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COUNTRY AND MARINE PARKS BOARD

Summary Report of the Marine Parks Committee

1. Purpose

1.1 This paper aims to inform members of the major issues discussed at the Marine Parks Committee (MPC) meeting held on 6 December 2019.

2. Study for Pier Improvement at Lai Chi Wo and Tung Ping Chau – Investigation

2.1 In 2017 Policy Address, the Government was committed to improving a number of remote public piers to facilitate public access. To take forward the policy initiative, the Government has launched the Pier Improvement Programme for the implementation of improvement works for piers at remote areas. Lai Chi Wo Pier and Tung Ping Chau Public Pier were among the selected piers. In the meeting, representatives and consultants of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) briefed members on the Study for Pier Improvement at Lai Chi Wo and Tung Ping Chau. They introduced the current conditions of the two piers, the key findings of ecological surveys, the proposed improvement works and the preliminary design layout of both piers. They also answered members' questions on the construction period and method, potential ecological impacts, and so on.

2.2 Members were generally concerned about the impacts of the construction works on coral communities and other marine life, and hence suggested CEDD to consider appropriate measures to reduce and mitigate the impacts. Regarding the preliminary design, members suggested that since the two existing piers were mostly used by villagers and fishermen to load or unload their small boats, CEDD should ensure the improved piers would continue to cater for these groups of users. The Chairman also suggested CEDD to consider adding features that could enhance marine biodiversity on the piles of the piers (e.g. using eco-concrete with eco-friendly surface structure) and allow light to penetrate the pier for the benefit of marine life (e.g. part of

the walkway constructed using glass panels or glass bricks). Some members also expressed concern that the north-east-facing floating platform of Tung Ping Chau Public Pier would be susceptible to strong wind and waves during winter.

2.3 After discussion, CEDD was invited to consider incorporating members' suggestions into the tender specifications for the construction works. CEDD was also invited to provide details of the coral mapping and translocation plan, and the feasibility study on the effects of winds and waves on the proposed pier structures and floating platforms, and further information on the design, setting up and removal of the temporary piers.

3. Study on Subtidal Seaweed Diversity and Distribution in Hong Kong – Results and Conclusion

3.1 The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) commissioned a 13-month study on diversity and distribution of subtidal seaweeds in Hong Kong. The study commenced in February 2018 and completed in March 2019. In the meeting, the study team from the Education University of Hong Kong briefed members on the study results and conclusion.

3.2 Members had no particular comment on the study results and conclusion. The Chairman was pleased to know that the study recorded 10 species new to Hong Kong, expanding the Hong Kong seaweed records from 247 species to 257 species. The Chairman recommended AFCD to announce the encouraging results to the public and seize the opportunity to raise public awareness and knowledge of algae in Hong Kong.

4. Coral Restoration in Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park – Study Summary and Application of the 3D-Printed Reef Tiles

4.1 The project team from the Swire Institute of Marine Science, the University of Hong Kong, updated members on the progress of hard coral restoration in Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park (HHWMP) and briefed them on the proposed deployment of 3D-printed artificial reef tiles to enhance restoration success.

4.2 Members had no objection to the proposed deployment of 3D-printed

artificial reef tiles in HHWMP at an experimental scale and considered that the project was a good opportunity to raise public awareness on coral conservation. They also recommended the project team to inform and educate the public about the project in advance to prevent human disturbance to the application of 3D-printed reef tiles.

5. Any Other Business

Proposed Short-term Use of Sham Shui Kok Anchorage No. 2 For Transshipment Operations for Three-Runway System Project

5.1 The Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) would like to apply for using Sham Shui Kok Anchorage No. 2 (SSKA No. 2) within The Brothers Marine Park (BMP) for a short-term period of no longer than two years for unloading of Mainland and overseas sand fill from ocean going vessels to feeder vessels for onwards delivery to the Three-Runway System works site. In the meeting, AAHK's representatives briefed members on the proposed transshipment operations and sought their comments.

5.2 Members understood that SSKA No. 2 was one of the mooring sites within BMP that could be used by vessels for mooring, anchoring or mid-stream operation, subject to the provisions in the Marine Parks and Marine Reserves Regulation (Cap. 476A). They also understood that AAHK would consider using SSKA No. 2 for transshipment operations only when other suitable anchorages were exhausted and would exercise strict control of their operations at the anchorage.

5.3 During the discussion session, members mainly expressed concerns about the possible impact of the transhipment operations on the water quality and dolphins in BMP and they made a few suggestions to AAHK in this regard. Firstly, AAHK was advised to carry out appropriate measures to prevent leakage of sand during the transshipment process, including but not limited to halting the operations during adverse weather conditions. Secondly, AAHK was requested to implement a specific water quality monitoring plan for the proposed sand fill transshipment operations and the monitoring should be conducted in the close vicinity of the anchorage location and on the dates when it was used for transshipment operations. Thirdly, while a Dolphin Exclusion Zone would be established during the transshipment operations to protect dolphins, AAHK was suggested to step up their passive acoustic monitoring efforts at BMP as well to strengthen dolphin protection. Lastly, AAHK was suggested to properly communicate with stakeholders, including fishermen, before carrying out the

proposed transshipment operations.

5.4 AAHK responded positively to members' suggestions and agreed to take follow-up actions as appropriate. In response to members' request, AAHK also provided a specific water quality monitoring plan to members for reference after the meeting. Members had no further comment on the specific water quality monitoring plan.

6. Advice sought

6.1 This paper is prepared for members' information.

Country and Marine Parks Authority
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