

Country and Marine Parks Board (CMPB)
Confirmed Minutes of the 68th Meeting

Date : 23 November 2018 (Friday) File Ref.: AF CPA 01/1/0
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Room 701, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Headquarters

PRESENT

Chairman

Mr TANG King-shing, GBS, PDSM

Members

Mr Jan CHAN

Ms Suzanne M. GENDRON

Dr HE Shen-jing

Mr LAM Chung-lun, Billy, GBS, JP

Mr LEE Chung-ming, Eric

Dr LEE Nam-yuk, Amelia

Mr LEE Yee-keung, Charles

Ms MA Miu-wah, Katherine

Dr MAN Chi-sum, JP

Mr MO Ka-hung, Joseph

Professor NG Sai-leung

Mr SO Kwok-yin, Ken

Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP

Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Dr SO Ping-man, JP

Deputy Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Ms Daisy LO	Assistant Director (Nature Conservation), Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Mr Alan LO	Assistant Director of Lands (Specialist 2), Lands Department
Mr LAI Chi-tung, JP	Assistant Director of Marine (Port Control), Marine Department
Mr Wilson CHAN	Assistant Director of Planning (New Territories), Planning Department

Secretary

Ms Phyllis 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)
Ms Y N NGAR	Senior Country Parks Officer (North-west)
Mr Franco NG	Senior Country Parks Officer (South-east)
Mr Alfred WONG	Senior Country Parks Officer (Ranger Services)
Mr Alan CHAN	Senior Marine Parks Officer
Mr LEE Ying-ming	Country Parks Officer (Protection)

Home Affairs Department (HAD)

Mrs HO WONG Nga-kiu, Ann	Chief Executive Officer (2)1
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Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)

Mr CHEUNG Wing-keung, Wicky	Chief Leisure Manager (Management)
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Water Supplies Department (WSD)

Mr FU Sau-bong Senior Engineer (Planning Policy) (Acting)

For Agenda Item III only

The Green Earth

Ms Vivien CHENG Director of Community Partnership

Ms Yuki HO Project Officer

ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES

Mr CHAN Ka-kui, SBS, JP

Ms CHAN Po-kam, Beatrice

Honourable HO Chun-yin, Steven, BBS

Ms KIU Kin-yan, Judy

Dr LAU Tai-wai, David

Professor LEUNG Mei-ye, Kenneth, JP

Ms SO Ka-man

Ms WONG Pik-yan, Nicole

Ms Eugenia CHUNG, JP Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2), HAD

Mr LIU Wai-shing, Simon Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services
(Leisure Services)³, LCSD

Mr WONG Yan-lok, Roger Assistant Director of Water Supplies (Development)
(Acting), WSD

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

115/18 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the following persons who were attending the meeting for the first time:-

- Mr CHEUNG Wing-keung, Wicky, Chief Leisure Manager (Management) of LCSD
- Mr FU Sau-bong, Senior Engineer (Planning Policy) (Acting) of WSD

116/18 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 67th Meeting held on 20 July 2018

117/18 The minutes of the 67th meeting held on 20 July 2018 were confirmed without amendments.

II. Matters Arising

(a) Consultancy Study on Enhancement of the Recreation and Education Potential of Country Parks and Special Areas – Conceptual Proposals (Para. 93/18 to 105/18)

118/18 Mr Alfred WONG of AFCD reported that the Department and their consultants reported the progress of the study to the Country Parks Committee (CPC) on 20 September 2018, and collected the views of CPC members on the enhancement proposals and the public consultation plan. They were currently preparing for the public consultation and would inform CMPB members of the commencement of the public consultation in due course. Mr WONG encouraged members to participate in the consultation activities and provide their views.

III. Engagement of the Public in the Maintenance of Hiking Trails in Country Parks (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/12/2018)

119/18 The Chairman reminded members to declare if there were any potential conflicts of interest in the matter to be discussed under this agenda item. Professor NG Sai-leung declared that he worked as a volunteer consultant for The Green Earth. The Chairman ruled that Professor NG could stay in the meeting to listen to the briefing by The Green Earth.

120/18 Mr LEE Ying-ming of AFCD briefed members on Working Paper: WP/CMPB/12/2018, which was about AFCD's initiatives in engaging the public and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the maintenance of hiking trails in country parks. Then, the Chairman invited the representatives of The Green Earth to the meeting.

121/18 Ms Vivien CHENG of The Green Earth introduced their "Make Our Nature Trails Sustainable - Leave No Trace Education Programme" (the Programme).

(Mr LEE Chung-ming, Eric attended the meeting at this juncture.)

122/18 Ms CHENG answered a member's enquiry that instructors from the Taiwan Thousand Miles Trail Association would be invited to share with participants of the Trail Volunteer Training Programme the knowledge and technique in trail building and maintenance. They would also guide the participants in actual trail repair works. In addition, AFCD officers would participate and provide technical assistance throughout the training programme.

123/18 In response to the Chairman's enquiry, Ms CHENG indicated that The Green Earth would promote the Programme through various channels. They would make use of social media platforms to advertise the Programme and spread educational messages regarding trail conservation, such as "Do not take shortcuts" and "Stick to the main hiking trails as far as possible". They would also educate the public to avoid having certain hiking practices that might damage the hiking trails. In addition, they would invite the press to report on the Programme when it was appropriate. Moreover, Ms CHENG said that building and repairing hiking trails required a large pool of manpower. If there was only the AFCD team to repair the damaged hiking trails, it would take a long time for the repair to be completed. For this reason, The Green Earth organised the Trail Volunteer Training Programme to train volunteers to help with the works. They would also explore whether the trained volunteers could participate in the

trail repair works undertaken by government departments in the future.

124/18 In response to another member's enquiries about the activities under the Programme, Ms CHENG indicated that members of the public could enrol in the Public Talks and they were not necessarily the enrollees of the Trail Volunteer Training Programme. Regarding the "Hong Kong Trail Day" Kick Off and self-guided hiking tour scheduled for fall 2019, she said that The Green Earth would place Internet of Things (IoT) devices on a few selected hiking trails, and then encourage members of the public to hike on these trails to gain knowledge about trail conservation through the self-guided walk programme on smart phone as they passed through the designated spots.

125/18 As members made no further enquiries and comments, the Chairman thanked the representatives of The Green Earth for attending the meeting.

(The representatives of The Green Earth left the meeting at this juncture.)

126/18 Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP said that building and repairing hiking trails required a lot of manpower resources. He hoped that more organisations would work with AFCD in conducting public engagement activities to maintain the hiking trails in country parks.

127/18 The Chairman suggested that AFCD could consider engaging the youth uniformed groups in Hong Kong in the maintenance of hiking trails. He believed that it would provide valuable opportunities of group activities and community services for these groups.

128/18 A member said that Green Power was in discussion with AFCD on the opportunity of working together to repair the Hong Kong Trail. Mr LEE Ying-ming took the opportunity to thank Green Power for working with AFCD in repairing Hong Kong Trail Section 5 back in March 2018.

129/18 A member asked if the participation of NGOs in the maintenance of hiking trails would affect AFCD's routine work. Besides, he asked if AFCD had any plan to invite the participating NGOs to maintain the hiking trails for three or five years following their completion of the repair works.

130/18 In response to the above questions, Mr LEE Ying-ming said that AFCD welcomed the long-term participation of NGOs in the maintenance of hiking trails. The Department organised a number of workshops teaching over 250 volunteers the basic principles and techniques of trail maintenance since late 2016. These workshops provided opportunities for the public to understand the importance of trail conservation and have hands-on experience in repairing trails. If more NGOs could cooperate with the Department, they would be able to spread the message of trail conservation to more people and also train and mobilise a larger group of volunteers for the long-term maintenance of hiking trails in country parks.

131/18 Moreover, Mr LEE said that AFCD would explore the possibility of inviting NGOs to adopt hiking trails in the future. For the adoption of hiking trails, it was important that the organisations had a group of volunteers who were committed to devote time and efforts to acquire the various maintenance techniques and carry out the repair works. The NGOs should also come up with a suitable and practicable maintenance plan that was compatible with the work of the Department.

132/18 Mr Patrick LAI supplemented that the Country Parks Plantation Enrichment Programme (PEP) was an initiative of AFCD to engage NGOs in the Department's plantation enrichment work. Every year, the Department would propose new PEP sites for NGOs to apply for adoption. The participating NGOs would take up site preparation, tree planting, post-planting maintenance and monitoring activities at their chosen PEP site for five years, and conduct different types of publicity programmes to promote the benefits and values of biodiversity across all sectors of the society. Five NGOs were participating in PEP at present. He said that AFCD would explore the possibility of engaging NGOs in the maintenance of hiking trails in the same manner as in PEP, but before that, the Department would have to investigate whether there was enough NGOs that could commit to trail maintenance.

133/18 A member suggested that AFCD could put up plaques on the repaired hiking trails in recognition of the efforts of NGOs which had helped repair the trails.

134/18 Another member remarked that the Taiwan Thousand Miles Trail Association was successful because they not only endeavoured to repair hiking trails but also make use of the trails to reconnect the remote villages and cultural heritages in the countryside. He suggested that AFCD could take their actions further to also preserve the ancient trails in the countryside,

which were mostly stone paths linking villages of various sizes, and connect them with the hiking trails in the country parks. He considered that this further action had the potential to fulfil the UNESCO requirement of significant interactions between people and the natural environment.

135/18 In response to a member's enquiry, Mr LEE Ying-ming responded that AFCD would continue to organise public engagement activities in the next year to promote conservation of hiking trails and engage the public in trail maintenance. If individual NGOs were interested in taking part, AFCD would be pleased to discuss with these NGOs on the suitable arrangement.

IV. Summary Report of Country Parks Committee (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/13/2018)

136/18 Professor NG Sai-leung, Chairman of CPC, briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/13/2018, which provided members with a summary of the issues discussed at the CPC meeting held on 20 September 2018. Members noted the Paper.

V. Summary Report of Marine Parks Committee (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/14/2018)

137/18 In the absence of Professor LEUNG Mei-ye, Kenneth, JP, Chairman of the Marine Parks Committee (MPC), Mr Patrick LAI briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/14/2018, which provided members with a summary of the issues discussed at the MPC meeting held on 23 October 2018.

138/18 With regard to the Study on Subtidal Seaweed Diversity and Distribution in Hong Kong, a member commented that the study had the potential to provide useful baseline data for studying the effects of climate change on seaweed and the ecological habitats. Therefore, she encouraged AFCD to extend the 13-month study and consider collaboration with the Ocean Park Conservation Foundation, Hong Kong (OPCFHK) which had a dedicated fund to support projects that strive to increase the understanding of climate change effects on wildlife and their habitats.

**VI. Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/15/2018)**

139/18 Mr Patrick LAI briefed members on the Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report for the period from 1 June 2018 to 31 October 2018 (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/15/2018). With reference to the table in Section 1.2 about fire protection in country parks, he highlighted that there was no hill fire inside or threatening country parks this autumn. He briefly described the efforts AFCD made to prevent hill fires and assured that the Department would continue to stay alert to the risks of hill fires.

140/18 Members noted the Report.

VII. Any Other Business

(a) Recovery of Country Parks and Marine Parks after Typhoon Mangkhut

141/18 Mr Franco NG of AFCD briefed members on the recovery of country parks after Typhoon Mangkhut. He said that Typhoon Mangkhut hit Hong Kong on 16 September 2018 and caused extensive devastation to the country parks. The damage was particularly serious in the country parks situated in the north-western part of Hong Kong. After the passage of the typhoon, AFCD mobilised staff to clear fallen trees, repair damaged facilities and carry out inspection of various country park areas. For the few weeks following the typhoon, at least 250 AFCD frontline staffs were mobilised every day for the recovery and repair works at country parks. The Department arranged the works systematically, based on the degree of damage and popularity of the facilities. Priority was given to the restoration of major forest tracks, hiking trails and recreational sites with a view to reopening them as soon as possible.

142/18 Mr NG said that many relevant groups and members of the public expressed interest in helping with the restoration of country parks. There were altogether 37 clean-up activities with the participation of relevant groups, involving around 500 volunteers. He thanked the volunteers for their help.

143/18 Regarding the latest conditions of country park facilities, Mr NG said that the Hong Kong Trail, the MacLehose Trail, the Lantau Trail, the Wilson Trail (country parks sections) and all country park forest tracks were fully reopened. In addition, over 80% of the recreational

sites were reopened. Moreover, he informed members that AFCD updated on the conditions of country park facilities on the AFCD and “Enjoy Hiking” websites (www.hiking.gov.hk) on a weekly basis to facilitate visitors to plan their trips.

144/18 Mr Alan CHAN of AFCD briefed members on the recovery of marine parks after Typhoon Mangkhut. He said that the typhoon damaged 86 facilities in marine parks and marine reserve, and the three marine parks in the north-eastern part of Hong Kong suffered most. After the passage of the typhoon, AFCD deployed staff to repair the damaged facilities and accorded high priority to the repair of facilities in popular spots and warning signs. At the end of October, about 80% of the damaged facilities in the marine parks and marine reserve were repaired.

145/18 Mr CHAN said that a lot of marine refuse was washed up on the shore due to the typhoon. Although marine parks only covered coastal areas below the high water mark, AFCD staff cleared the marine refuse found inside and near marine parks this time to help restore the natural environment. The Department organised six onshore and four underwater clean-ups after the typhoon, in which volunteers from universities participated in one of the underwater clean-ups and volunteers from various groups participated in the other onshore clean-ups. Between the day after the typhoon and the end of October, about 20 tons of marine refuse was collected. Moreover, Mr CHAN said that AFCD conducted underwater inspections in marine parks and marine reserve to assess the impact of the typhoon on marine life. It was found that marine life, including coral communities, was just mildly affected. The Department would continue to closely monitor the situation.

146/18 A member expressed gratitude to AFCD staff for their hard work after the passage of Typhoon Mangkhut. Besides, he said that he visited Lugard Road, Tai Mo Shan and Yuen Tun Country Trail, Tai Lam after the typhoon and found that the vegetation in these places were seriously damaged. He worried that it would take a long time for the vegetation in country parks to recover. Also, the collapse of trees might open up large windows in the canopy and expose the forest floor to invasive exotic plant species, such as *Ipomoea cairica* (五爪金龍) and *Mikania* (薇甘菊). Therefore, he suggested AFCD to examine the impact of the typhoon on vegetation and ecology in country parks and consider taking measures to avoid deterioration. Furthermore, the member commended AFCD for using different and colourful layouts for the PowerPoint presentations in this meeting.

147/18 The Chairman, on behalf of CMPB, thanked AFCD for the clean-ups and repair work following Typhoon Mangkhut.

(b) Annual Field Visit 2018

148/18 Ms Y N NGAR of AFCD briefed members on the itinerary of the Annual Field Visit scheduled for 17 December 2018 (Monday) and the transport arrangement.

[Post-meeting note: The Annual Field Visit was conducted as scheduled.]

149/18 After the briefing on the Annual Field Visit, members did not raise any other business for discussion.

VIII. Date of Next Meeting

150/18 The Chairman informed members that the Secretary would inform them of the date of the next meeting in due course.

151/18 The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

– End –