

Country and Marine Parks Board (CMPB)
Confirmed Minutes of the 49th Meeting

Date : 22 February 2012 (Wednesday) File Ref.: AF CPA 01/1/0
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Room 701, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Headquarters

ATTENDANCE

Chairman

Prof Nora TAM Fung-ye, JP

Members

Dr Gary ADES

Professor Rebecca CHIU Lai-har, JP

Mr CHOW Kwok-keung

Prof CHU Lee-man

Dr Billy HAU Chi-hang

Ms HUI Mei-sheung, Tennessy, JP

Mr LEUNG Wing-hang

Dr Eric LI Shing-foon

Ms LO Po-man

Dr NG Cho-nam, BBS, JP

Mr TANG King-shing, GBS, PDSM

Mr TIK Chi-yuen, BBS, JP

Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

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

Mr Elvis AU Wai-kwong, JP	Assistant Director (Nature Conservation & Infrastructure Planning), Environmental Protection Department
Mr HUI, Eric Kwok Sun, JP	Assistant Director (2), Home Affairs Department
Ms Karen CHAN Pui-yee	Assistant Director (Estate Management), Lands Department
Mr CHUNG Siu-man	Assistant Director / Port Control, Marine Department
Mr Bobby NG Mang-tung, JP	Assistant Director / Development, Water Supplies Department

Secretary

Mr Patrick TSANG	Assistant Secretary (Boards)1, AFCD
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IN ATTENDANCE

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Mr Joseph SHAM	Assistant Director (Country and Marine Parks)
Mr LEUNG Chi-hong	Senior Country Parks Officer / North-west
Ms NGAR Yuen-ngor	Senior Country Parks Officer / South-east
Mr Alan CHAN Lai-koon	Senior Marine Parks Officer
Mr Edmond LAM	Senior Country Parks Officer / Ranger Services
Mr Franco NG Kowk-yan	Country Parks Officer / Special Duties

Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)

Ms LOK Kit-ha	Chief Leisure Manager (New Territories East)
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Planning Department (PlanD)

Mr YUM Chi-fai

Senior Town Planner/Sai Kung

ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES

Ms Jasminia Kristine CHEUNG

Ms KWAN Sau-wan

Dr Young NG Chun-yeong

Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP

Mr Wilson SO Ying-leung

Assistant Director of Planning / New Territories

Mr Donald CHOY Chi-mun

Assistant Director (Leisure Services)³, Leisure and Cultural Services Department

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

01/12 The Chairman welcomed all members and the public attendees to the meeting, in particular Professor Rebecca CHIU Lai-har JP, Mr TIK Chi-yuen, BBS, JP, and Mr HUI, Eric Kwok Sun, JP, Assistant Director (2) of Home Affairs Department, who attended the meeting for the first time.

02/12 The Chairman informed members that, as an established practice, to facilitate the taking of meeting minutes, sound recording would be made during the meeting. The audio records would be destroyed after the meeting minutes were confirmed.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 11 October 2011

03/12 The minutes of the last meeting held on 11 October 2011 were confirmed without amendments.

II. Matters Arising

(a) Proposed Designation of the Country Park Enclave of Tai Long Sai Wan as Part of Sai Kung East Country Park (Para. 157/11 to 187/11)

04/12 The Chairman informed members that this item would be dealt with under Agenda Item IV. Members noted.

(b) Annual Field Visit (Para. 193/11 to 194/11)

05/12 Mr Joseph SHAM reported that the annual field visit had taken place on 2 December 2011. The participants had visited Lai Chi Wo Geosite, Lai Chi Wo Nature Trail (including White-flowered Derris) and Lai Chi Wo Geoheritage Centre. After lunch they visited Kat O Geoheritage Centre and then toured in Ap Chau Hoi to see the geosites around Ap Chau. During the visit in the Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve, they were briefed on the work and facilities of AFCD and a forest research project to be conducted by the Kadoorie Institute of the University of Hong Kong there. Before ending the visit, they proceeded to AFCD Fire Control Centre at Kowloon Hills where they were briefed on the operation of the Centre and AFCD's work in preventing and fighting hill fire. They also saw a demonstration for fire-fighting by the AFCD fire crew.

06/12 A report on the field visit had been distributed to members for prior reference. Photographs taken on the field visit were circulated at the meeting.

(Mr TIK Chi-yuen, BBS, JP attended the meeting at this juncture.)

III. Progress Report on the Hong Kong Biodiversity Education Centre at the Woodside (Working Paper: WP/CMPB/1/2012)

07/12 Mr Edmond LAM presented Working Paper WP/CMPB/1/2012.

(Ms LO Po-man attended the meeting at this juncture.)

08/12 Mr Edmond LAM answered to a member's enquiry that AFCD would convert the external areas for educational walks. The exotic plant species in the garden would also be replaced with certain native species so as to give good examples of diversity and adaptability of native species. He supplemented that after the completion of slope stabilization works, AFCD would explore ways to make use of the engineered slope for on-site interpretation of Hong Kong's local biodiversity. He expected that more local wild animals, birds, dragonflies and butterflies would be attracted as well.

(Dr Eric LI Shing-foon attended the meeting at this juncture.)

09/12 In response to a member's enquiry about whether the opening hours of the Exhibition Galleries Building (EGB) could be extended to 6:00 p.m., Mr Edmond LAM explained that the proposed opening hours of the EGB followed the normal working hours (i.e. eight hours). Given that the total area of the EGB was about 125 m² only, visitors were expected to finish their tour within 45 minutes to one hour. Besides, morning walkers usually started to leave Mount Parker Road after midday; hence, they were not likely to visit the Hong Kong Biodiversity Education Centre (HKBEC) after 4:30 p.m. As it was estimated that the HKBEC would attract some 200 visitors per day upon its full operation, the proposed opening hours would be able to meet the demand of visitors. He remarked that the opening hours could be reviewed in due course if re-deployment of existing resources was possible.

10/12 The Chairman suggested that the visitors could enter the EGB by 4:30 p.m. and might be allowed to stay until 5:30 p.m.

11/12 Mr Edmond LAM addressed a member's enquiry that AFCD was devising education programmes for local schools and also collecting opinions from them. Besides, AFCD might consider collaboration with schools. These schools could also use seminar room and activity room for environmental-related group activities.

12/12 In responding to a member's enquiry about accessibility of the HKBEC, Mr Edmond LAM pointed out that people could walk comfortably from King's Road to the HKBEC within 20 minutes. As Mount Parker Road was a one-way road where the entry of private cars and minibuses was restricted, AFCD would recommend schools to drop their students off at the junction of Mount Parker Road and King's Road and to encourage their students to take a 15-minute stroll to the HKBEC. Persons with disabilities could be dropped off and picked up at loading/unloading area outside the EGB by 24-seater minibus. Woodside building was barrier-free and visitor paths were unidirectional to ensure a smooth visitor flow inside the building.

13/12 Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP remarked that visitors were encouraged to go to the HKBEC by public transport instead of coach. AFCD would also work with departments concerned to improve the conditions of Mount Parker Road for the convenience of persons with disabilities.

14/12 Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP elaborated the ideas behind the HKBEC. Apart from revitalisation of the historic Woodside building, the HKBEC, being located in urban area, was a convenient spot to introduce to Hong Kong people and overseas visitors the valuable natural resources and biodiversity in Hong Kong. As a focal point to disseminate the message of having a touch with Nature, the HKBEC would also guide its visitors to visit other venues, for example Lions Nature Education Centre at Tsiu Hang, the Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden,

and Hong Kong Wetland Park. In the end, AFCD wished that Hong Kong people and overseas visitors would appreciate natural environment and biodiversity in Hong Kong by visiting its countryside and educational facilities.

15/12 Mr Edmond LAM answered to a member's enquiries that AFCD would duly consider animal and plant exhibits to be displayed in the HKBEC. Depending on acceptability of the public to the exhibits, AFCD would review the composition of the exhibits on a regular basis.

16/12 Mr Edmond LAM addressed a member's enquiry that the historical background of the Woodside building had already been included in education programmes.

17/12 Mr Edmond LAM replied to a member's enquiries that information about the environment of the HKBEC, Quarry Bay Tree Walk and wartime communal stoves had been included in education programmes for local secondary schools. He advised that the HKBEC would be a major venue for biodiversity education to local primary and secondary schools as well as a focus for biodiversity and environmental-related studies.

18/12 A member remarked that various hiking routes from/to the HKBEC could be devised for primary and secondary students.

19/12 A member appreciated the development of the HKBEC. He had strong reservation on the entry of vehicles into Mount Parker Road.

20/12 Mr Edmond LAM responded to a member's suggestion that the HKBEC would have a library with books about the countryside of Hong Kong. The HKBEC also had a digital microscope for students to examine the structures of organisms in more details.

(Dr NG Cho-nam, BBS, JP left the meeting at this juncture)

21/12 After thorough discussion, the Chairman concluded that all members supported the establishment of the HKBEC. She advised that AFCD should consider the integration of the HKBEC and its environment so as to provide diverse programmes for students of different ages and the public, the composition and replacement of the exhibits, and the hardware and software of education programmes. She suggested that AFCD should invite Members to be the first group of visitors to the HKBEC upon its opening.

[Post-meeting note: Members had been invited to attend the opening ceremony of the Woodside Biodiversity Education Centre on 1 June 2012 at 3:00 p.m. The ceremony was successfully held.]

**IV. Progress Report on Proposed Designation of the Country Park Enclave of Tai Long Sai Wan as Part of Sai Kung East Country Park
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/2/2012)**

22/12 Mr Joseph SHAM presented Working Paper WP/CMPB/2/2012.

23/12 A member remarked that the comments of the Sai Kung District Council (SKDC) focused on the effects of inclusion of the country park enclaves into country parks on small house development and village development in all enclaves instead of the enclave of Tai Long Sai Wan (Sai Wan) only. The SKDC had also not given its comments on whether the country park enclave of Sai Wan would be suitable for designation as part of Sai Kung East Country Park (SKECP) from the perspectives of conservation and landscape. On the contrary, the Board assessed the suitability for incorporating the country park enclave of Sai Wan into the SKECP from the perspectives of conservation and landscape.

24/12 She went on to say that the establishment of a working group under the SKDC might delay rather than resolving differences among stakeholders. She did not expect that the working group could easily draw conclusions that were different from the SKDC. Hence, she suggested that the Country and Marine Parks Authority (the Authority) should invoke the statutory procedures under the Country Parks Ordinance (CPO) to include the country park enclave of Sai Wan into the SKECP if the Administration could not reach a consensus with the working group within a reasonable time.

25/12 A member agreed to the member's views. He said that the enclave issue was obviously a conflict between the interests of society and some local villagers.

26/12 In response to the two members' enquiries, Mr Joseph SHAM recapitulated that at the meeting on 7 February 2012, the SKDC had been advised that the private property rights of landowners would be protected under the CPO and the landowners would have the right to claim compensation from the Government if the activities or development permitted under the lease were found to substantially reduce the enjoyment and amenities of the country park and hence not allowed.

27/12 Mr SHAM pointed out that the draft Tai Long Sai Wan Development Permission Area (DPA) Plan was published in August 2010 and would be effective for 3 years only. Hence, the Authority would need to decide before August 2013 whether to include the country park enclave of Sai Wan into the SKECP. He highlighted that the Government would have to make the decision to invoke the statutory procedures under the CPO to include the country park enclave of Sai Wan into the SKECP in the next few months, in order to meet the time frame.

28/12 Mr SHAM advised that the Authority had commenced the assessment of the suitability for designating some of the 54 enclaves as part of country parks. He highlighted that the Authority assessed the merits, justifications and implications of incorporating the enclaves into country parks on a case-by-case basis. Hence, the progress of the proposed designation of the country park enclave of Sai Wan as part of the SKECP did not affect the assessment of other enclaves.

29/12 A member agreed with the two members. He advised that the proposed designation should be kept moving as the interests of the whole community of Hong Kong and not just individual interests should be considered by the Board. He was of the view that the proposed designation would be a test case and everybody would watch how well the Government handled it.

30/12 A member agreed with the member. He said that some stakeholders worried that the proposed designation would set a precedent for the other enclaves even though the Authority at the last meeting emphasized that the enclaves would be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Apart from continual communication with local villagers, he advised the Authority to devise other backup plans.

31/12 A member was of the view that the comments of the SKDC based on economic reasons which were not well-founded.

32/12 A member agreed that the proposed designation should be proceeded. From his experience of contacting with indigenous residents of New Territories, he remarked that the residents would try to gain more potential interests despite the fact that their existing interests had not been affected. He was pessimistic about reaching a consensus in the working group as local villagers would not easily change their stance.

33/12 A member urged that a time-table should be worked out to show firm commitment by the Authority to take forward the proposed designation.

34/12 A member believed that green groups would support the Authority to proceed with the proposed designation from the perspectives of conservation and protection of the scenic beauty of country parks.

35/12 A member said that apart from local villagers and the Board, the Authority should also collect the opinions of other stakeholders so as to get a more balanced view. She suggested that local villagers could gain benefits from the proposed designation if approved.

36/12 A member remarked that the Authority should collect the opinions of villagers of Sai Wan Village. He advised that the Authority should prudently consider the proposal of

vehicular access for Sai Wan Village as similar requests would be raised for villages in Ham Tin Wan and Tai Long Wan upon the successful implementation of the proposal.

37/12 In response to members' views, Mr Joseph SHAM stated that if the Authority invoked the statutory procedures under the CPO to include the country park enclave of Sai Wan into the SKECP, members of the public could express their opinions to the Board in writing within the inspection period of 60 days upon the gazettal of the new draft map of the SKECP. Provided that the natural environment of Sai Wan would be protected, the Authority would explore with the working group appropriate means in the proposed designation that would be beneficial to local villagers. As regards the proposed vehicular access for Sai Wan Village, he pointed out that Environment Impact Assessment would likely be required for this ecologically sensitive area in the SKECP. The proposal might not easily be acceptable by the public and green groups.

38/12 As regards the time table, Mr Joseph SHAM advised that the Administration would take reference of the statutory time-limit of the DPA plan (i.e., August 2013). In case the Administration decided to invoke the statutory procedures to include the country park enclave of Sai Wan into the SKECP, it was estimated that the procedures would be kicked off in late 2012 since at least nine to ten months were required to complete the procedures.

39/12 Mr Elvis AU Wai-kwong, JP concurred with Mr Joseph SHAM's estimation. As regards the opinions of other stakeholders, he supplemented that the Town Planning Board had received a lot of representations which supported the incorporation of the country park enclave of Sai Wan into the SKECP during the public inspection of the draft Tai Long Sai Wan DPA Plan in August 2010.

40/12 Mr Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP thanked the support of members to the Authority. He reiterated that the incorporation of the country park enclave of Sai Wan into the SKECP was the most appropriate protection measure. As a first step to speed up the proposed designation, the Administration would work with the working group to identify a mutually acceptable solution that would be welcomed by the villagers and other stakeholders. As the discussion might be time-consuming, he advised the members to be patient with the Authority. He highlighted that the Authority did not want the proposed designation to be a them-versus-us situation as the proposed designation was for the good of the public and did not target any individuals.

41/12 Mr WONG highlighted that the Authority must be sensitive in handling the matter as overwhelmingly majority of the SKDC Members opposed to and no Members supported the proposed designation. The Authority, in partnership with the Sai Kung District Office, would

strive to reach a win-win situation in the working group as soon as possible. The Authority would report any progress to the Board in due course.

42/12 A member pointed out that the enclave issue had become quite political. He worried that a lose-lose scenario, instead of a win-win situation, would probably occur in the end as those who failed to get what they wanted would prevent others from succeeding. He was of the view that a compromise might have to be reached.

43/12 A member remarked that the enclave issue was a typical example of conservation versus development conflict. She was of the views that it was not likely to create a win-win situation by reaching a compromise as the SKDC's comments related to the rights for small house development and compensation scheme which were probably outside the purview of the Board.

44/12 After thorough discussion, the Chairman concluded that the Board fully supported the Authority to incorporate the country park enclave of Sai Wan into the SKECP as soon as possible. The Board also wished the Administration to continue to work with the working group with an aim to reducing the differences among stakeholders and creating a win-win situation for conservation and development. She highlighted that the interests of the public should always take precedence over the interests of individuals or local area in the work of the Board. As overwhelming majority of the SKDC Members opposed to the proposed designation of the country park enclave of Sai Wan as part of the SKECP, she appreciated the difficult situation of the Authority and said that members would offer their help to the Authority if necessary. She suggested that the Authority should actively proceed with the proposed designation and provide a more definite time-table at the next meeting.

V. Summary Report of Country Parks Committee (CPC)
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/3/2012)

45/12 Prof CHU Lee-man, Chairman of the Country Parks Committee, presented Working Paper WP/CMPB/3/2012. Members noted the Report.

(Mr TIK Chi-yuen, BBS, JP left the meeting at this juncture.)

VI. Summary Report of Marine Parks Committee (MPC)
(Working Paper: WP/CMPB/4/2012)

46/12 Dr Eric LI Shing-foon, Chairman of the Marine Parks Committee, presented Working Paper WP/CMPB/4/2012. Members noted the Report.

(Mr Elvis AU Wai-kwong, JP left the meeting at this juncture.)

**VII. Summary Report of Public Relations Committee (PRC)
(Working Paper WP/CMPB/5/2012)**

47/12 Ms HUI Mei-sheung, Tennessy, JP, Chairman of the Public Relations Committee, presented Working Paper WP/CMPB/5/2012. Members noted the Report.

**VIII. Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report
(Working Paper WP/CMPB/6/2012)**

48/12 Mr Joseph SHAM presented Working Paper WP/CMPB/6/2012 on Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report for the period from 1 September to 31 December 2011. Members noted the Report.

50/12 The Chairman appreciated the efforts of AFCD staff and volunteers in education/visitors services as a lot of such services were provided at weekends and holidays.

IX. Any Other Business

49/12 Mr Joseph SHAM answered to a member's enquiry that the proposed designation of Robin's Nest (紅花嶺) as a country park was at its preliminary stage of preparation work as the frontier closed area had just opened up. According to the preliminary findings of ecological survey conducted, ecological resources of the site were quite abundant. The next step would be on planning, including the demarcation of boundary for the proposed country park. It was expected that a tentative proposal would be worked out in late 2012 and the Board would be consulted in due course.

50/12 In response to a member's enquiry about the measures to facilitate visitors to the monuments in the site before the designation of the site as a country park, Mr HUI, Eric Kwok Sun, JP said that he would convey the Member's concern to North District Office (NDO) for its consideration. He added that the member might also follow up the matter with the NDO through AFCD.

[Post-meeting note: Mr Eric HUI informed District Officer (North) of the member's concern / request on 27 February 2012.]

51/12 Members had no other business to discuss.

X. Date of Next Meeting

52/12 The Chairman informed members that the next meeting was tentatively scheduled for 31 May 2012 at 2:30 p.m.

[Post-meeting note: The next meeting has been re-scheduled for 13 June 2012 at 2:30 p.m.]

53/12 The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

– End –