

Country and Marine Parks Board (CMPB)
Confirmed Minutes of the 72nd Meeting

Date : 19 May 2020 (Tuesday)

File Ref.: AF CPA 01/1/0

Time : 2:30 p.m.

Venue : Room 701, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Headquarters

PRESENT

Chairman

Professor LING Kar-kan, SBS

Members

Mr CHEUNG Siu-keung, MH

Dr CHEUNG Ting-on Lewis

Professor HE Shen-jing

Professor HUI Cheuk-kuen Desmond

Dr LAU Tai-wai, David

Dr LEE Nam-yuk, Amelia, MH

Mr LEE Yee-keung, Charles

Professor LEUNG Mei-yee, Kenneth, JP

Professor NG Sai-leung

Mr SO Kwok-yin, Ken

Dr TANG Chin-cheung

Ms WONG Pik-yan, Nicole

Mr YU Hon-kwan, MH, JP

Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP

Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Dr SO Ping-man, JP	Deputy Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Ms Eugenia CHUNG, JP	Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2), Home Affairs Department
Ms CHAN Suet-ching, Angela	Assistant Director of Lands (Specialist 2), Lands Department
Mr LAI Chi-tung, JP	Assistant Director of Marine (Port Control), Marine Department
Mr WONG Yan-lok, Roger	Assistant Director of Water Supplies (Development), Water Supplies 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)
Mr Franco NG	Senior Country Parks Officer (Management 1)
Ms Y N NGAR	Senior Country Parks Officer (Management 2)
Mr Alfred WONG	Senior Country Parks Officer (Ranger Services 1)
Ms Eva YAU	Senior Country Parks Officer (Ranger Services 2) (Acting)
Ms Louise LI	Senior Marine Parks Officer
Mr Felix YEUNG	Country Parks Officer (Enhancement Projects2)
Dr James LUK	Country Parks Officer (Sai Kung)

Environmental Protection Department (EPD)

Ms Thebe NG

Senior Administrative Officer (Nature Conservation)

Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)

Mr CHEUNG Wing-keung, Wicky

Chief Leisure Manager (Management)

Planning Department (PlanD)

Ms CHIU Kit-yee, Kitty

Senior Town Planner (New Territories Headquarter 1)

For Agenda Item III only

Urbis Limited

Mr Alan MACDONALD

Director (Planning and Urban Design)

Ms Anson YIM

Town Planner

ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES

Mr CHAN Ka-kui, SBS, JP

Ms CHAN Po-kam, Beatrice

Dr CHUI Pui-yi, Apple

Ms KIU Kin-yan, Judy

Ms YIP Yan-yan

Ms Daisy LO

Assistant Director (Nature Conservation), EPD

Mr LIU Wai-shing, Simon

Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services
(Leisure Services)³, LCSD

Mr YIP Chi-kwai, Tom

Assistant Director of Planning (New Territories)
(Acting), Planning Department

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

1/20 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Mr CHEUNG Siu-keung, MH, Dr CHEUNG Ting-on Lewis and Dr TANG Chin-cheung, who were attending the meeting for the first time.

2/20 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.

3/20 The Chairman informed members that in view of the latest situation of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the meeting was open to the media only so as to reduce social contact and the risk of community transmission. Besides, a special seating arrangement was made in this meeting to maintain suitable distance among attendees.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. Confirmation of Minutes of the 71st Meeting held on 22 October 2019

4/20 The minutes of the 71st meeting held on 22 October 2019 were confirmed without amendments.

II. Matters Arising

(a) MacLehose Trail 40th Anniversary Celebration Programme (Para. 108/19 to 110/19)

5/20 Mr Alfred WONG reported that the MacLehose Trail 40th Anniversary Celebration Programme had been completed successfully in the end of 2019 and many of the activities were well received by the general public. He said that a souvenir and a commemorative album were given as an award to participants who had completed all ten sections of MacLehose Trail in the “Complete Walk on MacLehose Trail 2019”.

III. Planning Study on Setting Up a Visitor Hub at Pak Tam Chung, Sai Kung – Inception Phase
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/4/2020)

6/20 The Chairman reminded members to declare if there were any potential conflicts of interest in the matter to be discussed under this agenda item. No member made such declaration.

7/20 After Dr James LUK's introduction of the background of the planning study on setting up a visitor hub at Pak Tam Chung (the Study) (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/4/2020), the Chairman invited and welcomed the representatives of Urbis Limited to the meeting.

8/20 With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Alan MACDONALD briefed members on the objectives and scope of the Study, key issues identified from the preliminary site observation and the study approach.

9/20 Regarding the public engagement strategies, a member suggested that AFCD could invite green groups to share the message. The member suggested that products packaged within non-degradable wrapping and drinks in plastic bottles should not be sold at the present kiosk and from other future businesses in the visitor hub.

10/20 Another member enquired whether 300 on-site face-to-face questionnaire surveys were enough to yield a valid result and how the sample size was determined. He also enquired the purpose and the target respondents of the surveys. He believed that due to the impact of COVID-19 on travel and tourism around the world, it would be difficult to collect the opinions of foreign visitors during this period.

11/20 A member who was a mountain biker pointed out that some mountain bikers would ride their mountain bikes to Pak Tam Chung and then use the mountain bike trail inside the country park. He suggested that the project in question should take the needs of this group of people into consideration.

12/20 Mr MACDONALD noted members' suggestions. Regarding the measures to promote waste reduction, he said that there was a water fountain and another water dispenser at Pak Tam Chung. He believed they would encourage people to bring their own water bottles.

He also agreed that it would be beneficial if the kiosk was not allowed to sell bottled water. To get an idea of what was attractive to local and foreign visitors, Mr MACDONALD indicated that apart from the questionnaire surveys, they would also solicit the views of the local community with a view to obtaining a broad range of views. Besides, during the course of baseline review, they had been looking at facilities that were provided at various visitor centres throughout Europe and North America. He said that eco-tourism was very fundamental, therefore they would look at advertisement strategies to promote the country park and facilities more extensively to foreign countries. Moreover, Mr MACDONALD indicated that during their site visits, they had found quite a lot of road bikers and mountain bikers in Pak Tam Chung. He said that cyclists would be taken into account in the project.

13/20 The Chairman took the view that 300 on-site face-to-face questionnaire surveys was a small sample size and he asked for more information about that. Mr Alfred WONG responded that the main purpose of the questionnaire surveys was to collect users' views on the service requirements of the proposed visitor hub at Pak Tam Chung. The questionnaire surveys would be carried out at Pak Tam Chung as well as the East Dam, Hoi Ha Wan and Sai Wan pavilion, which were the popular attractions or strategic locations. The Chairman asked AFCD and the consultant to make sure the surveys were comprehensive and representative.

14/20 A member remarked that Pak Tam Chung was very crowded during holidays that there were sometimes no room on the pavement and people needed to stand on the road. To enhance safety, he suggested that if there was sufficient funds, AFCD could consider building an underground car park to free up ground-level space for people. Multi-storey car parks might affect the view and hence should be carefully considered. Besides, he asked whether the Study was divided into two phases, just like the Consultancy Study on Enhancement of the Recreation and Education Potential of Country Parks and Special Areas, to identify the needs and preferences of country park users first in the baseline review, and then compile a list of potential options for further consultation.

15/20 A member considered that the Sai Kung Country Park Visitor Centre could be better used to educate the public and students about the natural environment. He suggested that the exhibition could adopt the STEM education approach and align with the current curriculum. Besides, the exhibition content could be made more interesting using 3D images and interactive displays. To enhance the attractiveness of the exhibition, he also suggested changing the flora and fauna shown on the display boards with the season.

16/20 A member appreciated the Government's initiative to upgrade the facilities at Pak Tam Chung. She took the view that the upgrade should not be a one-time project. Rather, it should have a project cycle and be continued for some years. Pointing out that Pak Tam Chung was a gateway to the East Dam, Hoi Ha Wan, Sai Wan and even outlying islands, like Tap Mun, the member advised that the consultant should consider the various entrances and exits as well as means of transport, including ferries. Besides, she asked for the schedule of the project and more details about the accommodation requirements mentioned in Mr MACDONALD's presentation. She also asked whether environmental impact assessment (EIA) would be conducted for the project.

17/20 In response to the suggestion of developing an underground car park, Mr MACDONALD remarked that pedestrian safety was of vital importance and it was one of the aspects they had paid attention to during their site visits. Nevertheless, underground car park was expensive and subject to the availability of resources. He said that they would look at the layout options for the whole area and try to come up with different options to ensure pedestrian safety. As regards the consultation, he elucidated that a twofold approach would be adopted. There would be a major engagement with the public at the beginning to collect their views on setting up the visitor hub, and the public would be consulted again later to obtain more ideas, which would be fed back into the project. Besides, Mr MACDONALD said that the suggestions of a member concerning the educational function of the visitor centre coincided with their thoughts. He considered that the visitor centre should be able to inspire and educate different groups of people. Moreover, Mr MACDONALD concurred with a member's comment about the relationships between Pak Tam Chung and other attractions and he indicated that the Study was not only looking at Pak Tam Chung but the whole environment around it and their relationships. Regarding accommodation, he clarified that they were just studying the options and if provision of accommodation was found to be not feasible in the area, it would not be considered further in the project. He also noted the member's suggestion on the means of access. Lastly, he responded to the question about EIA that the Study was preliminary at this stage, so they were not doing any EIA at the moment.

18/20 Mr Patrick LAI supplemented that the Study was a preliminary planning study, which aimed to identify service requirements of the proposed visitor hub at Pak Tam Chung. After collecting the public's views, AFCD would pass the ideas to the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) for detailed studies on the design and technical feasibility. He said that whether EIA was required depended on the scale of the project and would be determined at a later stage.

19/20 A member suggested that the concept of “experiential tourism” could be applied in the visitor centre whereby visitors could learn and feel more engaged through direct experience. An example she gave was that the visitor centre could hold workshops to teach visitors to make organic fertilisers and workshops of other themes could also be held to match with the educational purpose of the visitor centre at different times. Noting from Mr MACDONALD’s presentation that there would be a focus group meeting with stakeholders, the member advised that relevant government departments should be included in the focus group so as to establish communications on matters such as transport at the early stage. Besides, she pointed out that there was always traffic congestion near some popular country parks. In this regard, she suggested that the Park-and-Ride scheme should be extended to encourage members of the public to park their private cars near public transport hubs or railway stations and then take public transport to go to the country parks.

20/20 A member pointed out that with its ideal location, Pak Tam Chung was commonly used as an assembly point by hikers and eco-tour operators. He suggested providing facilities to facilitate their assembly and educational activities. Besides, he considered that the visitor centre could help promote eco-tourism and experiential learning, by introducing the various attractions nearby and providing contact information of eco-tour operators. Moreover, the member pointed out that the car park for private vehicles at Pak Tam Chung was always full whereas the coach parking area was sometimes not fully utilised. He believed that the allocation of parking spaces could be more flexible and he suggested AFCD to consult coach companies in this regard. He also suggested that AFCD could liaise with ferry/ small boat service providers to assess the possibility of visiting the nearby attractions by water transport. He believed the use of water transport might create new routes for eco-tour and alternatives for leaving the Sai Kung Country Parks.

21/20 A member enquired whether the Study would generate a master plan for Pak Tam Chung, and if affirmative, whether it would be a fixed plan. Besides, he remarked that many overseas visitor centres did not only introduce the park that it belonged to but also the local culture and heritage. He enquired whether the visitor centre at Pak Tam Chung would also cover similar information.

22/20 In response to the suggestion of applying the concept of “experiential tourism”, Mr MACDONALD said that it could be a way forward for the visitor centre. He indicated that the exhibitions at the visitor centre had not been changed in 15 years and there was a lot of

improvement that could be made to enhance its attractiveness, such as holding educational workshops and changing the activities and displays from time to time. He said that they were looking at the technologies that were available for changing displays and would modernise the way to communicate the events and attractions available to the public. Regarding the traffic issue, Mr MACDONALD stressed the importance of good management and he indicated that they were exploring the feasibility of managing the traffic coming to the area using entry systems, QR code systems and booking systems of parking. In addition, they would review the car park provision at Pak Tam Chung and come up with strategies after they got the result of the traffic review. Regarding the gathering point at Pak Tam Chung, Mr MACDONALD believed that the spaces needed to be organised to cater for the needs of the primary users and there should be multi-purpose spaces for different events and visits. Besides, he concurred with members' suggestion of having alternative means of getting to/ leaving the country parks and he said that they would explore that with the coach and kaito ferry services providers. In response to the question about master plan, Mr MACDONALD indicated that they were required to produce at the end of the Study a master plan for facilities with an associated explanatory statement, based on the findings arising from technical reviews. In his opinion, the master plan should not be fixed. It should be adaptable over time and be reviewed progressively as things changed.

23/20 The Chairman made a few suggestions and comments. Firstly, considering that green transport was fundamental for green tourism, he advised that the transport facilities at Pak Tam Chung should not be inviting more cars in and people should be encouraged to use public transport as far as possible. As a matter of principle, large-scale earthworks, such as constructing underground carpark, should be avoided as far as possible. He also suggested exploring the possibility to close some car park spaces to release spaces for pedestrians in peak season. Besides, he reminded the consultant to look at the whole transport system in Sai Kung in formulating the strategies for addressing the traffic issue. Secondly, he suggested considering the application of information technology in the management of the visitor hub and the availability of public parking space. Thirdly, he commented that there was too much hard paving in Pak Tam Chung. To enhance eco-friendliness, he suggested reducing hard paving where appropriate and increasing the area of permeable surface. Fourthly, he advised that the P.H.A.B. Site should be re-designed to become both disabled-friendly and elderly-friendly. Besides, he suggested moving the barrier gate inward so that elderly and disabled people could board/ alight coaches nearer the P.H.A.B. Site. Fifthly, he suggested that the improvement projects could be carried out in stages. Improvement projects that involved software enhancement and did not require additional funding could be carried out first, while improvement projects that involved construction works and required additional funding could

be implemented in the next stage. He asked the consultant to take note and consider his suggestions.

24/20 As members had no further enquiries for the consultant, the Chairman thanked the representatives of Urbis Limited for attending the meeting.

(The representatives of Urbis Limited left the meeting at this juncture.)

IV. Public Engagement in Trail Maintenance in Country Parks (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/5/2020)

25/20 With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Felix YEUNG briefed members on the progress of the public engagement programme on the maintenance of hiking trails in country parks, called the “Repair Our Own Trail” Scheme (the Scheme) (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/5/2020). He informed members that the Scheme was awarded the Special Citation (Interactive Communication with the Public) Award under the General Service Team Award of the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2019. The Civil Service Bureau, which was the organiser of the event, made a short video documenting the Scheme. At the end of the presentation, he played the short video for members to watch.

26/20 A member pointed out that there was a risk of injury in trail repair works, and she asked whether measures were taken to ensure safety of the volunteers.

27/20 Another member appreciated AFCD’s efforts in trail maintenance in country parks and he supported AFCD to continue implementing the Scheme. He pointed out that there were over 500 kilometres of hiking trails in country parks. A lot of manpower was needed to maintain and repair the trails. He suggested that if the Scheme aimed to train volunteers to help with the trail repair works in the long run, AFCD should find out how many trails needed to be repaired and how many of them could be done with the help of volunteers and then develop a plan. He also suggested AFCD to require its contractors to apply the low impact principles in trail repair works.

28/20 A member suggested that AFCD should consider creating a reward or recognition system for the Scheme, to give volunteers incentives to help repair the trails in country parks.

29/20 The Chairman suggested that AFCD could consider inviting companies and uniform groups to join the Scheme and establishing a system to recognise their help. For example, AFCD could consider putting up a plaque with the name of the helping company/group and dates on the repaired trail in recognition of their help.

30/20 In response to the question about safety measures, Mr YEUNG indicated that safety of the volunteers was the prime concern of the Scheme and it was taken into consideration in the selection of trails and tools for volunteer workshops. In addition, to raise the awareness of occupational safety among the volunteers, AFCD staff would lead the volunteers to do warm up exercise before they began the repair works. During the workshops, volunteers would be reminded to be careful not to overstretch themselves and pay attention to the safety of themselves, their teammates and passing hikers. AFCD had organised 29 volunteer trail maintenance workshops so far, and fortunately, no major accident happened. Mr YEUNG indicated that the Scheme focused on educating volunteers on the principles and techniques of trail maintenance through hands-on experience. During the workshops, volunteers repaired trails that were not very rugged and remote under the guidance of AFCD's staff. He said that it was hoped that the volunteers would acquire the skills and become more experienced, and then they could pass the knowledge and skills on to other people and provide more assistance to the trail repair works in the future. He added that AFCD staff and hired workers remained as the main source of manpower for the maintenance of trails in country parks. Regarding the suggestion of requiring AFCD's contractors to apply the low environmental impact principles in trail repair works, Mr YEUNG said that no trail repair work was currently outsourced to contractors. Nonetheless, AFCD would organise training workshops with Hong Kong Institute of Construction (HKIC) for construction workers and student volunteers from HKIC to learn the trail maintenance methods adopted by AFCD, which focused on sustainability and use of simple hand tools and natural materials. It was hoped that HKIC could create a pool of skilled labour in the construction sector in the long run, so that AFCD could outsource some of the trail maintenance works to potential contractors. Mr YEUNG also thanked for the suggestions of giving volunteers recognition and incentives.

31/20 Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP supplemented that there were over 500 kilometres of hiking trails in country parks. AFCD was investigating how many trails needed to be repaired and would give priority to those popular trails and those with higher degree of damage. He said that AFCD staff were the main source of manpower for the maintenance of trails in the past. Through the Scheme, AFCD hoped to engage various groups, such as green groups and hiking

groups, and the construction sector in this effort and create a pool of trained manpower to assist in the trail maintenance works in the long run.

32/20 On behalf of CMPB, the Chairman expressed gratitude to AFCD staff and volunteers for their contribution to the maintenance of trails in country parks.

**V. Summary Report of Country Parks Committee
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/6/2020)**

33/20 Professor NG Sai-leung, Chairman of CPC, briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/6/2020, which provided members with a summary of the issues discussed at the CPC meeting held on 17 March 2020. Members noted the Report.

(Mr YU Hon-kwan, MH, JP left the meeting at this juncture.)

**VI. Summary Report of Marine Parks Committee
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/7/2020)**

34/20 Professor LEUNG Mei-ye, Kenneth, JP, Chairman of the Marine Parks Committee (MPC), briefed members on Working Paper WP/CMPB/7/2020, which provided members with a summary of the issues discussed at the MPC meeting held on 16 April 2020.

35/20 As a representative of a fishermen organisation in Hong Kong, a member remarked that the establishment of marine parks reduced the waters available for fishing and affected fishermen's livelihood. Fishermen accepted the establishment of the new marine parks with reservation and hoped that the Government could address the problem of diminishing fishing grounds in Hong Kong. He also pointed out that the marine parks in the western and south-western waters were very close to the border where fishing activities were very active. He advised that the Government should closely monitor the fishing activities near the border and combat any illegal fishing. Regarding the new fisheries management strategy in marine parks (hereinafter referred to as "the new strategy"), the member said that commercial fishing was banned in four marine parks starting from 1 April 2022 (i.e. Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park, Yan Chau Tong Marine Park and Tung Ping Chau Marine Park in the eastern waters and Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park in the western waters). He was concerned that illegal fishing activities might appear in the four marine parks and undermine the effectiveness of the new strategy on marine conservation. Therefore, he advised AFCD to closely monitor the situation

in the four marine parks. Besides, the member asked when fishermen could begin to return the fishing permits of the four marine parks to AFCD and apply for fishing permits for fishing in The Brothers Marine Park (BMP) and Southwest Lantau Marine Park (SWLMP). He urged AFCD to expedite the issue of fishing permits and communicate the status of fishing permits to the enforcement departments in the meantime.

36/20 Mr Patrick LAI responded that under the new strategy, there was a transitional period of two years, during which the fishing permits already granted for the four specified marine parks would remain valid and be renewed upon request with a validity period up to 31 March 2022. The eligible permit holders could also choose to return their fishing permit to AFCD before the validity ended so that they could get the ex-gratia allowance (EGA) earlier. He said that an Inter-departmental Working Group would be set up, chaired by AFCD and comprising representatives from relevant departments, including Marine Department and Home Affairs Department, to handle all matters relating to the processing of EGA applications. The working group would begin working soon and eligible fishermen would be informed about the timetable and details of EGA application. Mr LAI also explained that a valid fishing permit was required for fishing vessel operation within BMP and SWLMP. Since SWLMP was recently established on 1 April 2020, it would take some time to process the applications for the fishing permits. AFCD would expedite the process and would communicate with the enforcement departments about the situation. While AFCD was processing the applications for the fishing permits, fishermen could continue to operate in BMP and SWLMP. As regards the concern on illegal fishing, he said that AFCD would strengthen enforcement efforts in marine parks. AFCD would set up more enforcement teams, make use of new technologies to support routine monitoring and law enforcement, and enhance cooperation with the enforcement departments and the Mainland counterparts. Moreover, he said that AFCD would carry out regular ecological and fisheries resources monitoring surveys in marine parks to monitor the effectiveness of the new strategy and would report the results to members at a suitable juncture.

VII. Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/8/2020)

37/20 Mr Patrick LAI briefed members on the Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report for the period from 1 January to 31 March 2020 (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/8/2020). He indicated that due to the COVID-19 epidemic, there was a rise in the number of visitors to country parks and the amount of litter collected during the reporting period. The most significant increase occurred in February 2020 and the average increase in the number of visitors and the amount of litter collected during the three months period was around

10%. In the CPC meeting held on 17 March 2020, AFCD already reported on the situation and the actions taken. Besides, Mr LAI informed members that barbecue sites and campsites in country parks were closed from 28 March to 20 May 2020 due to the epidemic and they would reopen on 21 May 2020. After the above sites reopened, AFCD would step up management measures to keep country parks clean and remind visitors to country parks to maintain personal and environmental hygiene and social distancing.

38/20 A member who was a member of the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) remarked that in a recent meeting of ACE, the members had discussed about the increase in litter found in country parks during the epidemic and the possible ways to advise visitors to take their litter home. They generally considered that the “Take Your Litter Home” campaign was successful, and the associated education and publicity should be continued. The member suggested that AFCD could consider placing banners promoting “Take Your Litter Home” at the entrances of country parks to remind visitors of that good practice.

39/20 Another member also asked how AFCD would deal with the increase in litter in country parks.

40/20 Mr Alfred WONG responded that AFCD had constantly promoted “Take Your Litter Home” in country parks using multi-pronged approach, including broadcasting promotional short videos, putting up banners, deploying volunteers to disseminate the message, and conducting publicity events in collaboration with partner organisations. In view of the recent increase in visitor number, AFCD placed banners and posters at popular locations of country parks and stepped up patrol and deployed staff to remind visitors to maintain good personal and environmental hygiene and dispose of their rubbish and face masks properly. Besides, AFCD recently placed advertisements on MTR platforms and in-train banners with a view to further strengthening the public awareness of “Take Your Litter Home”. It was hoped that the message could reach those people who visited country parks infrequently. He added that volunteer activities and publicity events were temporarily halted to reduce social interaction. When the epidemic passed and the situation warranted, AFCD would resume the relevant activities and events.

VIII. Any Other Business

41/20 A member mentioned about the news report on 3 May 2020 about an incident at Ngong Ping Campsite, in which a few people cut trees to retrieve a paraglider that was stuck in trees. He would like to know AFCD's response to that case.

42/20 Mr Patrick LAI indicated that paragliding was not controlled under the Country Parks and Special Areas Regulations (Cap. 208A) but cutting trees in country parks without permission constituted an offence under Cap. 208A.

43/20 With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Eva YAU provided members with details of the case investigation and follow-up actions taken by AFCD. She said that upon receipt of report, AFCD staff went to the site to conduct investigation and found that two Taiwan Acacia (*Acacia confusa*) were recently cut by people. The staff carried out field investigations in an attempt to collect information about the incident and people involved in the illegal tree cutting, but unfortunately, the investigation was unable to identify the people involved. To prevent similar incidents from happening, AFCD erected a warning sign on the site to advise people that cutting trees in country parks without permission constituted an offence. In addition, the Department stepped up patrol of the place. AFCD staff would remind paragliders of the relevant regulations and take enforcement actions when necessary. Moreover, after the Department liaised with the Hong Kong Paragliding Association, the association posted a notice on their website to remind their members that it was an offence to cut trees and advise them the proper way of removing a paraglider in case of accidental landing on trees.

(Dr LEE Nam-yuk, Amelia, MH left the meeting at this juncture.)

44/20 In response to the member's question on the possibility of prosecution, Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP explained that although the news report concerned had a video recording showing the people engaged in the illegal tree cutting, it was unlikely that AFCD would be able to identify and find those people with the aid of the record. He appealed to members for information about the people involved in the incident, such as their names, so that AFCD could follow up the case.

45/20 In response to another member's enquiry, Ms YAU indicated that if a paraglider or kite was stuck in trees, members of the public could try to retrieve it by themselves. If they

were unable to retrieve it, they could contact AFCD for assistance. If it was an emergency situation, they were advised to dial 999 for help.

46/20 The Chairman considered that the incident would not have happened if people were civic minded and aware of environmental protection. He advised AFCD to enhance publicity of the relevant regulations and make the Hong Kong Paragliding Association aware that the irresponsible behaviour of their members would damage the reputation of paragliders. He also encouraged members to promote the idea of environmental protection to their friends and acquaintances.

IX. Date of Next Meeting

47/20 The Chairman informed members that the next meeting was tentatively scheduled for 29 September 2020 (Tuesday) at 2:30 p.m.

[Post-meeting note: The next meeting originally scheduled for 29 September 2020 (Tuesday) 2:30 p.m. has been rescheduled to 23 October 2020 (Friday) 10:00 a.m.]

48/20 The meeting adjourned at 17:10 p.m.

– End –