public Education Programme: Take your Litter Home (Phase II) (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/8/2016)

99/16 Mr Alfred WONG of AFCD delivered a PowerPoint presentation with regard to Working Paper WP/CMPB/8/2016. He briefed members on the progress of the Country Parks Public Education Programme "Take Your Litter Home" and the activities planned for Phase II of the programme.

100/16 A member commented that the Programme was successful and the outcomes were encouraging. He hoped that the activities planned for Phase II could be launched as soon as possible. He looked forward to the situation that the amount of litter containers and recycle bins could be further reduced and even the complete removal of them from all hiking trails. Another member also opined that the Programme was very successful. Although litter bins had yet been removed from some hiking trails, hikers were generally environmentally conscious and willing to take their own litter home. As a result, the amount of litter found along hiking trails had been

decreasing. While he considered the education and publicity activities among local people were very successful, he suggested promoting the same message to overseas visitors as well.

101/16 Another member also agreed that the Programme was very successful. He suggested giving credit to the public for the positive outcomes. He also pointed out that he had occasionally witnessed crew of some chartered boats, who dumped rubbish into the sea when they returned to the pier at Sai Kung. He suggested introducing the Programme in marina as well.

102/16 A member indicated that while he found the Programme successful, he would like to know the reasons why the reduction of litter in Dragon's Back, which was a difficult trail for experienced hikers, was not as remarkable as Ma On Shan Country Trail. In addition, he also suggested introducing the Programme to barbeque sites in country parks. He elaborated that as the majority of litter collected in country parks came from barbeque sites, the use of recyclable products instead of disposable products should be promoted among users of these barbeque sites. He urged AFCD to select one or two barbeque sites as trial site(s) to promote the concept of waste reduction.

103/16 A member pointed out that over 90% decrease in litter collected from these hiking trails was impressive. She suggested publicising such encouraging figures at the trial sites to acknowledge hikers' contributions. She believed that such publicity would be an effective positive reinforcement to hikers contributing to the Programme

104/16 The Chairman thanked AFCD for introducing the Programme in country parks and was glad to see the positive outcomes of the Programme. He advised that the idea of taking your litter home should be promoted continuously.

105/16 Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP supplemented that while the outcomes of Phase I of the Programme were positive, members had different views on the pace of the Programme in Phase II. Given the high coverage of area and the involvement of large amount of litter bins to be removed in Phase II, the Programme would not only rely on AFCD staff, but also volunteers from supporting organisations to assist in education and publicity activities. While he anticipated that there might be situations in which the amount of litter collected from some locations might fluctuate, it did not imply that the Programme was not effective in general. He

assured members that AFCD would continue to promote the message of “Take Your Litter Home”.

(Hon. HO Chun-yin, Steven, BBS and Mr Elvis AU, JP left the meeting at this juncture.)

V. Summary Report of Country Parks Committee (CPC)
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/9/2016)

106/16 In the absence of Professor CHIU Lai-ha, Rebecca, JP, Chairperson of the CPC, Mr Patrick LAI briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/9/2016, which served to provide members with a summary of the issues discussed at the CPC meeting held on 6 May 2016. Members noted the Report.

VI. Summary Report of Marine Parks Committee (MPC)
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/10/2016)

107/16 Professor LEUNG Mei-ye, Kenneth, Chairman of the MPC, briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/10/2016, which provided members with a summary of the issues discussed at the MPC meeting held on 6 June 2016. Members noted the Report.

VII. Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report
(Working Paper WP/CMPB/11/2016)

108/16 Mr Patrick LAI of AFCD briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/11/2016 on Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report for the period from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2016.

109/16 A member enquired whether the figures of illegal entry of bicycle had increased. He also wanted to know what was the trapping appliance used in the relevant case. In response, Mr Alfred WONG said that the number of illegal entry of bicycle was at a similar level when compared with figures in the previous years. As regards the trapping appliance, it was actually a cage for catching dogs.

110/16 A member expressed that while he realised that the large amount of litter collected at Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau might mainly come from Mainland China, he was surprised by the large amount of litter found in Hoi Ha Wan. He considered that it was necessary for AFCD to find out the reasons behind and ways to tackle the problem. In response, Mr Patrick LAI advised that apart from the litter collected on sea surface, the figure of litter collected in Hoi Ha Wan also included litter collected at shoreline. There was a Working Group on Clean Shoreline led by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD). The Working Group, comprised representatives from different departments, would meet regularly to review and formulate measures to further improve the cleanliness of our shorelines. While the problem might not be solved shortly, AFCD would request its contractor to step up the collection of litter on sea surface and at shorelines within marine parks as and when necessary.

111/16 In response to a member's enquiry about the penalty for offences other than littering in country parks, Mr Alfred WONG said that making reference to recent cases of damaging of plant, the offenders were fined \$2,000.

112/16 A member enquired whether the Voluntary Patrol Team was still in force. In response, Mr Alfred WONG said that AFCD welcomed hiker groups to join the patrol team. He encouraged the member to ask those hiker groups which were interested in joining the patrol team to contact him so that AFCD could liaise with them for detailed patrol and reporting arrangements.

113/16 Another member enquired about the reasons why large amount of litter was found at Tung Ping Chau. Given the unique nature of rock formation there, she was of the view that special care should be given to conserve the environment of Tung Ping Chau. She would therefore like to know if AFCD had any special observations regarding the large amount of litter found and any measures to improve the situation. In response, Mr Alan CHAN said that compared with the figures of the previous 5 years, the amount of litter collected at Tung Ping Chau Marine Park had slightly decreased. According to relevant studies conducted by EPD, some litter found at Tung Ping Chau might come from Mainland China. AFCD would liaise closely with EPD and step up public education and publicity against littering.

114/16 A member learned from press reports that there were criticisms of using non-slip rubber pads to pave trails in country parks. He wondered if AFCD would provide members

with more information about the arrangement. In response, Mr Patrick LAI explained that the pads were recycled from old and used ones under outdoor fitness equipment and were meant to prevent soil erosion, provide shock-absorbing and anti-slip functions. Given that it was only a trial scheme and some feedback from the public was not positive, all the rubber pads had been removed. He further elaborated that AFCD would use natural material for paving hiking trails in country parks as far as practicable, and concrete would only be used in certain situations such as for erosion control. As he was given to understand that the member had prepared to share some materials on trail maintenance with members, he invited the member to present his suggestions on the subject at the meeting.

115/16 With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, the member introduced different materials for paving hiking trails in other countries to other members. After the presentation, the Chairman thanked the member for sharing photos of hiking trails in other countries at the meeting. He suggested that AFCD might approach the member for more ideas for trail construction and maintenance.

116/16 In response to a member's enquiry about the ways to compile visitor statistics of different country parks/marine parks, Mr Alfred WONG indicated that given the large area of country parks, the figures of visitor statistics were estimated based on sampling in some strategic and representative locations in different period of time. As for the case of marine parks, Mr Alan Chan explained that except Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park, the other three marine parks had to be accessed mainly by sea. The estimated number of visitors could be obtained by counting the number of vessels carrying visitors to marine parks and their passengers. As regards those who visited Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park by land transport, patrol teams of AFCD were responsible for conducting sample counts of these visitors.

117/16 A member expressed his concern over some fatal accidents taking place in country parks. He suggested erecting signposts at those black spots to alert visitors to potential risks. In response, Mr Patrick LAI advised that warning signs had been erected in high-risk areas and spots where fatal accidents had happened before. AFCD would also review the conditions and locations of these signs periodically.

118/16 A member pointed out that hiking accidents took place from time to time. He was of the view that hiking alone was especially prone to accidents. He suggested alerting the public to the danger of hiking through education and publicity. He also indicated that given the

lack of food stalls on Tung Ping Chau, visitors tended to bring packaged foods. As a result, the packaging materials became a major source of litter. He suggested promoting the message of “Take Your Litter Home” on Tung Ping Chau. The Chairman agreed with the member’s view and suggested displaying relevant education and publicity materials at University Station of East Rail Line so that visitors’ attention could be drawn before boarding the ferry to Tung Ping Chau.

VIII. Any Other Business

119/16 Mr MO Ka-hung, Joseph, convener of the Working Group on Sai Wan Management provided an update on the latest development of the proposed Management Agreement of Sai Wan. He informed members that as reported at the last Country Parks Committee meeting, local villagers were unwilling to accept the reduced rent for agricultural land offered by the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) Committee. After several rounds of communication and lobbying, parties concerned from villagers’ side were willing to take a proactive role and revised the rate for renting agricultural land for ECF Committee’s consideration. He was given to understand that an ECF Committee meeting would be held in October this year and discuss the issue. He hoped that an agreement on land rent could be reached between villagers and ECF Committee.

IX. Date of Next Meeting

120/16 The Chairman informed members that the secretary would let members know the date of next meeting in due course.

121/16 The meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.