

Country and Marine Parks Board
Summary Report of the Public Relations Committee

1. Purpose

1.1 To inform members of issues discussed at the Public Relations Committee meeting held on 24 February 2012. Major issues discussed at the meeting are summarised below.

2. Publicity and Media Coverage

2.1 Members were briefed on the promotional and educational activities on country and marine parks for the period from 19 October 2011 to 12 February 2012, including the Mountain Bike Safety Day, “Trace of Hong Kong Wild Animals” walking trail in Tsiu Hang, Hong Kong Reef Check and opening of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China. Various topics, such as country park enclaves, recommended locations for red leaves viewing in the countryside, illegal felling of incense trees, the SMS Hiker Tracking Service, results of the public consultation on Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030 and the option of reclamation outside Victoria Harbour, had also been covered by the media.

2.2 A member suggested that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) could consider broadcasting a promotional video on “Great Outdoors Hong Kong!” hiking activities on local ferries and hoverferries to and from Macau.

2.3 A member enquired about AFCD’s work under the option of reclamation outside Victoria Harbour. Members were informed that an environmental assessment would be conducted for every potential reclamation site, and concerned departments would be consulted. AFCD would provide professional advice on impacts on marine ecosystem and species at the potential sites.

3. Country Park Hiking and Planting Day 2012 Programme

3.1 Members were briefed on the details of the Country Park Hiking and Planting Day 2012 Programme. They were informed that the Programme aimed at promoting public awareness of nature conservation and tree preservation. This year’s events

would take place at Fu Tei in Tai Lam Country Park (15 April), Luk Chau Shan in Ma On Shan Country Park (29 April) and Sheung Miu Tin in Plover Cove Country Park (6 May).

3.2 A member asked if the “tree planting day” events would be rescheduled in case of inclement weather. Members were informed that the events would not be rescheduled on account of inclement weather and would be held even on rainy days. The events would only be cancelled when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or a Rainstorm Warning was issued.

4. Work Report on 50222 SMS Hiker Tracking Service

4.1 Members were briefed on the details of the 50222 SMS Hiker Tracking Service. They were informed that this was the world’s first SMS tracking service for hikers and was free of charge. Hikers could simply punch in the number of the Distance Post (DP) and send it to 50222 via SMS, and their tracking data would be stored in the system for three days. Should hikers have accidents, rescue parties could narrow down the search area based on the DP record last received by the system, thus increasing the chance and speed of rescue.

4.2 A member suggested that the Department promote the tracking service to community organisations and training centres which organised mountain activities and training for young people. Members were informed that the Department would look into the suggestion.

4.3 Members proposed that hikers’ records be stored for a longer period. Members were informed that the Department would examine the proposal with the Police and the Fire Services Department.

5. Exhibition and Education Work Programme of Hong Kong Biodiversity Education Centre

5.1 Members were briefed on the details of the Exhibition and Education Work Programme of the Hong Kong Biodiversity Education Centre (HKBEC). They were informed that the HKBEC was expected to come into operation in early 2012. It would mainly serve as a conservation and education centre for local secondary and primary schools, and would focus on biodiversity and nature conservation-related studies. The HKBEC would also be a major venue for public education on habitats and species conservation through collaboration with different non-governmental organisations, district councils and local organisations.

5.2 A member suggested that the Department might consider opening a book store and a tuck shop in the HKBEC. Members were informed that the Department would look into the suggestion.

6. Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report

6.1 The Country and Marine Parks Authority Progress Report covering the period from 1 October to 31 December 2011 was presented at the meeting. Members noted the contents of the report.

7. Presentation

7.1 This paper is prepared for members' information.

Country and Marine Parks Authority

May 2012

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